

**ECONOMY BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF AUGUST REGULAR MEETING**

DATE: August 4, 2025

Present: J. Blumling, D. Carlson, N. Fedorek (Planning Commission Consultant), M. Kowalski, D. Lang, A. Mutschler, C. Pcsolyar.

Absent: R. Kowal.

Others Present: Phil Kalanovich (Red Swing Group, 4314 Old William Penn Highway, Monroeville, PA 15146), Keith Andreyko (Integrity Design, P.O. Box 371, Ingomar, PA 15127), Brad O'Connell (BOC Real Estate, 1518 Mt. Nebo Rd., Sewickley, PA 15143), Bill Bielivuk (200 Campbell Road, Sewickley, PA 15143).

After review, the minutes of the July 7, 2025, meeting were approved as submitted on a motion by Chad Pcsolyar. Seconded by Myron Kowalski. Motion approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Application for subdivision by: Edward and Bonnie Howe, 185 Sproat Avenue, Freedom, PA 15042. 07-01-25.

Applicant requested to subdivide one existing parcel at 185 Sproat Avenue (tax parcel 60-13-226.001, 1.98 acres) into two parcels by creating a new lot line. This would create two lots, referred to as "Revised Lot 1" (1.13 acres) and "Lot 2" (0.85 acres) on the application's Site Plan. The property is zoned R-2 Suburban Residential District.

Based on the initial review by the Planning Commission Consultant, this development is in conformance with Zoning and SALDO requirements as it is presented to the Planning Commission. Based on my review of the site plan as provided, minor modifications to the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations or variances to the Zoning Ordinance are required. The minimum lot sizes in the R2 Suburban Residential District are:

- One acre without public sewers and public water
- 0.57 acres with public sewers and on-site water
- 0.46 acres with public sewers and public water

Based on the proposed lot size of 0.85 acres for the new Lot 2, public sewer access is required. The new parcel will not meet the minimum lot size of the R2 zone without access to the sanitary sewer system. The site plan notes that Lot 1 is "subject to a sanitary sewer right-of-way allowing Lot 2 access", but without this being in place already, the new Lot 2 is not legally guaranteed to have sanitary sewer access once it is created. There is a possibility that creating a sewer connection to the right-of-way indicated on the Site Plan is not possible due to topography, soils, or another factor. If this were to occur, this new lot would be out of compliance with the R2 district regulations.

At the July 7, 2025 meeting, the proposed plan was approved subject to approval of the sewer authority right-of-way.

The Borough Manager requested that the Planning Commission approve the plan now that the sewer right-of-way was approved since our last meeting.

Action taken: Motion by Don Lang to recommend approval of the plan with the sewer authority right-of-way having been approved. Seconded by Chad Pcsolyar. Motion approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 2020 Big Sewickley Creek Road Land Development Application: BOC Real Estate, LLC, 1518 Mt. Nebo Road, Sewickley, PA 15143. 8-01-25.

On July 29, 2025, Michael Baker International received the 2020 Big Sewickley Creek Road Land Development Application for Preliminary and Final Approval. This submission is an update from a July 16, 2025 application, which Michael Baker International and Shoup Engineering reviewed earlier in the month of July. The resubmitted application adequately addresses several comments flagged by Michael Baker International and Shoup Engineering. The scope remains the same: the land development proposal is to develop one existing parcel (tax parcel 60-185-0249.000, 0.96 acres) by expanding the existing building, constructing a patio, and adding 36 parking spaces. The property is zoned C-1 General Commercial District.

The Planning Commission Consultant reviewed this application for conformance with the Subdivision and Land Development and Zoning Ordinances (SALDO). The procedures for this type of subdivision, a consolidation, are governed by Chapter 163, Article VII, Section 163-16. As such, the applicant is required to submit the plans and data under Section 163-15. The requirements of Chapter 180 also apply, particularly, the standards found in Article VI: C-1 General Commercial District.

Based on the initial review, this development is in conformance with Zoning and SALDO requirements as it is presented to the Planning Commission. Based on my review of the site plan as provided, no modifications to the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations or variances to the Zoning Ordinance are required. However, it is recommended that the applicant adjust the design to provide enhanced landscaping and move the dumpster area away from roadside view. This would enhance the quality of the development, improve safety of the parking lot, preserve property values for the R-2 parcels across the street, and contribute to the pleasant and bucolic character of Big Sewickley Creek Road. While this is not required, it should be recommended by the Commission.

Site Description

The property is located at 2020 Big Sewickley Creek Road, Sewickley, PA. The property is in a C-1 "General Commercial" district. The property is across the street from land that is zoned R-2 "Suburban Residential" and single-family homes exist across the street. Per the Borough's definition of "adjoining" this is not adjoining.

Use Requirements

The current use is a convenience store and eating place in a one-story building with a paved parking lot in front. The parking lot has seven marked spaces, although the lot is large enough to accommodate more. The use of either "Bar or Tavern" or "Restaurant, Sit-Down" are classified as Permitted Uses in the C-1 District. Lighting is adequate and provides minimal bleed to adjacent properties.

