



Dickinson Township
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PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING March 13, 2013

PRESENT: DENNY STRAUB, KEN GIFFHORN, DAN WYRICK, LYNN HOOVER, PAUL STRIZZI, TOM SMITH - MEMBERS; Larry Barrick, Assistant Manager/Zoning & Codes Enforcement Officer; Jason Reichard, Engineer; Keith Brenneman, Solicitor; Denise Gembusia, Secretary/Treasurer.

VISITORS: Judy Brough, J.R. Barrett, Kathy Little, Troy Sieg, Leah Hoover, Al Starner.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Strizzi called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. December 12, 2012 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Tom Smith noted that Doug Brehm's last name was misspelled under Page 1, Review of Plans, Item #1. It contained the letter "a" which should be removed. Ken Giffhorn motioned to approve the December 12, 2012 Planning Commission meeting minutes as amended. Denny Straub seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

Chairman Strizzi noted that Earl Bock was appointed to a 4-year term on the Planning Commission by the Board of Supervisors at their January organization meeting. Additionally, he congratulated Tom Smith to his reappointment of another 4-year term resulting from the same meeting. Chairman Strizzi thanked Harry Roth for his attendance at the meeting and welcomed Supervisors Bob Wrightstone and Jonathan Reisinger.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was offered.

REVIEW OF PLANS

No plans were scheduled to be reviewed.

BUSINESS

1. Draft Zoning Ordinance discussion – resume discussions on Supervisors comments from 2012.

Chairman Strizzi provided a brief background regarding the creation and history of the draft Zoning Ordinance. The purpose of the meeting is to get a better understanding of the reasoning behind the language included in the draft Ordinance. The meeting is strictly educational in nature and not to be used as the forum to champion for or against the adoption of the Ordinance. A short discussion ensued regarding the best way to facilitate the meeting in a manner that would accomplish the meeting goals.

Supervisor Wrightstone asked Harry Roth to explain the rationale behind the inclusion of Article 4, Section 437 – Forestry Uses. Mr. Roth noted that the Municipal Planning Code (MPC) requires that forestry activities be permitted in all zoning districts (*See Section #603.F*). However, the township may regulate the permitting through their zoning ordinance. Since the State already regulates forestry activities, Supervisor Wrightstone said he felt the Township

should not impose additional regulations on the property owner. Mr. Roth stated that the Ordinance will only be applicable to commercial harvesting operations. This is an attempt to minimize possible adverse effects of commercial harvesters such as road deterioration, water contamination and soil erosion. Supervisor Reisinger suggested removing all parts of Section 437 – Forestry Uses, except Section 437.E – Responsibility for Road Maintenance and Repair; Road Bonding. After a short discussion about heritage trees, developer density bonuses, the definition of forestry and road maintenance, it was determined by Supervisors Wrightstone and Reisinger that the entire Forestry section was to be eliminated in its entirety. Any reference to Section 437 should be replaced with “Forestry uses applicable to all state and federal laws”.

Ken Giffhorn expressed concern over spot zoning and whether or not the Low-Density Residential (LDR) zone by Richland Road should be reconsidered as Agricultural. Mr. Roth agreed that the area could be considered agricultural.

Supervisor Reisinger wondered why the mixed use district at Alexander Spring Road wasn't classified as commercial. Mr. Roth said he followed the direction of the comprehensive plan when determining zoning. He said that the commercial zoning districts are shallow.

The sliding scale in conservation and agricultural districts was discussed in great length. A general consensus was given to remove the sliding scale from the draft ordinance. Mr. Roth explained that he was capable of doing so, but would end up with an entirely different document. Dan Wyrick asked and was told that an additional cost would be charged to follow the directive.

Judy Brough stated that the public hasn't been asked their opinion on the document. She felt that more public input should be heard before a determination on the authorization to spend more funds to modify the draft was made.

Kathy Little read a letter prepared by Betsy Smith regarding her concern over Section 315.E – Parking of Commercial Trucks. Mrs. Smith's letter addressed the need for her husband to park in the driveway while at home to sleep. He is an owner/operator and makes his living as a long-haul trucker. She asked Mr. Giffhorn to have concern over people who make their living by driving trucks. Mrs. Smith felt that this section of the ordinance restricted her husband's ability to feed his family.

After a brief conversation with all present, Supervisor Wrightstone determined that the direction of the zoning ordinance draft would be an open discussion item at the next Board of Supervisors meeting on Monday, March 18th.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT / ENGINEER'S REPORT / ZONING OFFICER'S REPORT

No reports were provided.

PARK & RECREATION LIAISON REPORT

No Park & Recreation liaison has been assigned.

SUPERVISOR LIAISON REPORT

No report was provided.

ADJOURNMENT

Denny Straub motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 pm. The motion to adjourn was seconded by Ken Giffhorn and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Denise Gembusia
Secretary/Treasurer

