

East Fallowfield Township
Planning Commission Workshop meeting
Approved December 19, 2016 minutes
6:32 pm

Attendees:

Dennis Crook, Chairman
John Schwab, Vice Chairman
John Nielsen
Sue Monaghan
Joe Perzan
Carol Kulp

Not Present:

Jim Weeks

Dennis Crook called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

Discussion on order of agenda items.

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

Interview Planning Commission Applicants.

Dennis Crook reported they are looking to fill one opening now. There may be an additional Planning Commission opening soon. He also stated there is the possibility of creating an alternative position or positions.

Interview with Stephanie Saxton:

Ms. Saxton presented her background including her family, job experience, and volunteer work in the community. Ms. Saxton has lived in the Township for 14 years and has always been active in the Township as much as possible. She stated she'd like to get more involved in the Township going forward. She said she is interested in learning how the Township works. Her goal is to run for Township Supervisor in the next election. She thought serving on the Planning Commission was a great way to get a better understanding of how the Township works.

Questions:

1. John Nielsen asked Ms. Saxton if she thinks she will have enough time to devote to the Planning Commission meetings. Ms. Saxton stated she does have enough time. She also said she had given this a lot of thought.
2. John Schwab asked Ms. Saxton if she was currently on the HOA Board of her development. Ms. Saxton stated she was on the HOA Board but is no longer on that Board. She explained why she stopped serving on the HAO Board.
3. Dennis Crook discussed the Planning Commission members taking the Master Planner Courses and he asked Ms. Saxton if she would be willing to take those courses. Ms. Saxton stated she would be interested in taking those courses.

4. Stephanie Saxton asked if there is anything she should be reading to gain further knowledge to help her learn and keep up to date. Dennis Crook recommended she read the Comprehensive Plan, Municipalities Planning Code and eventually the Township Ordinances.

Interview with Michael Domboski:

Michael Domboski presented his background including his family, education, work experience, volunteer experience and recreation. Mr. Domboski stated he has lived in East Fallowfield Township for one year.

Questions:

1. Dennis Crook asked if Mr. Domboski would be able to attend Monday night Planning Commission meetings because he has another Monday night commitment. Mr. Domboski stated it won't be a problem and he'd be able to attend Planning Commission meetings.
2. John Schwab asked if Mr. Domboski ever had to go before township boards as part of his job as a superintendent of construction for Wawa. Mr. Domboski stated he was not required to go before township boards. However, he was required to work/communicate with township inspectors.
3. John Schwab asked Mr. Domboski if he ever had to go before any township planning commissions as part of his jobs. Mr. Domboski stated no. He stated he did develop plans and had to read township ordinances.
4. Joe Perzan asked Mr. Domboski if he would be able to attend the Master Planner courses. Mr. Domboski stated he can take those courses and they sound interesting.
5. John Schwab asked Mr. Domboski what brought him out to live in East Fallowfield Township. Mr. Domboski stated it was his house that drew him to the Township.
6. John Nielsen asked Mr. Domboski if he has been to a board meeting before. Mr. Domboski stated he hasn't been to a board meeting in a long time.

The Planning Commission discussed the two applicants and the Planning Commission Bylaws and attendance. John Schwab stated that with the resignation of George Sampson, the Planning Commission has one vacancy. One applicant could be appointed as a Planning commission member and one as an alternate member. Dennis Crook reported he has tried to contact Jim Weeks (current member) about his lack of attendance, numerous times by both phone and email. There was a discussion on how to handle the situation with the current member not attending meetings or responding to phone calls. They also discussed the two applicants. The members felt that both applicants were well qualified. Dennis Crook stated he will present the Planning Commission recommendations to the Board of Supervisors at their meeting tomorrow.

MOTION: John Schwab made a motion to recommend to the Board of Supervisors to appoint Stephanie Saxton to fulfill the one vacancy on the Planning Commission. Sue Monaghan seconded.

VOTE: 4-1 (Dennis Crook, John Schwab, John Nielsen and Sue Monaghan voted yea. Joe Perzan voted nae.)

MOTION: Joe Perzan made a motion to recommend to the Board of Supervisors to appoint Michael Domboski to fulfill the vacancy as an alternate on the Planning Commission. John Schwab seconded.

VOTE: 5-0

Discussion of Bylaws for Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission reviewed and discussed sample planning commission bylaws from other municipalities. They discussed the attendance section in the sample county bylaws. John Nielsen asked if a regular Planning Commission member is absent, will the alternate member fill in for the regular member. Dennis Crook discussed recent state legislation that stipulated the Planning Commission chair could put an alternate member up to vote at any meeting when there is an absence or recusal of a permanent member. If there is a full Board at a meeting, any alternates in attendance would not vote. John Schwab stated he felt that alternates were a good idea due to their recent problem with having quorum at meetings. There was a discussion about the options of having alternate members and how they would utilize alternate members in different scenarios. They also discussed what constitutes a quorum.

Sue Monaghan summarized each of the sample bylaws from other municipalities they were reviewing. After discussing, they decided the Pocopson Township Planning Commission Bylaws most closely represented what they were trying to accomplish by creating bylaws. They reviewed and commented on each section of the Pocopson Bylaws as follows:

Article I – Name of Commission.

They changed the name to East Fallowfield Township.

Article II – Authorization.