Area and Bulk Regulations

The lot area is a non-conforming parcel. The minimum lot size and minimum lot width do not meet current zoning requirements for the C-1 district. The existing structure and site are grandfathered in. The addition must conform to 189-92(a) "Nonconforming Structures" in the Borough Ordinance. Because the expansion is in the rear of the property and does not violate rear or side setback requirements, the expansion does not create an issue with area and bulk requirements.

Off-Street Parking and Loading

Parking is 10 feet away from the property line in compliance with Borough regulations.

The five angled parking spaces and two of the eastern parking spaces are located within the 25' front setback. Section 180-71 "Permitted projections into required yards" allows some architectural features, decks, porches, and steps attached to the principal building, and fire escapes. Parking is not considered a permitted projection into required yards. Parking is not specifically a permitted use, but this is acceptable based on the further regulations of 180-80(L)

"Location of parking areas." - required parking is 35 spaces. The site plan provides 42 parking spaces. The developer could remove several parking spaces to add more pervious surface to the site and increase the front yard setback.

Buffer Areas and Landscaping

As this is a commercial development with more than 20 parking spaces, the requirements of 180-69 "Buffer areas and landscaping" apply, particularly 180-69(b)(2)(a). Economy Borough's buffering requirements are split into three options: A, B, and C, with A providing the most intense buffer and C providing the least. Because this is off-street parking, the regulations in 180-80(j)(1) "Landscaping" also apply.

Because the parcel is adjoined by C-1 properties and the R-2 properties across the street do not technically adjoin the parcel, the buffering is not required. While not required, Buffer Area C is *strongly recommended*. Per the regulations in 180-69(b)(3)b) states that Buffer C is allowed "On developed nonresidential properties in the C-1 District where existing conditions such as building location and existing paving of the parking lot make it impossible to meet the requirements for Buffer Area B along a property line that adjoins property in the R-A, R-1, R-2 or R-3 District."

A description of Buffer Area C is below:

“Buffer Area C shall be comprised of a continuous, compact evergreen hedge or line of evergreen trees that will grow together when mature and that are a minimum of six feet in height at the time of planting. The depth of Buffer Area C shall be 15 feet as measured from the property line.”

At the very least, the regulations of 180-80(j)(1) regarding landscaping will apply to the site. These regulations are excerpted below:

“The area of the front yard between the street right-of-way and parking located in a front yard shall be seeded with grass or planted with ground cover and shall be landscaped with trees and/or shrubs that comply with the requirements for visibility of § 180-70D. This landscaping may include trees required by § 180-69J.”

The current site plan includes a single tree in the front, with no other landscaping. A one-way entrance and the pull-out for the angled parking spaces is proposed in lieu of landscaping. While the structure is a non-conforming use, it is well within the existing constraints of the site to add Buffer Area C, which is already relaxed from the stricter guidelines of Buffer Area B. To protect the property values of the adjacent residential parcels and support quality development, Buffer Area C is recommended. However, at a bare minimum the regulations of 180-80(j)(1) should be enforced and a thin area of the front yard between the street right-of-way and parking should incorporate landscaping.

The dumpster may need to be relocated to maintain access. This would also be an improvement, since the dumpster currently faces Big Sewickley Creek Road in the existing site plan. Although not a requirement of the Zoning Ordinance or SALDO, it is recommended the dumpster be moved. If the site does not permit this, it should be screened by a six-foot high fence in accordance with Section 180-66 “Standards for Specific Uses.”

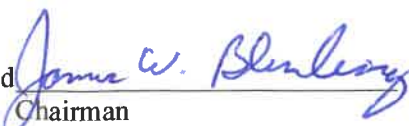
After review, the Planning Commission Consultant recommends that the subdivision application be recommended for approval to the Borough Council with the following conditions:

- The front of the site is reconfigured to incorporate the landscaping requirements of either Buffer Area C or 180-80(j)(1)
- The five angled parking spaces in front of the development are removed to incorporate landscaping (recommended—not required)
- The dumpster area is relocated to a less visible area (recommended—not required)
- The drawing of the side sign shows a hand-painted sign on the side of the wall and on the top of the entrance that is not shown in the rendering. The rendering also has lighting for a sign, but no sign is shown on the rendering. To ensure conformance with the Sign Ordinance, the developer should confirm where signage will be placed, how many signs, and the total square footage of the signs.

There was a presentation by the developer’s representative Mr. Karanovich. He outlined the plan and reviewed the drawings and renderings. Of the proposed structure and site. Developer O’Connell was in attendance – he has operated the restaurant Good Fellas on Mt. Nebo Road since 2011. There was also a review of the Borough Engineer and Planning Commission Consultant. The developer is targeting a Spring 2026 opening. Based on information prepared by the developer’s representative, the Commission and Planning Consultant rescinded the recommendation to remove the parking spaces and relocate the dumpster. This was due to their impact on feedback from PennDOT during their Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP) application review process. However, a small landscaping area that does not impact road line-of-sight could still be provided and is recommended by Planning Commission.

Action taken: Motion by Don Lang to recommend to Council approval, on the condition that a front landscaping buffer be added, provided it does not impact line of sight. Seconded by Myron Kowalski. Motion approved.

Motion to adjourn by Audrey Mutschler., seconded by Myron Kowalski. Motion passes. The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Signed 
Chairman

Signed 
Secretary