

**East Fallowfield Township  
Planning Commission meeting  
Approved April 3, 2017 minutes  
6:35 pm**

**Attendees:**

Dennis Crook, Chairman  
John Schwab, Vice Chairman  
Sue Monaghan  
Joe Perzan  
Michael Domboski  
John Nielsen (by telephone)

**Not Present:**

Stephanie Saxton

Dennis Crook called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

**Discussion on order of agenda items.**

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.

**Congratulations and Welcome – Michael Domboski Appointed to Planning Commission Term 2016-2019.**

Michael Domboski was welcomed as a new member of the Planning Commission for the term 2016-2019.

**Bronson Sketch Plan (Harkins Farm Property).**

Ron Bronson and Sarah Bronson presented a sketch plan of their proposed subdivision of their property located at 1365 South Bailey Road (Harkins Farm property) to the Planning Commission. Sarah Bronson stated they have hired E.B. Walsh & Associates as their civil engineer. They did preliminary surveying around the seven homes along the frontage of South Bailey Road and South Caln Road. They are about to do the rest of the surveying and move forward with the subdivision. Their property is 29.38 acres, and they plan to do a subdivision of 10 acres to sell off and keep the 19.38 acres for themselves on which they will build a home. The civil engineer wanted to know how much topography would be required because there was topography done as part of the Harkins Farm Development application. They don't know where they will be building their home on the property nor do they know where a home will be built on the 10 acres they will be selling.

John Schwab asked about the driveway entrance on the 10 acres. He stated the right-of-way is really close to the existing houses. He asked if it's possible to move the driveway. Ron Bronson stated it is probably in the best location for line of sight. Moving it would create a line of sight problem. Dennis Crook stated the Harkins Farm developers went all the way through the application process but the final plan was never signed and recorded with the County. Mr. Crook stated he went to the County to verify this. The Planning Commission members looked at the previous subdivision plans and reviewed the topography. Dennis Crook stated the Bronson's need to use existing topography. John Schwab stated page 14 in the plans are called "Existing Features" and there is a grading and utility plan dated 2004. Mr. Crook stated the Bronson's civil engineer that could contact the engineer that did the 2004 survey as a starting point. Sarah Bronson asked if the driveway location needs to be pinned down for a subdivision application. Dennis Crook stated the driveway location does need to be determined for a subdivision application. Ron Bronson stated they have two potential driveway locations and asked if they could note both on the application. Dennis Crook recommended picking one location for the driveway.

John Schwab asked if they were planning to have well and on-lot septic for both sites. The Bronsons stated yes. John Schwab stated the original subdivision plan included a right-of-way on the property for a connecting trail link. Ron Bronson stated they would not be interested in that.

Sarah Bronson stated they applied for a variance because they put a shed on their property without a permit and it fell under accessory use in the Township Ordinance. A shed is considered to be an accessory use to a primary use such as a residence. She said the purpose of the shed is for temporary storage of their equipment until they build a home on the property. Dennis Crook explained the concept of accessory use. The existing tennis court on the property was an accessory to the existing farm house. Dennis Crook discussed options for the Bronsons to address their current issue with the shed on the property and no house which is a violation of the accessory use requirement.

The Planning Commission did not have any objections to the Bronson's sketch plan.

#### **Approval of May 2, 2016 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.**

**MOTION:** Dennis Crook made a motion to approve the May 2, 2016 Planning Commission meeting minutes as presented. John Schwab seconded.

**VOTE:** 3-0 (Sue Monaghan, Michael Domboski and John Nielsen abstained.)

#### **Approval of June 6, 2016 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.**

**MOTION:** Dennis Crook made a motion to approve the June 6, 2016 Planning Commission meeting minutes as presented. Joe Perzan seconded.

