

East Fallowfield Township
Planning Commission Workshop
Approved December 15, 2014 minutes
6:45 p.m.

Attendees:

Dennis Crook, Chairman
John Schwab, Vice Chairman
Richard Agatone
Jim Durborow

Not Present:

Jim Weeks
Garth Monaghan
Joe Perzan

Dennis Crook called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm.

Planning Commission appointment of Joe Perzan to the 2015-2018 term:

MOTION: Dennis Crook made a motion to appoint Joe Perzan to the 2015-2018 Planning Commission term. John Schwab seconded.

VOTE: 4-0

Conditional Use Application Submitted – Vermeil Tower: There was a discussion about the conditional use application regarding the Vermeil Tower. Dennis Crook commented that the additional antenna is more than six feet tall and the tower will be an additional 20 feet tall. Mr. Crook said they will wait for the Engineer to review. A question was raised concerning airport or state agency approval if the tower is above a certain height. There was a discussion regarding what approvals were required. John Schwab said that conditional use applications go to the Board of Supervisors for their approval and the Board will ask for feedback from the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will want to have input on the conditions. There was a discussion about concerns regarding the tower due its close proximity to the road. John Schwab posed a question about the additional 20 feet changing the stress point at which it will implode upon itself rather than break and fall in the road. There was a discussion about the stress point and if the extra height is a concern with the tower being near the road. John Schwab said the Engineer would review that and attend the next Planning Commission meeting to discuss. They also discussed how long the Engineer has to review the application.

Comprehensive Plan Discussion: Dennis Crook reported he sent a short letter to Ray Ott and he received a response back with four questions. The Planning Commission discussed their responses to the four questions:

1. Is the Board of Supervisors on board with this?

Dennis Crook stated the Board of Supervisors is on board. Joe Pomorski (Chairman of the Board of Supervisors) attended their last Planning Commission meeting and helped write the letter to Ray Ott.

RESPONSE: The Planning Commission response will be “yes” to this question.

2. Shall I use the same development density parameters in the current Zoning Ordinance for the Future Land Use Plan and Build-Out Analysis?

Dennis Crook posed the question that if we don't know if Section 1300 is in place, then how did Ray Ott do his calculations. Mr. Crook said Ray Ott had not answered this question. Mr. Crook discussed Ray Ott's density calculations and said some of them don't add up. Dennis Crook said if Ray Ott had not taken account for the Section 1300 in his calculations, then this means they could cluster and change the number of units allowed. Mr. Crook said the main issue with Section 1300 is that it doesn't address combinations of Commercial, Industrial, and Residential Zoning. Is an office building with multiple businesses in it considered one unit or multiple units? What happens if apartments are added to this building? He said this leaves the Township wide open because of a lack of explanation in the Ordinance. The Commission talked about having to use the same density numbers in the Future Land Use Plan and Build-Out Analysis and why. John Schwab said an additional column should be added for the Open Space Design Option. All zoning is applicable to Open Space Design. John Schwab stated the answer for Ray Ott's question is yes, with updated numbers to allow for the development since the last one was done and also recognizing that the Open Space Design Ordinance can be used in all zoning areas except for Agricultural and Conservation. They had a discussion regarding what zoning areas were included in the previous Comprehensive Plan and zoning map.

RESPONSE: The Planning Commission will respond "yes" to this question. This will allow for all the developments since the last Comprehensive Plan Analysis as well as allow for the possibility of the Article 1300 Open Space Design Ordinance being used in all the zoning locations (low, medium, high density). John Schwab said these calculations will allow the Board of Supervisors to see what could happen if we allow the Open Space Design Ordinance to stay on the books.

3. The existing zoning includes the Open Space Design Option, but the Planning Commission wants to eliminate that provision. Shall we follow that lead and recommend eliminating the Open Space Design Option?

Dennis Crook stated they want to understand it before recommending it be eliminated. John Schwab said that the Ordinance can be used in any of the Future Land Use categories and would allow significantly higher densities. The Planning Commission discussed Section 1300 and said they would recommend to remove the Ordinance. Dennis Crook commented that the Township needs to be in compliance with the County's Comprehensive Plan in order to ensure that we receive the grant for the Comprehensive Plan.

RESPONSE: The Planning Commission will respond "yes" to this question.

4. The existing zoning ordinance also includes Mobile Home Park District which permits mobile homes at up to five units per acre. The zone includes most of the Beagle Club property, which we have included as a recommendation for acquisition by the Township as passive open space. Should we include this property for Mobile Homes on the Future Land Use Map, or continue to show it for Township acquisition?

Dennis Crook asked how legitimate is it to say the Township wants to buy a piece of property and zones it this way. John Schwab stated it has been zoned this way for fourteen years. There

was a discussion about Spot Zoning. Dennis Crook spoke about Township changing zoning without notifying the property owners before making the change. John Schwab discussed that there was no follow-up or feedback on the last Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan should be a tool for running the Township. John Schwab stated that for any recommendations in the current Comprehensive Plan that will change ordinances or land use, we should follow through to ensure the changes are made.

They discussed that Ray Ott was under the assumption that Section 1300 was being eliminated. John Schwab explained that the Open Space Design Option originally came as a recommendation from the Chester County Planning Commission. The whole point of it was to allow a developer to take a piece of property and to be more creative to better utilize the land. What it means is the developer can use higher densities to develop a smaller piece of property and allow more of it to be open space. The first draft of it was used to build Brook Crossing and it was a disaster. The Chester County Planning Commission's model ordinance overcompensated the developer and allowed them to use all the junk land as open space. We got more lots in a very tight area and a bunch of junk open space. John Schwab gave an over view of the changes made in the past to the Open Space Design Ordinance. John Schwab proposed getting rid of the Ordinance if the County is not requiring it. They also discussed keeping the Ordinance but adding more zoning restrictions to it.

RESPONSE: The Planning Commission will respond is "yes" to this question.

Other Business:

Dennis Crook discussed the Zoning Hearing Board. There was also a discussion about the Bawa Muhaiyaddeen Fellowship. John Schwab gave a background on this development. John Schwab stated that Dennis O'Neill is the Chairman on the Zoning Hearing Board and he has been trying to get a Planning Commission member to serve on the Zoning Hearing Board.

There was a brief discussion about the need for the Township Flow Chart. They will put it on the agenda every month or every other month until completed.

They discussed the need to find out if the Open Space Design Ordinance is required to be in Compliance with the Chester County Planning Commission.

Next Planning Commission Meeting: Monday, January 12, 2015.

Next Planning Commission Workshop/Comprehensive Plan Meeting: Monday, January 19, 2015.

Adjournment: Dennis Crook made a motion to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 8:00 pm. Seconded. Vote: 4-0

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Valaitis
Township Secretary