

AGENDA  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
Special Meeting  
August 1, 2018  
7:00 PM  
Blakeslee Community Center

1. Call Meeting to Order: Anne Lamberton - Chair

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. **Old Business:**

Discussion regarding Proposed Zoning Ordinance -Blakeslee Village District

4. **New Business:**

A. Consider Resolution 2018-024 for American Legion Post 413

5. Public Questions and Comment

6. Adjournment

THE TOBYHANNA TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
SPECIAL MEETING  
AUGUST 1, 2018

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A Special Meeting of the Tobyhanna Township Board of Supervisors was held on August 1, 2018, at the Blakeslee Community Center, located at 5669 Route 115, Blakeslee, PA 18610.

Present are Supervisors Anne Lamberton, John Holahan, III, Heidi A. Pickard, David Carbone, and Township Manager John Jablowski Jr. Brendon Carroll and Solicitor Jonathan J. Reiss, Esquire are not present.

1. Chair Anne Lamberton calls the meeting to order at 7:02PM. It is determined that a quorum is present.
2. The Pledge of Allegiance is recited.
3. Announcements
  - a. Anne Lamberton states National Night Out is August 7<sup>th</sup> at 6-8:30PM.
  - b. Anne Lamberton states Fall Cleanup is August 25<sup>th</sup> from 11AM-3PM, John Jablowski states dumpster space is limited.
4. Old Business – none.
5. New Business
  - a. Presentation by Ann Hutchinson of Natural Lands Trust. Anne Lamberton states Ann Hutchinson will present and questions will be answered after the presentation. Jack Varaly and Barbara Nichols are also present to answer questions.

Ann Hutchinson states she works for a nonprofit called Natural Lands Trust. It is a regional land conservancy that is 65 years old. They own and manage nature preserves in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. She has worked for the Monroe County Planning Commission (MCPC) since 2002, and much of that was regarding zoning regulations for residential neighborhoods. In 2015, the Board began this study with the purpose to develop and redevelop a functionally diverse but visually unified community. Tourism in this region brings over \$16 billion annually. They wanted to promote bicycle paths and walkways, and wanted to be economically and ecologically successful. The proposed zoning is in two districts, Blakeslee Village 1 (BV 1) and Blakeslee Village 2 (BV 2). Concerning the timeline of this study, it began in 2011 when the Board had community visioning with a consultant. Anne Lamberton states the township did a survey in Blakeslee. Barbara Nichols states there were 80 respondents and 120 participants that looked

at what the area needed. Ann Hutchinson states in May 2015, the Board authorized the zoning update. There was a community meeting in Blakeslee in June 2017, and then the Tobyhanna Township Planning Commission (TTPC) and MCPC recommended approval.

Ann Hutchinson states the new version of the document eliminated conditional “non-village” uses, like gaming, resorts, truck terminals, surface mining, adult entertainment, bulk fuel storage, and medical marijuana. If there is already a use here, that nonconformance will apply to the owner. Any redevelopment must conform to new standards. By-right means no special Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB) approval is required, and by-right uses in BV 1 allows buildings up to 15,000 sq. ft. for restaurants, service shops, other shops, churches, and apartment buildings if part of the first floor is retail. Large scale buildings up to 45,000 sq. ft., roughly the size of a local grocery store, and hotels up to 100,000 sq. ft. are allowed.

Ann Hutchinson states BV 2 by-right uses include single family dwellings (SFD), multi-family dwellings (MFD), and apartment buildings. Large scale buildings for BV 2 are defined as up to 80,000 sq. ft., and hotels can be 100,000 sq. ft. These large buildings are allowed by right, but will have other standards. Other examples of these buildings are retirement communities, nursing homes, and recreational facilities.

Ann Hutchinson states some key zoning standards are that parking be at the rear or side of buildings. Landscaping in parking lots will help with stormwater. Street trees, sidewalks, and pedestrian amenities will be present. Chestnuthill Township’s West End Medical Center is an example. Buildings with over 45,000 sq. ft. in BV 1 or 80,000 in BV 2 will provide 300 sq. ft. of greenspace and site amenities. Buildings over 50 ft. across will provide variance in their façade.

Ann Hutchinson states the rezoning process also explored the possibility of working with DEP on joint stormwater permitting. If these zones were entirely redeveloped with stormwater BMPs (best management practices), there would be a 45.8% decrease in total runoff, 50.1% decrease in solids (dirt), 39.4% decrease in phosphorous, and 42.6% decrease in nitrates. BMPs are not written into the zoning code, but are important because it reduces the impact on streams.