**VOTE:** 3-0 (Sue Monaghan, Mike Domboski and John Nielsen abstained.)

#### **Planning Commission 2016 Annual Report.**

The Planning Commission reviewed and discussed the draft of the 2016 Planning Commission Annual Report. Sue Monaghan stated it is a summary rather than a narrative and it looks good. Dennis Crook proposed adding the May 2, 2016 meeting summary on the report. There was a discussion about what to add to the annual report for the May meeting. The Planning Commission decided to add "reviewed the Holland conditional use application" for May. Under May, they also added "discussed the flow chart system for permits, zoning and development".

Sue Monaghan discussed monthly reports done by the Historical Commission. She suggested the Planning Commission should list the projects that are still open as of year-end as a "Note to Supervisors". Mr. Crook summarized a project some Planning Commission members worked on to construct a complete list of developments (with all alternative names) because there was no list of developments in the Township. The purpose of this project was to determine the deadlines for each development because the Extension Act was expiring. There was a discussion regarding putting a list back together of development deadlines. Dennis Crook also briefly discussed a problem with two different developments at the County with the name "Harkins Farm" and the confusion it causes.

Fieldstone, Field Crest, and Hope Farm developments were discussed. The Commission members had a conversation about the Fieldstone Development which is the development that is not complete. Dennis Crook stated the investors that purchased Fieldstone were recently at a Board of Supervisors meeting requesting to call the bond and saying they can't sell it. The investors are being represented by a prior Township Solicitor. Both the development and infrastructure are incomplete.

Sue Monaghan suggested including open items at the end of 2016 and two or three goals for the upcoming year on the Annual Report. There was a discussion about what items should be on the list of next year's goals. Joe Perzan suggested consistency of costs for accepting applications – conditional use, permits, subdivision and land development applications. They talked about how to address this. Dennis Crook stated they have tried to address this several different ways through the flow chart but haven't accomplished what they intended.

There was also a discussion about the Township Secretary date stamping applications that are received in the Township and who is determining the official start date of the application. Joe Perzan stated the Township Secretary should date stamp every document received. Dennis Crook questioned if that should also be considered the start date of an application. Joe Perzan stated determining the start date is the responsibility of someone other than the Township Secretary. Dennis Crook stated there is no one else to do this. Sue Monaghan said a township manager could determine start dates for applications. There was a brief discussion about the role of Homeowner's Associations (HOA's) in dealing with complaints.

#### **East Fallowfield Community Conversation.**

- **Park & Recreation.**
- **Historic.**
- **Public Health and Building Safety.**

Dennis Crook discussed holding a Community Conversation regarding property maintenance. There was a debate about the advantages and disadvantages of holding a community conversation about abandoned properties and buildings. Dennis Crook stated that it is difficult for the Township to address blighted properties. The Township does not have an ordinance in place to address some of the issues. They briefly discussed the old school house in the Township that is deteriorating. The safety and health of residents are at risk by not addressing some of these issues. Sue Monaghan proposed having an ordinance that required abandoned buildings be secured such as boarding up windows and broken doors. The code for historical homes to be maintained is more definitive than the maintenance code requirements for non-historical homes. The Zoning Officer does not currently have the tools to enforce property maintenance within the Township. The members looked at photographs of various abandoned buildings in the Township. Mr. Crook suggested getting example ordinances from other local municipalities. The Planning Commission determined they'd like to discuss this further and gather sample ordinances from other municipalities.

#### **Planning Commission Bylaws Amended by Board of Supervisors Then Accepted.**

Dennis Crook reported he presented the Planning Commission Bylaws to the Board of Supervisors at the last public meeting as a resolution and the following changes were recommended by Solicitor Crotty:

**Article III: Membership** - The requirement in the Bylaws stating "new members are required to take the Master Planner courses" should be changed from "required" to "preferred".

**Article V: Attendance Policy** - The attendance policy to address a certain number of absences from Planning Commission meetings. "The Chairman on his/her own authority, and/or a majority of the members present at any regular scheduled public meeting of the Planning Commission, may vote to notify any Planning Commission member who is absent...." Dennis Crook stated the Board thought this clause gave too much power to the Planning Commission Chairman. The clause was changed to "majority of the members present" and Chairman was removed from the sentence.

