

East Fallowfield Township
Planning Commission
February 2, 2015 Approved minutes
6:42 PM

Attendees:

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

Not Present:

Jim Weeks
Joe Perzan

Dennis Crook called the meeting to order at 6:42 pm.

Discussion: Dennis Crook discussed the order of agenda items for the meeting. The committee decided to discuss the agenda items in the order below.

Section 1300 of the Zoning Ordinance – rewrite or repeal: Dennis Crook reported on an email from Vince Pompo which advised to either get rid of certain wording in the Ordinance or repeal the Ordinance. Dennis Crook report that Mr. Pompo’s email stated that the two issues with the Ordinance are lack of a minimum lot size and ratio of residential to commercial – industrial in the non-residential district with the open space overlay. Mr. Pompo’s recommendation is that the article be amended to impose a minimum lot size. Regarding the ratio issue, his recommendation is to amend the ordinance to take away the open space overlay within the non-residential districts. These issues can be resolved in two ways. One way it to make these recommendations as part of the Comprehensive Plan update. The second way is to proceed with a separate zoning ordinance amendment now.

John Schwab said our course of action depends on whether the Planning Commission is comfortable that there is enough wording in the existing Open Space Design Ordinance that we would be comfortable to revise it rather than appeal it. There was a discussion about this being in the Comprehensive Plan. The consensus was not to wait and put it in the Comprehensive Plan. Immediate repeal and late amendment was discussed as an option. Timing of amending an ordinance was also discussed. Garth Monaghan said there are other zoning issues that can be addressed too. The Beagle Club being zoned as Mobile Home and fair share was discussed. Garth Monaghan stated that fair share is how many dwelling units you have. The Township made allowance for mobile home zoning and the owner chose to build single homes. In this case the Township has still met its fair share. There was a discussion about spacing between homes.

MOTION: John Schwab made a motion to request that the Supervisors repeal Section 1300 of the Zoning Ordinance Open Space Design Option with the understanding that upon repeal, the Planning Commission will take it upon itself to begin the work of revising the previous Ordinance and resubmitting a revised Open Space Design Ordinance for the Supervisors’ approval. Richard Agatone seconded.

VOTE: 5-0

There was a discussion about who to consult when revising the Open Space Design Ordinance. Dennis O'Neill from the Zoning Hearing Board and a representative from the Chester County Planning Commission were suggested. There was also a discussion about conflict of interest inherent in the process with planners all being active members of the Chester County Economic Development Council. The purpose of this group is to maximize work and job opportunities and housing within our Township and the County.

Dennis Crook commented on our Township map in the Landscapes2 document. Our Township was classified as suburban. Garth Monaghan said he doesn't like the idea of someone coming into the Township and potentially changing its character without the participation and willingness of the Township to change. They thought Ray Ott had seemed surprised that the Planning Commission primarily wanted the Township to stay the same. According to resident surveys, most of the residents want this too. A few residents did bring up wanting to be able to walk to work which is why Ray Ott has been bringing up the Village Commercial Zoning District. Dennis Crook commented on the importance of how you word questions on surveys and having the right questions to resolve the subject. Dennis Crook stated that Survey Monkey is a great way for us to get ongoing feedback from residents to find out exactly what they want.

Revenue / cost for services and benefits in East Fallowfield Township per household or individual:

Dennis Crook talked about helping the Township by creating a tax to bring more revenue into the Township. He also commented on enforcement of the zoning ordinances. Richard Agatone said the residents need to be educated on permit requirements because many residents don't know that permits are required for certain property work. John Schwab said that he thinks municipalities are not allowed to make a profit on code enforcement. Garth Monaghan said a municipality can make money on permit application fees. There was a discussion about resale inspections. John Schwab said if we want to pursue whether or not any money can be made through permit fees and fees for ordinance violations, we could have a representative from our current Code Officer's company to come in and do a presentation.

Dennis Crook talked about Earned Income as the revenue source for the Township. He said there are residents that do not have earned income and are therefore not contributing financially to the Township. There was a discussion about fire and ambulance services being provided by donation money.

They talked about a township manager being able to generate revenue for the Township through grants and other methods. He brought up the idea of having a college student come in to the Township as an intern and be trained to be a township manager. East Fallowfield Township has never had a township manager long enough to accomplish anything. They discussed the recent trend of the Township hiring part-timers. A township manager would be able to find new ways to generate revenue.

They discussed when the Township sent Tag Gathercole to a recycling course and he saved the Township \$100,000 with what he learned from the course. The money was saved by increasing recyclables and reducing trash.

