



## THE EXPRESS-TIMES

### Supervisors OK store plan

**3-2 vote. Opponents of the Weis supermarket have raised traffic concerns with PennDOT.**

Friday, February 16, 2007

By **COURTNEY LOMAX**  
The Express-Times

FORKS TWP. | Supervisors approved a developer's preliminary plan to build a grocery store at Sullivan Trail and Uhler Road and agreed the plan meets the conditional use requirements of the township.

Supervisors voted 3-2 on each issue with John Ackerman and Bonnie Nicholas casting the dissenting votes. C. David Howell and Donald Miller and Chairman David Hoff approved the plans.

Ackerman listed traffic concerns at an already busy intersection as the reason why he voted against the plan.

Weis Markets Forks Inc. plans to build a 62,000-square-foot supermarket and a gas station on an 8.9-acre tract in the employment center district.

"Traffic will be the biggest topic of this project," supervisors Chairman Hoff said.

Several road improvements, including widening Sullivan Trail, are in the plans.

Conditions to the project include submitting a traffic plan by an outside party to PennDOT with the developer's traffic plan. The supervisors will have input in the building's design and there will be no left turns from the grocery store onto Sullivan Trail.

The decision comes a week after supervisors heard several hours of testimony from a group opposing the zoning change. Supervisors agreed in July to a conditional use that allows a grocery store in the employment center district, meaning supervisors can impose specific guidelines about the building's appearance and other factors.

Nicholas voted against the change in July.

A group of residents opposes the zoning change, calling it spot zoning designed with one developer in mind. They argue traffic will substantially increase and the one zoning change will spiral into several more.

A traffic expert testifying on behalf of the group of residents opposing the zoning change said last week traffic will increase 10,000 times on Sullivan Trail and Uhler Road if a grocery store is built there. That report will be submitted to PennDOT.

Project opponent Scott Gingold was not at Thursday's meeting. His attorney Gary Asteak submitted a letter to supervisors saying it was premature to grant approval because of the zoning challenge.

Township Solicitor Karl Kline said the developers will be building at their own risk before the challenge is final.

Reporter Courtney Lomax can be reached at 610-258-7171 or by e-mail at [clomax@express-times.com](mailto:clomax@express-times.com).