

East Fallowfield Township
Planning Commission Workshop and Comprehensive Plan meeting
Approved November 2, 2015 minutes
6:30 pm

Attendees:

Dennis Crook, Chairman
John Schwab, Vice Chairman
Garth Monaghan
Joe Perzan
Jim Durborow

Not Present:

Richard Agatone
Jim Weeks

Dennis Crook called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Discussion: There was a discussion about the order of agenda items for the meeting. The committee decided to proceed with the meeting in the order below.

Lot Line Change Application: Dennis Crook reported there is a potential applicant that wants to split his property into two lots. His daughter's property is adjacent to his and he wants to give his property to her. Mr. Crook said the applicant is required to go through the subdivision process to make a lot line change. It would be considered a minor subdivision and it has to get recorded by the County. John Schwab stated we would have to verify the properties are still conforming. The applicant is the owner of one parcel and his daughter is the owner of the other parcel.

Planning Commission Recording Secretary: Dennis Crook stated the ordinance mentions the Planning Commission should have a Planning Commission Secretary. He discussed who would write letters for the Commission when needed. Dennis Crook stated he brought the need for a Planning Commission Secretary to the Board at the last meeting. At that meeting, Dennis Crook said he explained their procedure to the Board. The Planning Commission records their meetings and give the recording to Lisa Valaitis, Township Secretary, to do the meeting minutes. Mr. Crook proposed as a compromise, when the Commission needs a letter, they will record a dictation of the necessary letter and have Lisa Valaitis type the letter from the recording. The Planning Commission will then review the letter. Mr. Crook spoke about letter writing in regard to clock dates. Lisa Valaitis agreed to type letters as needed. They also discussed the 2016 Township budget having a deficit of \$397,000 and some of the causes of the deficit. Mr. Crook stated The Second Class Township Code requires the Board of Supervisors to pass a balanced budget. Dennis Crook asked the Planning Commission members if any of them would interested in serving as their recording secretary. They discussed a few options for getting a recording secretary. Dennis Crook reported that the Planning Commission is getting a \$250 reimbursement for the postcard mailer due to the success of Park Day.

Park & Recreation Committee & East Fallowfield Park: There was also a discussion about a bid the Park & Recreation Committee has out for a paved walking trail in East Fallowfield Park. The details of the proposed trail was discussed. John Schwab said the DCNR will probably fund the trail. John Schwab

talked about the high volume of use of the paved walking trails in a park in West Bradford Township. There was also a discussion about the Park & Recreation Committee members all resigning at the end of 2015.

Comprehensive Plan Copies: There was a discussion about obtaining hard copies of the final Comprehensive Plan for the Planning Commission members. John Schwab stated he printed a copy of both the Comprehensive Plan and the Appendix from the Township website. He got a cost estimate from Staples to print 10 copies. The estimated cost was \$301. Dennis Crook reported Mr. Ott's cost would be \$300 for 10 bound copies.

Strategic Implementation Plan: There was a discussion regarding hiring a township manager, which is a Comprehensive Plan recommendation listed under the Community Facilities and Services Plan section. The recommendation to hire a township manager is a high priority. John Schwab stated that the recommendation to implement a property tax (under the Identify New Township Revenues section) is linked to hiring a township manager. The Commission members discussed possible implementation of a township tax. They talked about the budget deficit opening the door for people that want to eliminate the police to come forward. Garth Monaghan stated eliminating the Police Department would cause property values to drop. At the Comprehensive Plan public meeting, residents provided overwhelming support for keeping the Police Department. There was a discussion about how West Bradford Township works with only state police coverage. Close proximity of the state police barracks and distance from Coatesville were suggested as reasons they get away with no township police force. They discussed a possible tax implementation due to the budget deficit. John Schwab stated a half mill would raise \$205,000 for the Township based on the Township's land assessment. John Schwab said he would recommend implementing a tax to hire a township manager and cut costs. Implementing a tax to cover the budget deficit is throwing money away. Educating the public on the tax was discussed. Garth Monaghan suggested the Planning Commission write a letter to the Board of Supervisors stating that their recommendation has been, and continues to be, to hire a township manager to bring organization into the Township's day to day functions which would include finances. Dennis Crook stated Ray Ott is willing to come and talk to the Planning Commission about how to address the implementation phase. There was a discussion about it being better to have Ray Ott go before the Board of Supervisors rather than the Planning Commission. The Commission discussed methods of preparing a balanced municipal budget.

Dennis Crook will talk to Ray Ott about how the Planning Commission should implement the Comprehensive Plan recommendations - specifically hiring a township manager. He will ask Ray Ott if he would be willing to come talk to the Board about the Comprehensive Plan implementation either in November or December. John Schwab suggested preparing a case statement listing reasons the Township needs a township manager. Jim Durborow suggested determining if other local municipalities have a township manager.

New Business:

1. Ordinances involving solar panels: Garth Monaghan stated he got a relevant solar panel ordinance from West Marlborough Township. The ordinance requires enforcement and also requires a permit. There are a couple of places in the Township that have put up solar panels. Mr. Monaghan will ask the Building Code Official if residents have been applying for permits for solar panels. Dennis Crook

stated solar panels need to be hooked up to a home's electrical system and therefore inspections should be required for safety.

Next Planning Commission meeting: December 7, 2015.

Dennis Crook made a motion to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 7:45 pm. John Schwab seconded. Vote: 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Valaitis
Township Secretary