



Dickinson Township
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**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
November 8, 2023**

PRESENT: ELIZABETH GRANT, JUSTIN SMITH, BETH KIKLA, KENWOOD GIFFHORN, MEMBERS; Glenn Kelso Jr, Zoning/Codes Officer; Brandon Brookens, Assistant Zoning/Codes Officer

ABSENT: Earl Bock, Nathan Merkel, Robert Line, Laci Hockenberry, Christian Miller, Jason Reichard

VISITORS:

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Vice Chairwoman Grant.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

OPENING ANNOUNCEMENTS: None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by Beth Kikla and seconded by Kenwood Giffhorn and unanimously passed to approve the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Kenwood Giffhorn noted that under the Park and Rec liaison report on the second line remove the repetitive word “with”. A motion was made by Kenwood Giffhorn and seconded by Justin Smith and unanimously passed by to approve the October 11, 2023 regular meeting minutes.

CHAIRPERSON’S COMMENTS: None

PUBLIC INPUT: None.

REVIEW OF PLANS:

NEW BUSINESS: None

ZONING OFFICER’S REPORT:

SOLICITOR’S REPORT: None

ENGINEER’S REPORT: None

PARK & REC LIAISON REPORT: Zoning & Codes Officer Kelso gave the Planning Commission an update on the completion of the paving of the Lindenwood Park trail. He explained that the public works crew is backing up the shoulders with topsoil and will be seeding to complete the first phase of the grant. The second phase of the grant will be to connect the parking lot to the pavilion at Stuart Park and a trail that is designed to mimic the mill race as it once was through the park.

SUPERVISOR LIAISON REPORT: None

OLD BUSINESS:

Park & Rec Fee Discussion & Direction – Subdivision & Land Development Park & Rec fees

Zoning/Codes Officer Kelso provided the Planning Commission with material on his findings from the questions the Planning commission had requested at last month's meeting. Assistant Zoning/Codes Officer Brookens reached out to some of the neighboring townships to discuss how they handled similar situations; his documentation was also provided. The Board opted to work through the questions and answers provided.

1. Is there any precedence to waive a fee for plans involving agricultural uses?

Zoning/Codes Officer Kelso explained that he reviewed old files and did not find any record indicating a precedence or a plan the size of the one submitted by Newswanger.

2. What is the policy regarding Subdivision and Land Development fees?

Zoning/Codes Officer Kelso stated that there is no policy outside of the SALDO and everything is referred back to the adopted fee schedule.

Beth Kikla questioned what the basis was for the dollar amount for the fees. Zoning/Codes Officer Kelso explained he was unsure what the basis for setting the formula was, as it has been in existence since 2004.

3. How do other Townships handle fees for the Ag plans?

The Planning Commission reviewed the fee schedules for South Middleton, North Middleton, West Pennsboro and Penn Townships. Beth Kikla stated that in her review of the fee schedules West Pennsboro was the only one that had some sort of requirement, noting that in their SALDO the Park & Rec fee was based upon assessed development that caused increases in the population.

4. How does the Ag plan compare to a non-Ag plan (Residential & Commercial)? Did they have to pay the fees in the past?

Beth Kikla mentioned that she can see the potential on the commercial that it will bring in jobs which could impact the use of our Parks whereas, something like Ag doesn't drive any additional jobs or have an increased impact on Park and Rec. Due to this point she believes the waiver request by Newswanger is a great example of why would want to grant a waiver. Beth Kikla noted the need for a basis on how to determine park and rec fees from a requirement point of view on what constitutes fee to mitigate impact on residential versus commercial.

5. Should the non-residential category be separated into two groups: Commercial and Agriculture? Should different calculations be considered for each category?

Justin Smith commended staff on the materials provided for the meeting. He expressed that he likes the idea of carving out something Ag specific that would be based on disturbed acreage. He suggested adding an Ag category to the SALDO fee schedule calculation that is disturbed acres X 5% X \$20,000 per acre.

There was a brief discussion on how to approach enacting a waiver policy, the documentation required and the potential pitfalls that should be considered. There was a question on the process of documenting the waiving of fees. Zoning/Codes Officer Kelso explained to the Planning Commission that all waivers are added to the plan, recorded in the minutes and an approval letter is provided.

6. Should the fees be calculated on the full acreage of the property, or the amount of land disturbed for the project? Could this be considered for Ag uses vs Commercial uses?

Vice Chairwoman Grant suggested looking at the MPC for guidance and commented that for Ag the acreage is not a fair basis for the calculation and should be calculated using total disturbed area.

Assistant Zoning/Codes Officer Brookens agreed that including only what is being changed or affected is a better route to go.

7. Does the cost per acre fee need reevaluated?

Zoning/Codes Officer Kelso explained the Townships fee schedule works out to \$1000 per acre. He noted that North Middleton is at \$1500 for non-residential per acre, South Middleton is at \$1000 per acre, West Pennsboro is at \$1500 Per acre and Penn Township is at \$1000 per acre, which aligns with our fee schedule.

Justin Smith explained that he is not in favor of changing the monetary calculation but looking to add a category C under section 10 to add Ag land use X 5% X \$20,000 and state disturbed acres. Would like to assess the fee based on that

additional category. Zoning/Codes Officer Kelso clarified by saying we would keep the non-residential fee as is but include a new line item for Ag using the calculation to include the verbiage “disturbed acreage”.

A motion was made by Justin Smith to recommend the alteration of the SALDO fee schedule by adding an Agricultural Use subcategory to Park and Rec fees which charges the disturbed acres X 5% X \$20,000. This motion was withdrawn after considerable discussion.

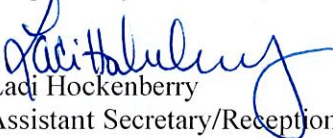
There was a brief deliberation on the verbiage and clarification on the motion was had.

A motion was made by Beth Kikla to recommend a change to the Township fee schedule by adding subsection C) Agricultural land development use at a rate of disturbed acres X 5% X \$20,000. Adding subsection D) Agricultural Subdivision at a rate of \$800 per lot. Justin Smith seconded the motion, and it passed by majority vote. Kenwood Giffhorn suggested tabling the vote based on all members not being present and therefore voted opposed.

ADJOURNMENT

Beth Kikla motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 PM. The motion was seconded by Justin Smith and passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,


Laci Hockenberry
Assistant Secretary/Receptionist