Ann Hutchinson states moving forward, the process is as follows: the township notifies property owners, posts properties subject to the zoning map change, holds a public hearing, and then the supervisors vote.

Anne Lamberton states this is a vision. With development coming into the area, the Board wanted to be proactive with a design. Zoning regulates uses and how land is developed.



- b. Public Questions. Sam Keiper asks if the Board would consider sending surveys with the legal notices. Anne Lamberton replies that is a great idea. Sam Keiper states this change will create a lot of nonconforming properties, and the Zoning Officer must notify and register those properties.

Sam Keiper states in article 2, the ordinance says only Blakeslee Village, but the Board is creating two districts—BV 1 and BV 2—which should be denoted. There is a subdivision that has small lots, and they will all be nonconforming.

Sam Keiper states in the list of allowances, “multi-family dwellings excluding apartment buildings” seems confusing. Ann Hutchinson replies that follows the wording in the existing ordinance. Sam Keiper replies it should be clarified.

Sam Keiper states in item K, the definition of apartment buildings conflicts with the definition in the zoning codes.

Sam Keiper states in article 5, page 7 regarding not counting private yards, the wording is confusing. Ann Hutchinson suggests removing the word “private.”

Sam Keiper states on page 8, item B will create a parking shortage. Ann Hutchinson states this is a very important detail. Current parking standards are very restrictive and require a lot of parking. There is a national problem where big box stores try to provide much more parking than they need. These large lots become undesirable gathering places, and nationally, there are gang problems on oversized parking lots. The intent of item B is to prevent that.

Sam Keiper states page 10, item 3 will create a parking shortage. Anne Lamberton states mixed use creates shared parking; the business has visitors during the day, and people are home by night. Sam Keiper states it is too restrictive.

Sam Keiper states on page 9, item 4 mandates that if someone has an entrance at the back of their store, they must have sidewalks at the back of the building. That will drive up costs.

Sam Keiper states in Attachment 13 concerning lots/yards, the allowed coverage would allow a building to be a maximum of 1,575 sq. ft. house, and that does not include a parking area. Ann Hutchinson replies yes, but that’s for one story; adding a basement or second floor would create a nice size house. Sam Keiper states in Attachment 13, permitted uses references 155.16.1.c, and there is no 155.16.1.c.

Sam Keiper states that Ann Hutchinson alluded to nursing homes, continuing care facilities, and medical buildings, but under the ordinance they are not allowed. Ann Hutchinson states they fall under professional offices. Sam Keiper states

municipal and government uses are not allowed. Ann Hutchinson states she did not envision a hospital in the center of Blakeslee, but her interpretation is that clinics are allowed. Barbara Nichols states this can be clarified.

Sam Keiper states on the map, Austin T. Blakeslee area is commercial in front. Barbara Nichols states she is working on changing that now.

Sam Keiper states the ordinance can't reference a commercial district if it's being eliminated. Ann Hutchinson replies the ordinance contains new standards for BV districts. Commercial districts will still exist elsewhere, so they can be referenced. Street standards are in the subdivision ordinance, and this follows the format of all other township's zoning districts.

Ann Hutchinson states impervious cover is correct. An SFD requires about a .25-acre lot, and the maximum impervious coverage is 45%, which is adequate for a paved driveway and one story of a house.

Sam Keiper states in the subdivision ordinance, the screen setback is 25 ft. or 15 ft., but if the contiguous parcel is Open Space, there must be a buffer strip of 25 ft., which clashes with some setbacks.

Anne Lamberton states that Sam Keiper's items are technical changes to the ordinance. She asks that he meet with Barbara Nichols to discuss further changes.

Heidi Pickard states for nonconforming uses, if a property is sold and there is no break in use, it can continue to be used. Joe Colyer states the process for creating nonconforming use should be streamlined.

Anne Lamberton states the Board will send out a survey with the zoning notices, and there will be a comment page for likes and dislikes.

Sam Keiper states the vision is nice but economically unfeasible. The stores are already empty, and there have not been any tax reductions. Richard Lloyd states he does not want affordable housing in Blakeslee because it brings crime. He never received the survey that was sent out.

Dena Hughes states she lives in Blakeslee and she participated in the survey. There should be housing that is not SFDs.

Melissa Stoffer states Jim Thorpe and Stroudsburg have big downtowns, and doesn't think people will come to Blakeslee for a downtown. She moved here because of the way it is now.

