

**Planning Commission
Minutes
January 4, 2016
7:30 PM**

Present:

Brett MacKay
Joseph Vavra
John Vickers
Matt Chartrand
Rich Marino
Nancy Becker
Supervisor Laura Smith

Absent:

Edward Buonocore
Michael Jayes
Patricia Younce

Staff:

Carolyn McKelvie, Asst. Zoning & Planning Officer
Jennifer Guckin, Director of Community Development and Code Enforcement
Mary Stover, Township Engineer

Mr. MacKay called the meeting to order.

First Order of Business

Election of New Officers

Nomination for Chairman -- Ms. Becker nominated Mr. MacKay for Chairman and Mr. Vavra seconded. All were in favor.

Nomination for Vice Chairman -- Ms. Becker nominated Ms. Younce and Mr. Vavra seconded. All were in favor.

Nomination for Secretary -- Mr. Vavra nominated Ms. McKelvie and Mr. MacKay seconded. All were in favor.

Approval of the December 2015 Minutes

Approval of the December 2015 Minutes was made with changes.
Mr. Vavra made a motion to approve the December minutes with corrections.
Ms. Becker seconded that motion.

Old Business

Wind Energy Ordinance

Mr. MacKay referred to the letter from the county and that Ms. Stover was making changes that were suggested by the solicitor.

Ms. Stover went over changes and comments from the county regarding the Wind Energy Ordinance. Planning Commission members discussed the comments from the Montgomery County Planning Commission and it was decided that we did not agree with many of the comments. The Planning Commission did not want to permit more wind energy systems than the one per acre in the proposed ordinance and they did not want to allow them in the higher density areas of the Township. It had already been discussed that we would not be allowing the rooftop variety of windmills. According to the recommendations of the DVRPC, small wind systems need to be separated from buildings in order to be efficient. Ms. Stover had already made all of the changes recommended by the Township Solicitor which included being more specific regarding the buffering requirement as noted in B.6 of the Montgomery County Planning Commission letter.

Mr. MacKay made a motion to approve the draft ordinance with the changes to the Board of Supervisors. Ms. Becker seconded. All were in favor.

Commercial and Parking Buffers

Ms. Stover reviewed the letter from the Montgomery County Planning Commission comments they made for the commercial and parking buffers. The Planning Commission discussed the Montgomery County Planning Commission comments on this ordinance. Ms. Stover had revised the ordinance to provide for a minimum width of the buffer as suggested by the Montgomery County Planning Commission. Ms. Stover did not agree with the recommendation for denser planting. Ms. Stover provided the Planning Commission with a sketch showing the proposed landscaping and they were in agreement. For the commercial buffer, Table 1 was modified to require a C Buffer between single family homes and office, retail and consumer service and industrial developments. In addition, it was requested that the required buffer between mixed residential and institutional be changed from none to an A Buffer. The ordinance and table will be amended as noted.

Mr. Chartrand commented that if we make it denser it may restrict future sight of the business. There was discussion regarding buffering when it comes to a road separating a residential area and a commercial property. Mr. MacKay stated that the street is a buffer. Ms. Stover commented that the chart shows what is required along the street for buffering.

Mr. MacKay asked if there were any additional comments. Hearing non, Mr. MacKay recommended that the amended version of the Commercial and Parking Buffer Ordinance and the table be submitted to the Board of Supervisors for approval. Ms. Becker seconded. All were in favor.

Sign Ordinance

Tonight's discussion was on signs permitted in Commercial, Village Commercial and Light Industrial Districts. The Planning Commission was satisfied with the current Towamencin

requirements except for a modification to include a regulation for awning signs since there are no specific requirements in the current ordinance. A statement will be added that awning signs will be counted as part of the overall wall or building signs permitted for the use. Ms. Stover had provided a comparison of the Towamencin Village Overlay district and the Montgomery County Planning Commission model ordinance Village Commercial recommendations. No revisions were requested for the current Towamencin requirements for the overlay district. We will be providing some final information for the next meeting including general sign requirements and the requirements for multi-family districts.

Ms. MacKay asked if there was any additional new business. The Planning Commission members asked Supervisor Laura Smith if there would be any new Planning Commission members and Supervisor Smith stated yes.

The Meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm. Ms. Becker made a motion and Mr. Vavra seconded.

Respectfully submitted,



Carolyn McKelvie
Asst. Zoning & Planning Officer

CM/dh