

ZONING HEARING BOARD
FEBRUARY 23, 2015

On Monday, February 23, 2015 at 7:00 P.M., after due advertisement according to law, a public meeting of the Zoning Hearing Board was held in the Municipal Building, 550 Washington Road. Board members Don Lambert, Andrew Rembert and John Burgess were present. Also present was John Cambest, Esquire, Zoning Hearing Board Solicitor and Ellen Wallo, Recording Secretary.

PUBLIC HEARING

JTB Sign Service/Washington Ford

The first agenda item is continuation of consideration of the application of JTB Sign Service/Washington Ford for a variance to the size of new signage per Section 1805.3.a of the Zoning Ordinance, zone C-2. This issue came before the Zoning Hearing Board on January 19, 2015 but there was no quorum, and February 9, 2015, but no action was taken.

Dan Wind representing Washington Ford and Chris Michaels, architect for General Industries, were present in support of this application.

Mr. Michaels stated that after the last Zoning Hearing Board on February 9, 2015, the Board asked Washington Ford to reduce the size of the lettering stating "WASHINGTON" on the new façade of the building at 507 Washington Road.

Mr. Michaels stated that the "WASHINGTON" Channel letter has been reduced to 33" x 27'-11" which is a total of 76.80 square feet, an additional 30.20 square foot reduction from the previous 107 square feet of signage.

Mr. Burgess asked how many variances have been granted for this project. Mr. Wind stated that no variances have been granted for this particular project.

There were no public comments in regard to this application.

After further discussion, Mr. Lambert made a motion to approve this variance to the size of new signage for Washington Ford based on their new submission of 33" letters, which is down 30% and allows for letters to cover 76 square feet instead of 107 square feet, which is what was originally proposed. The motion was seconded by Mr. Burgess and carried.

PUBLIC HEARING

Columbia Midstream Group, LLC

The second item on the agenda was consideration of the application of Columbia Midstream Group, LLC, for a Special Exception for a comparable use not specifically listed to the Zoning Ordinance to build a facility in support of natural gas development (Launcher/Receiver Facility and Meter Station) at the intersection of Davis School Road and Meadows View Road, zone A-1.

February 23, 2015

Blaine Lucas, Esquire, representing Columbia Midstream, stated that Columbia proposes to construct and operate a natural gas Launcher/Receiver Facility and Meter Station on the property in order to service natural gas wells being developed in the area.

The Project Narrative states that the “subject area is authorized as a special exception in the A-1 District as a “comparable use not specifically listed” pursuant to Section 245-15.C(1)(d) of the Township Zoning Ordinance. Columbia’s proposed use is comparable to the “essential services” use, which is a permitted use by right in the A-1 District under Section 245-15.C(1)(d). Columbia’s proposed facilities also are essential for the transmission of natural gas from oil and gas wells, which are permitted as a conditional use in the A-1 District under Section 245-15.B(1)(q). Columbia’s proposed use meets the requirements of Section 245-121 for comparable uses”.

The Description of Facilities states that the “Launcher/Receiver Facility is proposed to be built just upstream of the main Metering and Regulation Facility. The purpose of the Launcher/Receiver Facility is to remove any water, gas liquids, or solid particles in the gas stream before gas enters an existing gas transmission pipeline.

The proposed facility includes four main above-ground components: a PIG receiver, PIG Launcher, Slug Catcher, and a Liquids-Storage Tank”.

“...a meter station is proposed at the point where the gathering pipelines would deliver gas to the Columbia 1570 Transmission Line. The purpose of this station is to measure the quantity and composition of the gas, and also to regulate the flow and downstream pressure. The proposed facility includes the following equipment: PIG Receiver, Filter/Separator, Liquids Storage Tank, Meter Skid, Control Valve Skid and EGM Building”.

Mr. Lucas presented comprehensive notebooks to the Board and introduced Jeff Winkle, Land Project Manager; Ricky Barnhart, Operations Manager and Reginald Keith, Acoustics Engineer who will be available to answer questions from the Board and the audience.

Mr. Winkle stated that some of the reasons that this property was chosen for these facilities were: Transmission Line 1570 runs right through it; Range Resources already owns such property and it is located near Route 19.

Mr. Winkle also stated that Columbia Midstream gathers the gas; Columbia Transmission is the long distance transporter of the gas and Columbia Gas of PA serves residents of the Township and surrounding areas.

