

Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

February 5, 2020

Members present: Dawn Nicholson (Chairman), Karen Bedics, Bobb Carson, Brian Hague, Angela Kelly, Steve Smith

Also Present: Jim Nilsen, Tony Matzura, Jim Hopkins, Raymond Kade from the Board of Supervisors & Scott MacNair the Township Solicitor.

Ms. Nicholson called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM. Minutes from January 8th meeting reviewed. Changes: correction of spelling Mr. Nilsen last name. Motion by Ms. Bedics, Second by Ms. Kelly. Vote approved unanimously.

Ms. Nicholson stated the purpose of the night's joint meeting was to discuss the goals for the Commission and also topics, assignments, tasks of the Commission. Ms. Nicholson's first topic was the status of the Comprehensive Plan. The Commission is currently waiting on money in the township budget and appointment of a new Township Manager to move forward with updating. Mr. Nilsen recommended that the Commission revisit the survey data for the new Comprehensive Plan with the new Manager and Board Members. Members to review the original presentation of the survey data that was put together by Mr. Smith and presented to the Board. Goal is to bring the new Board members up to speed as well as serve as a refresher for others. Mr. Nilsen also suggested reaching out Lynn Busch from the Bucks County Planning Commission to help with the Plan. Mr. Carson recommended that Commission/Board shouldn't follow the survey/data too closely, since it most likely is age biased and lacked some topics such as affordable housing. Group discussed the facts that the Township has housing unaffordable for the younger generation, the township lacks public sewer and water infrastructure, as well as public transportation and other amenities.

Ms. Nicholson suggested there be an outreach to younger families and stakeholders within the community for input on the Plan and possibly looking to co-operation with surrounding communities. Drafts of the new Comprehensive Plan should be sent to Palisades School District and BCPC.

The Board and Commission agreed that the ACT 537 Plan should also be reviewed. Ms. Bedics had asked the Township staff to find maps (hard copies) from Act 537 Plan and have them accessible at the township building for members to view at their convenience. Mr. Carson requested that we check for digital copies available and to circulate prior to the next meeting.

Ms. Nicholson discussed the need to have more communication between the Commission and the Board regarding emerging issues such as Airbnb and Agritourism. The Commission members expressed frustration and disappointment with the BOS and

other responses to STR Ordinance and would like to avoid that kind of situation in the future. Suggest that, in the future, the Commission should first present an unbiased PC perspective of a topic directly to the Board and then move forward if BOS authorizes. Mr. Nilsen would like to see more communication, and information and research to be shared between the Board and Commission prior to public meetings.

Ms. Nicholson inquired about the status of the Historic Resource ordinance. Mr. Nilsen stated that the ordinance did not pass, needs to have more definitions and details need to be clarified.

Mr. Matzura would like to see the Board set goals for the Comprehensive Plan and do some kind of outline for the Commission.

The Commission will hold a March 19, 2020 work session to discuss and review the current Comprehensive Plan, review survey data, and review the Act 537 Plan. There is also a tentative schedule for an April 16th work session with the BOS to meet with stakeholders, along with the Comp. Task Force and Lynn Busch.

Mr. Nilsen would like to see all development plans coming into the office with digital copies. The Commission should encourage developers to do so. Township staff to contact engineers for digital copies of plans 20 years old or newer. Mr. Carson commented that it is important to have all township maps GIS compatible.

Ms. Nicholson adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m. Motion by Mr. Smith and Second by Ms. Kelly.