There was a discussion about the General Fund and Capital Projects Fund. They talked about the Park & Recreation Fund and the "Fee in Lou of" of \$1,500 per lot that developers paid if they did not want to include open play space in their development. They also discussed the South Caln Road and West

Chester Road intersection agreement. John Schwab stated this is something else that a township manager could do.

Township Real Estate Tax: They discussed how to determine how much township services cost per household. They suggested taking the budget total and dividing it by the number of households in the Township. Trash fees would not be included because the Township doesn't keep the trash fees collected from residents. This calculation would provide a basis for determining a real estate tax. The police and road crew are the major costs. Mr. Monaghan said to get more revenue, we need to be looking bigger than getting more money from the residents. We need to be looking for State and County money. No one in the Township currently has the knowledge to do this.

John Schwab said he would love to see an analysis on how much a property tax would cost for a household. If there are 2,400 properties in the Township and each residence pays \$50 a year, it would generate revenue of \$110,000 a year. This would cover a township manager's salary. Dennis Crook stated that Ray Ott should have done this analysis. Dennis Crook suggested paying a township manager a base salary of \$50,000 and a percentage of money/revenue that they bring into the Township. A township manager with this salary structure would cost each of the 2,400 residences \$42 a year. This would make it easier on the Board of Supervisors. They discussed unionization and that management positions can't be in the union. They discussed the road crew's unionization and some of the costs associated with it.

Flow Chart in conjunction with Employee Handbook: Some of the Planning Commission members asked why they needed to discuss this because they felt it is the Board's responsibility to deal with the Employee Handbook. Dennis Crook explained how the Employee Handbook relates to the Flow Chart. Dennis Crook said that the Employee Handbook job descriptions could be used to identify on the flow chart who would get specific applications. There was a discussion regarding the building and zoning permit process and whether a shed requires a building permit and/or a zoning permit. A lot of residents may not know to get a permit for decks, sheds, etc. Dennis Crook stated this is going to be a problem with the new Stormwater Management Ordinance. Coordinating this would be a township manager's responsibility. The Board needs to decide if they want to take the approach of educating residents or enforcement of the Ordinance in regard to stormwater.

Township manager: The Planning Commission will recommend to the Board of Supervisors that the Township needs a manager. Having a township manager seems to address all the issues the Township is facing. The Planning Commission will make this a high priority when the Comprehensive Plan is complete. They discussed who a township manager reports to. A township manager is hired by and accountable to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Crook spoke about West Bradford Township's Board of Supervisor meetings and how they only take an hour. He also talked about West Bradford's Township Manager and how much he does. They discussed doing a survey of the residents regarding the township manager. They also discussed the Township website. Garth Monaghan stated the budget should be on the website for resident review. They talked about how great it is that one of the Board of Supervisors is out in the community and 80% of the residents know him and he knows the majority of residents as well. The Planning Commission will find out from other local municipalities how much their township managers are paid and how much grant money these managers brought in. The purpose is to determine the cost vs. benefit of having a township manager. There was a discussion about other municipalities

having a property maintenance code. Dennis Crook said Valley Township and Parkesburg have this code. Every rental in Parkesburg is required to have an annual inspection.

Dennis Crook stated that Eastco Enterprises will meet with the Planning Commission next month. They have delayed their conditional use application. They discussed the County's (Vermeil Tower) conditional use application and the Board of Supervisors meeting at which this was discussed. They also talked about the pipeline that is in the vicinity of the Vermeil Tower.

New Business:

1. Planning Commission set of procedures: John Schwab discussed a set of procedures for a Planning Commission that he found on West Chester's website. He said it would be very helpful for a new Planning Commission member. Mr. Schwab also stated that the set of procedures had a section regarding the Planning Commission's role in subdivision land and development as well as zoning code and amendments. He thought it would be very helpful for the Flowchart. John Schwab will talk to West Chester about using this document. The other Planning Commission members loved it!
2. Master Planner Courses: The Commission discussed the Master Planner courses.
3. Planning Commission Budget: Dennis Crook stated the Planning Commission has \$2,500 budgeted for 2015. They discussed the fact that they no longer have a designated secretary. The previous secretary was full-time and her job included being secretary of the Planning Commission. The new secretary is part-time and Planning Commission is not part of her job.
4. Office Internship - Dennis Crook spoke about considering having an intern come into the office a few times a month to do Planning Commission minutes.

Next Planning Commission Meeting – March 2, 2015. There may be a Comprehensive Plan meeting later in February. Dennis Crook will contact Ray Ott to confirm.

Adjournment:

MOTION: Dennis Crook made a motion to adjourn the February 2, 2015 Planning Commission meeting at 8:40 pm. John Schwab seconded. Vote: 5-0

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Valaitis
Township Secretary