

East Fallowfield Township
Planning Commission meeting
Unapproved January 18, 2016 minutes
6:35 pm

Attendees:

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

Not Present:

Garth Monaghan
Joe Perzan
Jim Weeks

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 Planning Commission decided to proceed with the meeting in the order below.

Review Application for Alternate Planning Commission Substitute as per PA State New Mandate for Planning Commission Board. Applicant – Sharon Scott.

Dennis Crook stated at the January 4, 2016 Reorganization meeting, the Board of Supervisors informed him there was a Planning Commission application submitted on January 4, 2016 by Sharon Scott. John Schwab read the MPC section about Planning Commission alternates and stated that an alternate can participate in all discussions and be advised of all that is going on but is not entitled to vote or be reimbursed unless designated as a voting alternate. John Schwab posed the question as to whether Mrs. Scott would be designated as a voting or non-voting alternate if appointed. Dennis Crook stated Mrs. Scott is presently an Elected Auditor. Mr. Crook stated The Second Class Township Code, Section 404 states "No auditor shall at the same time hold any other elective or appointed Township Office or position or be an employee of the Township for which he has been elected or appointed." Jim Durborow said that since they weren't aware of this, the alternate positions should be advertised. There was a discussion about the Board of Supervisors Reorganization meeting. Mr. Crook stated the Board wished to appoint Mrs. Scott at the Reorganization meeting. There was also resident protest about Garth Monaghan's Planning Commission nomination because he is on several Township commissions. Dennis Crook reported the Board of Supervisors did reappoint both Jim Weeks and Garth Monaghan to the Planning Commission and therefore, the Commission is full.

There was a discussion about the process of advertising openings, interviewing applicants, and recommending an applicant's appointment to the Board of Supervisors. There was a discussion about whether or not they are permitted to vote on issues at workshops. They will do further research on this. They also discussed the Master Planner Courses and a recommendation that was made that similar townships partner together to share and exchange knowledge. They talked about the Comprehensive Plan recommendation that the Township needs a manager and reasons for that recommendation. Dennis Crook also briefly discussed exclusions, which are programs that help the elderly, or low income residents, with the municipal real estate tax.

The Planning Commission determined that an alternate is not necessary with seven members. If an alternate member is to be mandated, the Commission would like to advertise the position. As for the specific applicant, Sharon Scott, the Commission feels that she is disqualified under The Second Class Township Code, because she is an Elected Auditor. They also discussed past attendance records of the Commission. Dennis Crook will present these opinions to the Board at the next Board of Supervisor meeting.

Calendar of Events for 2016 – Schedule of Meetings.

Dennis Crook distributed the approved 2016 Calendar of Events, with the meeting schedule, to the Planning Commission members.

John Good Letter to East Fallowfield Township Board of Supervisors.

Dennis Crook discussed the wording of a recent letter regarding the Bawa M. Fellowship project from John Good to the Township Board of Supervisors. John Good is the legal counsel representing the Bawa Fellowship. Dennis Crook stated he didn't like the wording of the letter or the wording of the meeting minutes, that were presented at the last Board of Supervisors meeting, in which the letter was referenced. Dennis Crook stated John Good's office put a notice in the newspaper advertising there was a planning module available at the Township office for the public's review. There was no knowledge of the planning module at the Township or with the Township Solicitor. Therefore, the Township Solicitor called John Good's office because they can't put a public notice in the newspaper stating the notice was placed by the Township when it was not. There was a discussion about Dennis Crook being a member of Bawa M. Fellowship and a potential conflict of interest. Mr. Crook will recuse himself from any voting action that comes before the Planning Commission involving the Bawa M. Fellowship project. The Commission members talked about the subdivision and land development process. They discussed having the Township give developers two years to take action after the Permit Extension Act expires in July 2016. Some of these development applications are up to 15 years old. After two years, if the developer has not taken any action, the subdivision and land development application should start over because ordinances and regulations have changed since these developers submitted applications. They discussed writing a response letter to John Good. John Schwab suggested putting in the letter a sentence asking when Bawa plans to resubmit plans as per the agreed upon court order.

