

Planning Commission

MINUTES

March 20, 2024

Meeting Held at Passer Community Center

Members Present: Dave Long, Angela Kelly, Bruce Whitesell and Nicole Zane (by phone).

Mr. Long called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance. He introduced Travis Pantaleo who will be appointed to the Commission at the next Board of Supervisors Meeting scheduled for March 25, 2025.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Long asked if anyone had questions regarding the PSATS "Planning Commission" course. He advised that Neil O'Brien and him attended the webinar. The course gave an overview on what the Planning Commission is supposed to do in respect to Zoning including SALDO, Comprehensive Plan and the Sunshine Act.

DISCUSSION

Scenic Overlay District – Mr. Long advised that Mr. Hopkins reached out to the Bucks County Planning Commission to find out additional information and they were not able to find anything. So, we are having some difficulty understanding how Scenic Overlay was developed because it relies on scenic roads. Scenic Overlay District is to protect the unique visual character of the Township by setting standards for the visual impact of development on views from scenic roads. The scenic road overlay district does not affect the overall permit in the district but it does require the proposed development to go through a special site plan review procedure as defined herein and that are designed to minimize adverse visual impact on the character of the Township. If you follow that you can go to natural resource mapping which is what is used to calculate if there are any impacts based upon the scenic overlay provision and special procedures set forth here and applied to those properties that lie within whole or apart within the scenic overlay district. The scenic overlay district is defined as including all properties that are adjacent to the scenic district roadways as shown on the Zoning Map, Appendix C and all properties that could be seen from the scenic district roadways as identified through the site analysis and resource conservation plan required by the Springfield Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. Mr. Long advised that he does not recall the scenic overlay district ever being impacted previously in the Township through any type of development.

Mr. Whitesell stated that it really has not been a problem because there have not been many subdivisions since this went into effect. Mr. Long indicated that many surrounding municipalities do not have scenic overlay in their zoning. Ms. Kelly questioned if the scenic overlay contradicts any other zoning requirements and if this ordinance should remain in effect, as it may provide a hinderance on future development. There was a discussion on what benefits this ordinance provides to the Township and the differences between township, state and private roadways. Ms. Zane asked about how this ordinance aligns with the wants of the residents which was obtained through the Comprehensive Plan surveys.

Mr. Long advised that the Planning Commission would be the first reviewer of the sketches that are submitted to the Township which falls in the scenic overlay district. Since this is an adopted Ordinance, we

are required to adhere to it. Ms. Zane stated that the Commission needs to ensure that we can measure, quantify and justify. Mr. Long agreed that this needs to be subjective vs. objective.

Mr. Hopkins advised that the Bucks County Planning Commission may be able to assist with future discussions on scenic overlay. Mr. Long indicated that he did reach out to Mr. Carson to see if he could provide an overview from the discussions back in 2007. Unfortunately, Mr. Carson was unable to provide additional information.

The consensus of the Commission was to look at other municipalities to see what they have adopted.

Planning Commission Project Reports and Comments

1. PC Brief Reports

1.1. Comprehensive Plan initiatives – current status

1.1.1. Community Infrastructure & Utilities

1.1.1.1. Provide for reliable power options – Mr. O'Brien was not present and the topic was tabled for another meeting.

1.1.1.2. Encourage a resilient building stock (A15); Assess stormwater infrastructure and capacity to address community needs (A-16); NEED A LEAD – I

1.1.1.3. Assess wastewater infrastructure and capacity to address community needs (A22) – Mr. Long advised he is working on scheduling a meeting with Ms. Jennifer Kinsler to discuss sewage treatment systems.

1.1.2. Safety and Mobility

1.1.2.1. Continue to maintain local road network infrastructure for ease of mobility throughout the Township – (C1); D. Nicholson - lead; (C5); N. Zane – support

1.1.2.2. Expand, connect, and fund a multimodal network of off-road trails and on-road bike routes (C7, C8-13); D. Long/D. Nicholson – leaders; A. Kelly, N. O'Brien – support

1.1.3. Livable Centers

1.1.3.1. Provide financially accessible housing that is diverse in type and price point (D1-3); B. Whitesell – Lead

1.1.3.2. Promote neighborhood-scale mixed use development in the villages and hamlets (D4); B. Whitesell – Lead; (D6); NEED A SUPPORT PERSON– support

1.1.4. Rural & Historic Preservation

1.1.4.1. Protect natural ecosystems, including natural resources, such as air quality and water quality, forests, and wildlife (E23-27); N. O'Brien – Lead.

1.2. Need Lead Volunteer

1.2.1. Protect high-quality soils from development and other practices that reduce soil health (E1-6)

1.2.2. Establish intent of historic preservation within the Township and align the Historic Overlay district (E11-17)

Mr. Whitesell spoke about the property at Route 212/ Route 412 / Hickory Lane. He advised he had a discussion with the listing agent who has a few potentials buyers. He asked about the historic significance of the property.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Mr. Whitesell, seconded by Ms. Kelly and carried adopting the February 5, 2025 minutes as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chris Davidson of Deer Trail Road asked about how you become a lead on the Comprehensive Plan initiative. Mr. Long indicated that the leads were typically members of the Planning Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Ms. Kelly, seconded by Ms. Zane and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 p.m.
Next Planning Commission meetings are April 2, 2025 and then April 17, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,



Rich Pursell
Township Manager