David Everett states he can't go three miles in the city without sitting in gridlock. He does not believe Natural Lands Trust was the correct agency for this study.



Parks should be expanded. Anne Lamberton states this is about creating a community; dental shops and services for the people would be provided here. Richard Lloyd states there are retirement apartments in Mount Pocono. Loraine Kosciusko states that assisted living facilities could work under the current zoning; updated zoning is unnecessary.

Bristol Qian states the Board must look at the entire region, and can't put this area into a regressive state. Youths want transportation. Blakeslee cannot stay the way it is, but the Board must find a balance that keeps young people here.

David Everett states he moved here to escape the city and get outdoors. This is a pass-through town with some conveniences; there is no infrastructure for promenade shops.

Ann Hutchinson states zoning does not create a market; it accommodates a new development pattern. As properties sell, how do you want them to be developed?

Greg Hamill states that people say there's no money in Blakeslee. He attended a job fair for American Tire. He was hired for \$58,000 a year, with two weeks of vacation and full benefits. The company will hire 100 people. Stop being so negative and think about the next generation.

Heidi Brennan states she is the youngest person in the room. She wants to move to the city, but does not want to raise kids there. Anne Lamberton states the township needs economic development to have amenities for children. Heidi Brennan asks who will pay for these changes. Anne Lamberton replies the developers will pay. Kalahari has brought a lot of people to this area, and they spend money outside of Kalahari.

David Carbone states he does not want developers to come in and build whatever they want. Anne Lamberton states she does not want tractor trailers driving through Blakeslee Corners.

Sam Keiper states the township should market its concept in a vacant place so existing properties are not affected. New development will raise property value, which will raise taxes, and people cannot afford that. John Jablowski says the township wants the right development in the right spot.

Ann Hutchinson states there is an open space district that frames the commercial corridor. The area allowed for commercial redevelopment is the same area currently zoned Commercial and Commercial Industrial. Green space will increase, because as developers come in, they must provide green areas. The average life span of a nonresidential development is seven years.

Jack Varaly states zoning is a complex issue, and everyone studies change with apprehension. An existing property's nonconformance is protected. This development will evolve over years.

Janet Scartelli states the township should start on the corner of Blakeslee; that plaza is an embarrassment. Dena Hughes replies that owner likes it as a loss. Anne Lamberton states the only way the township can get someone to make changes is to enforce zoning. The gentleman that owns that plaza does not want to talk to the township. Michelle Bisbing states if he sells his property, the township needs to be ready for new developers. Anne Lamberton states the discussion has been going on since 2008. The fear is that if the township doesn't do something, nothing will change.

Beth Booterbaugh asks what happens next. Anne Lamberton replies Sam Keiper will meet with Barbara Nichols and make the changes proposed tonight. The ordinance will go back to the MCPC and TTPC. After they recommend approval, the Board will hold a public hearing and vote on it.

Tim Stevens states he lives right behind the old Blakeslee Inn, and is concerned about parking in the rear. Anne Lamberton replies there are provisions for landscaping to prevent lights from being an issue. John Holahan states the Board must be aware of light, because people in Blakeslee should be able to see the stars.

Richard Lloyd states the Board is changing his neighborhood, when will the Board change theirs? Anne Lamberton states the changes will be similar to the proposed changes for Blakeslee. John Holahan states the Pocono Lake Hotel, commonly known as Gert's, is being redone.

Heidi Brennan asks where will there be woods. Ann Hutchinson states land zoned Commercial allows 85% impervious surface coverage. The commercial district is not wooded. John Jablowski states this zoning update will increase the amount of green areas.

Heidi Pickard states that John Jablowski and staff have talked to most of the major property owners, and they seem okay with this. Most people are very receptive to the changes.

6. John Holahan motions to adjourn, meeting adjourned at 8:36PM.
7. Meeting reopened by Anne Lamberton at 8:38PM.
8. New Business

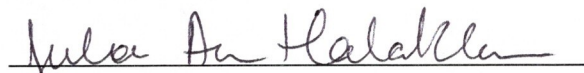
- a. Resolution 2018-024, American Legion Wilson Fischer Post 413. David Carbone motions to adopt Resolution 2018-024, Heidi Pickard seconds. Vote: motion passes.

9. Meeting adjourned at 8:39PM.

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Minutes recorded by Julia Heilakka

Respectfully submitted:

  
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Julia Heilakka, Township Secretary