Comprehensive Plan Implementation of Recommendations.

1. **Township Manager** - They discussed the positive first step the Township took by implementing a tax. The Comprehensive Plan recommendation for a township manager was discussed. John Schwab suggested approaching it by gaining community support and presenting hard facts in support of the Township hiring a manager. Township finances and the reserve fund was discussed. Dennis Crook stated that there was not enough money in the reserve fund to cover the budget shortfall without implementing a real estate tax. They discussed the potential for a township manager to be able to get grant funding for the Township to repair Mortonville Road.
2. **Zoning Changes & Official Map** - John Schwab discussed making the recommended changes to the Future Land Use Map, and incorporating the recommended changes to the Zoning Map. This is a high priority recommendation in the Comprehensive Plan. Once that is done we can create the official map which is a high priority recommendation under Section E - Community Facilities and Services Plan in the Comprehensive Plan.

3. **Septic Systems & Wells** - John Schwab stated additional high priority recommendations that should be focused on are the septic systems and wells under Section E – Community Facilities and Services Plan. They discussed looking into mandatory testing of septic systems. The pros and cons of mandatory testing were talked about. John Schwab suggested starting by having it be mandatory and do a campaign promoting it. Dennis Crook stated this will eventually be required by the County as part of the Clean Water Act. John Schwab said he is in favor of public education on septic systems. The members talked about the status of the Act 537 Plan. Dennis Crook stated the biggest area of concern will be the triangle around South Brandywine Middle School and Triple Fresh. The problem with half acre lots that have cesspools was discussed.
4. **Access to Public Transportation** – The importance of the recommendation to improve access to public transportation was also discussed. The Planning Commission felt they could approach the County to help get this implemented. Current public transportation routes and the Rover buses were discussed.
5. **Future Action** – The Planning Commission members will look over the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Plan Recommendations and they will revisit this next month.

Report of East Fallowfield Board of Supervisors Reorganization Meeting.

The Planning Commission members discussed the Board of Supervisors Reorganization meeting held on January 4, 2016.

1. **Change of Township Solicitor** – The Board of Supervisors approved a change of solicitor at the Reorganization meeting.
2. **Planning Commission Board of Supervisor Liaison** – Carol Kulp was appointed the Board Liaison for the Planning Commission.
3. **Opening up the Budget Passed at December 30, 2015 Board of Supervisors Meeting** – Dennis Crook reported that Carol Kulp motioned to re-open the 2016 budget at the Reorganization meeting. The Board subsequently did not have enough votes to approve re-opening of the budget. Allowable changes to a re-opened budget was discussed.

Zoning Course – 2016 Master Planner Program.

Dennis Crook spoke about the 2016 Master Planner Program. He reported that he took two course series. Mr. Crook recommended this program to the Planning Commission members and stated the course tuition is reimbursable. The Commission members talked about the various Master Planner courses they took. They discussed the option of having the Master Planner program brought to the Township. Dennis Crook stated the courses would benefit the office staff and Supervisors as well. The courses would also aid in preparing the flow chart. They also discussed the zoning use chart in the Township Ordinances.

New Business.

1. **Planning Commission Workshops and Making Motions** – Dennis Crook said he is going to research if the Planning Commission is allowed to make motions and approve actions at workshop meetings.

2. **Planning Commission Responsibilities** – They Planning Commission will research sections in the Township Ordinances that might be different than what is in the MPC concerning the Planning Commission.

3. **Annual Report** – Dennis Crook stated the MPC references a Planning Commission annual report. He asked the other members if the Planning Commission did this report in past years. They said the Commission did not do an annual report in the past.

Adjournment.

MOTION: Dennis Crook made a motion to adjourn the January 18, 2016 Planning Commission meeting at 9:00 pm. John Schwab seconded. VOTE: 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Valaitis
Township Secretary