Mr. Lambert asked Mr. Winkle if Columbia Midstream is regulated by the Public Utilities Commission. Mr. Winkle answered that Columbia Midstream is not regulated by the PUC, but they have guidelines to follow established by the PUC. The transmission line (Columbia Transmission) is regulated by the PUC.

February 23, 2015

Mr. Winkle reported that the only traffic to this site once it is operational will be a pickup truck about twice a week with two (2) workers and approximately one (1) water truck per year. No traffic study is required as Columbia Midstream will be making less than one (1) trip per day, which is the requirement for a traffic study.

Mr. Lambert asked why an Emergency Action Plan was submitted in the notebook presented by Columbia Midstream. Mr. Winkle stated that the Plan was part of the testimony given at this meeting.

Mr. Rembert asked about security at this site and Mr. Winkle stated that the entire site will be surrounded by an 8 ft. fence and the driveways will be gated. Also, the site will be landscaped with 8 ft. tall evergreens.

Acoustic Engineer Reginald Keith testified that there will just be gas passing through the Launcher/Receiver and the Meter Station. The Meter Station can be noisy, but a whisper trim valve will be used and the dba's anticipated for such Meter Station are 35 to 40. The projected sound impact is expected to be in the mid 35-40 dba's.

Mr. Winkle explained that Columbia Midstream has no plans at the present time to build a compressor station at this site. If the time comes that compression is needed, they will consider what sites are available to them at that time.

Mr. Lambert then announced that the Board would allow 30 minutes for the audience to speak.

George Hadanich, 26 Fulton Lane, stated that his property adjoins the site proposed for the Launcher/Receiver and Meter Station and that he feels certain that a compressor station will eventually be built here and that the noise would be continuous.

V. J. Patel, owner of 1200 Washington Road and 20 ½ acres of land abutting the proposed site, feels that the Launcher/Receiver and Meter Station will lower property values in the area.

Maureen Schulte of 139 Meadows View Road presented a petition signed by sixteen (16) residents opposing any gas/oil industrial developments at the confluence of said roads.

Mr. Cambest asked Mr. Lucas if he had any objection to entering this petition into the record and Mr. Lucas said he did not.

John Zitko of 123 Meadows View Road asked if the Special Exception is granted, will a legal precedent be set. Mr. Zitko also feels a compressor station will be needed in the future.

Dennis Ferlich of 155 Meadows View Road thanked the Zoning Hearing Board for the good work they are doing and stated that he feels the property values will be lowered if the Launcher/Receiver and Meter Station are built on this site.

February 23, 2015

John DeBord of 750 Clare Drive presented a North Strabane Township Zoning Map showing an I-1 Zoning District in North Strabane Township that he feels would be a better fit for the Launcher/Receiver and Meter Station.

Mr. Cambest asked Mr. Lucas if he had any objection to entering this Zoning District Map into the record and Mr. Lucas said he did not.

Cynthia Rossi of 99 Zediker Station Road presented a comment document and Community Development Objective from the South Strabane Township Comprehensive Plan to be entered into the record.

Mr. Cambest asked Mr. Lucas if he had any objection to entering this document and Objective into the record and Mr. Lucas said he did not.

Nancy R. Gray of 1601 Pierce Street presented a letter objecting to approval of the Columbia NiSource application and gas and oil drilling in close proximity to R-2 areas.

Mr. Cambest asked Mr. Lucas if he had any objection to such letter being entered into the record and Mr. Lucas said he did not.

Glenn Teeter of Delta Pump & Systems, Inc., 55 Davis School Road, thanked the Zoning Hearing Board for doing a good job. Mr. Teeter feels that a compressor station will be coming to this site.

At this time, Mr. Lucas rested Columbia Midstream's case.

Mr. Lambert then made a motion to continue consideration of the application of Columbia Midstream Group, LLC for a Special Exception for a comparable use not specifically listed to the Zoning Ordinance to build a facility in support of natural gas development (Launcher/Receiver and Meter Station) at the intersection of Davis School Road and Meadow View Road, zone A-1, until the next Zoning Hearing Board meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rembert and carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Mr. Lambert, seconded by Mr. Burgess, to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 P.M. The motion carried.

Submitted by,

Ellen G. Wallo
Recording Secretary

February 23, 2015