

THE TOBYHANNA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
APRIL 6, 2017

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The March 2017 Regular Meeting of the Tobyhanna Township Planning Commission was held on April 6, 2017 at the Tobyhanna Township Government Center Building, 105 Government Center Way, Pocono Pines, Pennsylvania 18350.

Present were Board Members Mark Sincavage, Michelle Bisbing, Patricia M. Rinehimer and Brendon Carroll. Township Engineer Robert McHale, Solicitor Jonathan Reiss, Esquire and Zoning Officer Maureen Minnick.

1. Chairperson Mark Sincavage called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. It was determined that a quorum was present.
2. Public comment.  
None.
3. Anne Lamberton moved to approved the minutes of the March 2, 2017 meeting. Michelle Bisbing seconds. Vote: three in favor, one abstains for not being present at the March 6<sup>th</sup> meeting; motion carried, minutes approved.
4. **Old Business**

**A. Liberty Petroleum**

Joe Stichokis of Land Development Engineering presents progress on the Liberty Petroleum's request for approval. All 5 comments of the April 3 review letter of the revised plans were completed/addressed. Financial guarantee will be provided to the Board on the complete construction cost estimated is complete.

Mr. Reiss advised that he will need to know the form of financial security that the client intends to post and once that is done he will forward Mr. Stichokis the preapproved form of letter of credit or bond.

Anne Lamberton Made motion to recommend approval subject to satisfying conditions that are outstanding. Brendon Carroll seconded. Vote: All in favor; motion carried.

**B. Blakeslee Overlay**

Michelle Bisbing presents that the committee wanted to present to the Board some of the design concepts that they are working on.

Maureen Minnick notes that they want the Planning Commission to look at the zoning and SALDO parts of the concepts they've created. They have created two zones in the Blakeslee village overlay one is a condensed use with smaller buildings and the second zone is larger buildings. Ms. Minnick shows the Board a picture of the proposed zones.

The committee is scheduling a joint meeting for the end of April at the Blakeslee Community Center in public forum to show conceptual plans and answer questions.

Mr. Sincavage suggests the solicitor review the proposed ordinance and that if the Commission has any comments in the next two weeks notify Ms. Minnick to the solicitor who will have this ready at the next board meeting for review in final form.

**5. New Business**

- A. Proposed zoning and SALDO 3000 square foot exemption in design guidelines. Mr. Reiss requests an updated version of the guidelines. Ms. Minnick agrees to send to Mr. Reiss.

Anne Lamberton summarizes the proposed change as allowing folks to go from 200 square feet on a commercial building for an addition up to 3000 square feet, following all other design guidelines. Mr. Sincavage recommends removing "brick" from signage section.

Anne Lamberton make motion to recommend approval in zoning in SALDO 3000 feet exception in design guidelines ordinance after removing the word "brick" to the Board of Supervisors. Michelle Bisbing seconded. Vote: All in favor; motion carried.

- B. Proposed change to height regulation to increase from 29 feet to 38 feet in R1 and R2 zones. Mr. Reiss presents that this came about where an applicant was a R1 zoning district and the average height of the house was around 40 feet but the zoning district only allowed the height of 29 feet.

After appealing the decision made by the zoning board following the height restriction guidelines the Board of Supervisors were willing to settle it with the idea that they would change the R1 and R2 districts to 38 feet which is consistent with all of the other districts in the township. Zoning Hearing Board also agreed to sign off on the settlement. It is here before the Planning Commission for review and recommendation and is scheduled for public hearing at the May 8<sup>th</sup> Supervisors meeting.

Public comment by Mike Christian discusses considering that in R2 there are 15 foot setbacks and the possibility of having a row of bungalows at 29 feet then a looming residence with a height of 38 feet. If there were a higher setback or a minimum lot requirement might be more appropriate.

It was decided that more discussion is needed on the possibility of increasing setbacks or adding a minimum lot size to the ordinance.

Anne Lamberton makes motion to approve height ordinance to 38 feet. Failed to make a recommendation due to lack of second to motion.

- C. Ms. Minnick presents a proposed business registration ordinance that would require any new business that enters the township register with the township that that we would have all of the business' information on hand. There would be a \$25 registration fee required for new businesses.

Public comment suggests that this cannot be required. There should be a softer way to touch base possibly allowing businesses to register online and township would have information. Encourage business owners to register their business with the township to be part of township news and forums.

Brendon Carroll makes motion to deny recommendation of Business Registration Ordinance with \$25 registration fee. Anne Lamberton seconded. Vote: All in favor.

Mr. Sincavage added that the Board of Supervisors review comments and make changes as necessary.

- D. Proposed Sign Ordinance - Mike Christian, the chair of the sign committee presents that the Board of Supervisors had asked that the Sign Committee review the proposed changes to the sign ordinance.

The sign committee used the old versions of the draft ordinance as well as the MCPC model ordinance and the existing sign ordinance to put together the proposed sign ordinance given to the Commission tonight.

Highlights of what was changed included permitting digital billboards as well as digital onsite signs. Changes were made to the resort section, allowing signs at two entrances. Some dimensional changes were also made. Nonconforming signs that exist today will be allowed to remain. Removed inappropriate language based on Mr. Reiss' recommendations and put in a place hold for the exchange program as not enough time was allotted to review that program.

Ms. Minnick explains how the exchange program works; owners of regular billboards can exchange two regular billboard signs for one digital sign. Once a billboard leaves the residential area they are not allowed back in. Goal is to create a scenic bypass.

Discussion ensues regarding the issue of updating nonconforming signs and the restrictions that can and cannot be applied by the board.

Planning Commission decides that a special meeting is needed to discuss and consider further. Mr. Sincavage requests that Mr. Christian gives comments to Ms. Minnick to revise and have one updated version. Meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 17<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m.

6. Open Discussion  
None.

7. Public Comment  
None.

8. Meeting adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

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Minutes recorded by Debra S. Jean.