The Commission changed the Township name in the sample bylaws. There was a discussion on whether or not 1968 was the most recent Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. John Schwab stated the Act 247 1968 is still correct but it was supplemented and amended. They decided to use the phrase “as re-enacted and amended” to this section. They changed the last part of the last sentence from “as set forth in the Township Code, Chapter 152” to “as set forth in the Township Code, Chapter §1-201”.

Article III – Membership.

There was a discussion regarding how many members they wanted to include in the bylaws. They also talked about staggering terms and how they could do that since the Commission is already created. Joe Perzan spoke in favor of staggering terms to maintain balance. John Schwab stated that is very hard to do after the Commission has started up. The Commission took out the Pocopson section and added the East Bradford Township wording into the bylaws. They discussed whether or not to include the fourth paragraph of the East Bradford Bylaws and decided to leave that paragraph out. They also changed membership from 9 to 7 members. The membership term will be 4 years. They included a section from the MPC on alternate members as a fourth paragraph to this section. They took out the reference to reimbursements.

Powers and Duties of the Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission members discussed timeline for the bylaws and Planning Commission powers and duties. There was a discussion on whether to include powers and duties in the bylaws or as a stand-alone document. Dennis Crook said his top priority is the powers and duties of the Planning Commission. They decided the powers and duties should be added to the Township Code as opposed to being included in the bylaws. Dennis Crook stated he has reservations about Section 209.1 Powers and Duties of Planning Agency duty #4 – “prepare and present to the governing body of the municipality a building code and a

housing code and make recommendations concerning proposed amendments thereto". They had a lengthy discussion on the housing code and what specifically they thought they should be doing under that section. They questioned whether they should be determining if applications/plans are ADA compliant. There was a brief discussion on the Holland Daycare Center conditional use application and land development plan.

They discussed dilapidated housing in the Township and the old schoolhouse property on Strasburg Road. Sue Monaghan stated the Historical Commission is concerned about the current condition of the schoolhouse. The owner started renovations and can't complete the work. There is nothing in the Township Ordinances that requires the owner to put wood over the openings or do anything to stop further deterioration even though it is a historical property.

The Planning Commission needs an approved list of duties from the Board of Supervisors.

Article IV – Officers and Duties.

Section 4 – Township Administrative Secretary: Section 4 was the only section they made changes to. There was a discussion on the wording of this section and whether the Township Secretary is the Planning Commission Secretary. Dennis Crook stated Lisa Valaitis is the acting secretary but the position has changed over time. Joe Perzan suggested changing the wording from "Township Administrative Secretary" to "Township Administrative Staff". The Planning Commission agreed on this change in wording.

The Planning Commission discussed where to reference the Planning Commission powers and duties. They discussed referencing it in Article IV or adding an article to make the reference. They decided to reference the powers and duties of the Planning Commission Ordinance as the last sentence in Article II – Authorization.

Article V – Attendance Policy.

Section 1: There was a discussion about the content of the Pocopson Township Attendance Policy section. The only item they changed in the Attendance Policy section was the township name. There was a discussion about how many allowable missed regular meetings should be stipulated in the bylaws. Percentage of missed meetings versus number of meetings missed was debated. Section 1 under the Pocopson bylaws was replaced by 3 consecutive regularly monthly meetings and 5 monthly meetings as the maximum number of missed meetings allowed. In the Community Planning Addendum, page 70, all of example 2 will be included in the bylaws.

Section 2: This section gives the Chairman discretion regarding attendance levels. Section 2's wording was not changed.

Article VI – Meetings.

Section 1 – Meeting Date and Time: The Planning Commission edited the time of the meetings to be on the first Monday of the month. They changed the location of the meetings to the Township Building, 2264 Strasburg Road, East Fallowfield, PA 19320.

Section 2 – Quorum: They changed section 2 to be "a quorum shall consist of a simple majority of voting members". They felt this wording allowed for changes in number of members and made it clear how many members are needed to have a quorum.

Section 3 – Special Meetings: There was a discussion about what a special meeting is. Dennis Crook stated the Comprehensive Plan meeting at the South Brandywine Middle School was a Planning Commission special meeting. No changes were made to this section.

Section 4 – Advertisement of Meetings: No changes were made to this section.

Section 5 – Electronic Attendance: Joe Perzan posed the question if attending a meeting by telephone is allowed. They discussed adding a statement about attendance by phone being allowed. They discussed the wording for this section. The wording they chose was “members may participate and vote in all meetings electronically as approved by the chairman” and it will be titled Section 5.

Article VII – Order of Business.

There was a discussion among the members regarding order of the meeting agendas and order of business conducted at meetings. They selected the following order for their meetings:

1. Call to order item priorities and agenda order.
2. Approval of meeting minutes.
3. Specific projects.
4. Correspondence and announcements.
5. Old Business.
6. New Business.
7. Adjournment.

There was a discussion about public participation as well as limiting public participation to three minutes per person like the Board of Supervisors do at their meetings. Dennis Crook stated residents can request to speak at a Board of Supervisors meeting prior to the meeting. Residents can also speak at the end of the Board of Supervisors meetings without making a request prior to the meeting.

Article VIII – Amendments.

No changes were made to this section.

Adjournment.

MOTION: Sue Monaghan made a motion to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting at 9:07 pm. Joe Perzan seconded. VOTE: 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Valaitis
Township Secretary