

January 14, 2015
7:00 PM

The regular meeting of the Monroe Township Planning Commission was called to order by Solicitor Mike Pykosh. The Pledge of Allegiance was said by all.

On the motion of Mr. DeNicholas, and seconded by Mr. Brymesser, and by unanimous vote of the members it was duly RESOLVED to select Steve Paulus as Chairman of the Planning Commission for 2015. The meeting was turned over to Steve.

On the motion of Ms. Nelson, and seconded by Mr. DeNicholas, and by unanimous vote of the members it was duly RESOLVED to select Sheldon Brymesser as Vice Chairman of the Planning Commission for 2015.

On the motion of Mr. DeNicholas, and seconded by Mr. Brymesser, and by unanimous vote of the members it was duly RESOLVED to select Sharon Nelson as Secretary of the Planning Commission for 2015.

ATTENDANCE

Steve Paulus, Chairman	Mike Pykosh, Solicitor
Sheldon Brymesser, Vice-Chairman	Mark Bruening, Engineer
Sharon Nelson, Secretary	Marjorie Metzger, Secretary
Dave DeNicholas	Kirk Stoner, Cumberland County Planning
Carl Kuhl	Greg Rogalski, Zoning Officer

MINUTES

On the motion of Mr. DeNicholas, and seconded by Mr. Paulus, and by unanimous vote of the members it was duly RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the November 5, 2014 regular meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE None

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS None

NEW BUSINESS

ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

Mr. Rogalski provided a memo dated December 9, 2014 outlining some potential revisions to the Zoning Ordinance.

Unenclosed Storage of Campers, Trailers, Etc. (Section 302) Mr. Rogalski showed some slides of examples of this type of activity in the township. As the ordinance is written, this type of use is not allowed in the Residential Zone. However, if no one complains, the ordinance is not enforced. These uses are okay in the Agriculture Zone.

Mr. Kuhl questioned if the neighbors real estate values are affected, which Mr. Rogalski said not. Mr. Kuhl questioned what neighboring townships have for this, and Mr. Rogalski said he would check.

Ms. Nelson said the ordinance keeps the use under control, if we need it, but we should not go out looking for violations.

Mr. Rogalski suggested relaxing the section for certain types, or to state the units can't be set up or hooked to sewer, or even limit the number of units allowed. It could also go by percentage of coverage of the lot.

Mr. Kuhl questioned if these units would affect the response of the fire company, and Mr. Paulus said that would be the home owners' issue.

Mr. Kuhl asked if anyone has requested zoning changes, and Mr. Rogalski said yes.

Mr. Paulus feels if the ordinance is loosened too much there will be more issues. People will move their campers or boats out of the yard and to the edges of the streets.

Outdoor Signs (Section 313) Mr. Rogalski showed slides of various signs posted throughout the township. The Board did not take issue with any of them. Ms. Nelson is surprised there is an issue with signs. She has no problem with signs and feels it is a part of the rural character of the township.

Mr. Paulus said people appreciate the community and the businesses and signs are no problem. What he gets concerned with are the real estate signs and yard sale signs that are left up, election signs, or the signs that are posted in groups in a small area for things like insurance or exercise gyms and things like that.

Mr. DeNicholas was concerned with the level of enforcement, with limited staff.

Mr. Kuhl questioned if the business sign requirements are similar to surrounding townships, and Mr. Rogalski said no, Monroe's ordinance on signs is much tighter. Mr. Kuhl questioned if that is keeping businesses from coming to our township because of the rules.

Mr. Rogalski said the ordinance does need updated. Flashing signs is a new thing that needs to be addressed.

There was a discussion about the off - site directional signs and the Planning Commission's recommendation to allow signs up to a 3 mile radius from the business. Mr.

Paulus explained the need for a business to get advertising to the major arteries and intersections. Someone on a back road may have a problem because of the other intersections that come before the major artery. The signs are already limited by the number allowed and the requirement to have the landowner's permission for placement.

Mr. Kuhl said there could be people coming from surrounding townships to visit these establishments, not just from Monroe. They need help with directions. Mr. Rogalski suggested eliminating collector and non-collector streets, and the use of intersections and major arteries. Kirk Stoner from County suggested limiting the number of signs and let the business owner decide where to put them, regardless of a collector road or some distance away. That is how most of the county operates.

Communication Antennas, Towers and Equipment (Section 417) Mr. Rogalski explained the township has an offer from Verizon to put a tower on township property near the firehouse. This could bring in some revenue toward the southern sewer district. Mr. Pykosh said the income to the township could be earmarked since it is source other than tax money. Verizon proposes a 150' mono-pole, which would generate approximately \$20,000 annually for the township. He provided a written proposal for changes to the Zoning Ordinance that would be needed to allow this tower on township property.

Mr. Kuhl questioned how far this expansion could go over the years. Will they want a pole every block? What protects the voters?

Mr. Stoner mentioned the 2012 Broadband Standards. There are new ways to add these smaller towers to traffic signals, utility poles, in rights-of-way, out of rights-of-way, etc. The county has a model ordinance, which Verizon's attorney has reviewed.

Agricultural Permit Fee Exemption (Section 702.2) Mr. Rogalski said this issue can be handled through the fee schedule.

Zoning Map Mr. Rogalski mentioned there appears to be interest from the Supervisors to make changes to the zoning map to allow for more development to help with the sewer rates. The area around Rutter's is being considered to allow for cluster development, and agrarian cluster development.

The Planning Commission questioned if there is any interest from the land owners in that area. Most of them are the traditional farmers. They suggested looking at the area around Zimmerman Road, back Old Stone House Road, and toward Lisburn Road to connect the sewer from Churchtown to the Lisburn Meadows development. Mr. Rogalski said development is market driven. We need something unique. The other issue is the sewer is there, but we still have well water.

Mr. Bruening mentioned the sewer capacity is needed before we can go for more development. There is no capacity for Allenberry. The agriculture security needs to be looked at, as well as land owned by Mr. Lehrman.

Mr. Kuhl questioned when the township would reach the tipping point with more development of needing a bigger school, a police force, and so on with services. Mr. DeNicholas mentioned that is why development is normally limited to 50 units per year.

Ms. Nelson questioned how many other household bills does a household have that amounts to the same as the sewer rate. Are the people scared of the big quarterly amount? As other townships are mandated to make the upgrades to their sewer plants, won't their rates be going up too? Mr. DeNicholas said what Monroe is charged for sewer is significantly higher than other areas. Mr. Rogalski said Mr. Kehoe did a review of costs, and if you add the Monroe sewer rate and real estate taxes, it is comparable to costs of living in Hampden Township.

Mr. DeNicholas said the cluster development makes sense, but he doesn't see any turn around in the near future.

Mr. Rogalski will work on an outline for the next meeting of proposed revisions to the zoning ordinance.

AGRICULTURE SECURITY REQUEST FROM JOHN MUSSER

Mr. Pykosh explained there has been a request for inclusion in the agriculture security area submitted for the John Musser farm on Old Stone House Road. This matter will be before the Planning Commission for action at their next month's meeting.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION None

STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Bruening introduced Chris, an associate from Barton & Loguidice.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marjorie E. Metzger, Administrative Assistant