**Resignation of Jim Weeks** - There was a discussion about Jim Weeks, the Planning Commission member who has been unresponsive to phone calls and emails from both Dennis Crook and John Schwab regarding his lack of attendance at Planning Commission meetings.

**MOTION:** John Schwab made a motion that Jim Weeks failure to respond to efforts to communicate with him both written and verbally concerning his attendance or lack of attendance at the Planning Commission meetings has been deemed his intent to resign and as such the Supervisors have accepted his resignation. Sue Monaghan seconded.

**VOTE:** 5-0 (Michael Domboski abstained.)

**ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS** – This section was changed from “These Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the entire membership of the Planning Commission.” to “These Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the entire membership of the Township Board of Supervisors upon consultation of the Planning Commission.”

Dennis Crook stated the Municipalities Planning Code – Section 207 – states the Planning Commission has the right to make its own bylaws and the Board of Supervisors do not have to accept them. John Schwab stated the bylaws are useful for new members.

### **Procedural Protocol Manual.**

Dennis Crook stated the Procedural Protocol Manual covers some of the same material in the Planning Commission Bylaws and the Planning Commission Powers and Duties. Mr. Crook stated the Board of Supervisors did not wish to review this. He said the office is following the procedures in the document. Dennis Crook will review the manual with Rob McLarnon, the Building Code and Zoning Officer. There was a discussion about the office procedures for accepting permit applications, conditional use applications and subdivision and land development applications. Conditional use application procedures and Rob McLarnon’s role with the applications was also discussed. Dennis Crook said the Township needs a flow chart to designate the proper order and procedures for applications. The Planning Commission discussed the flow chart and Rob McLarnon being the appropriate person in the office to accept conditional use applications.

Sue Monaghan suggested the first item on the annual report should be the flow chart. John Nielsen asked what the role is of the Zoning Hearing Board. Dennis Crook stated they hold hearings for applications for special exceptions and variances. They are completely independent from the Board of Supervisors. John Nielsen discussed the possibility of the Zoning Hearing Board consulting with them on the flow chart.

Dennis Crook asked if the members felt they should run the procedures by the Board of Supervisors. John Schwab said it would be nice if the Board acknowledged it. He also said Rob McLarnon should review it.

### **Announcements.**

- **Longview/Fieldstone Village Request for Performance Bond to be called by Township** - Dennis Crook stated this was discussed earlier in the meeting.
- **Bawa Conditional Use Motion Passed 4-1** - The Board of Supervisors passed the Bawa M. Fellowship conditional use application with a vote of 4-1. Mr. Crook stated that Bawa M. Fellowship will come before the Planning Commission as part of their subdivision and land development application.

- **Bamboo Ordinance Passed** – Dennis Crook reported the Board of Supervisors passed the bamboo ordinance.

#### **New Business.**

- **Master Planner Course** – Dennis Crook announced he is going to try to schedule a Master Planner course series for Thursday nights. He will be proposing between now and June 8th. The series includes three nights.
- **Community Conversation** – The Planning Commission discussed doing a Community Conversation on topics addressed in the Comprehensive Plan surveys.
- **Township Manager** – There was a brief conversation about hiring a township manager.
- **Windshield Survey** – Sue Monaghan explained the Windshield Survey which is a list of historic properties in the Township that were questioned as to whether they had historic significance. It is basically a list of every property over 50 years old. Once the list was compiled, they categorized each property as a 1, 2 or 3. Sue Monaghan discussed the procedures for categorizing the properties. Joe Perzan asked if home owners were notified. Sue Monaghan stated everyone was notified. Sue Monaghan said the Township doesn't have a HARB which tells people what they can and can't do to their historic property. Homes on the Historical National Registry have restrictions. Ms. Monaghan also discussed Historical Commission procedures.

#### **Adjournment.**

**MOTION:** Sue Monaghan made a motion for the April 3, 2017 Planning Commission to adjourn at 9:05 pm. Joe Perzan seconded. **VOTE:** 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Valaitis  
Township Secretary