

MINUTES
EXETER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
FEBRUARY 16, 2015

The Regular Meeting of the Exeter Township Planning Commission was held on Monday, February 16, 2015 at the Township Hall, 4975 DeMoss Road, Berks County, Pennsylvania. Donald R. Wilson, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge to the Flag.

COMMISSION MEMBERS: Donald R. Wilson, Chairman
John W. Bittig, Vice Chairman
Gary L. Shane, Secretary
Glen Powell
Mehmet Arslan

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Joseph Rogosky, GVC Consulting Engineer
Linda Cusimano, Recording Secretary

ABSENT: Cheryl Franckowiak, Zoning Officer

1. MINUTES

MOTION BY Mr. Shane, seconded by Mr. Bittig to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2014 Planning Commission meeting. The motion carried with Mr. Wilson, Mr. Bittig, Mr. Shane, Mr. Powell voting in favor and Mr. Arslan abstaining.

2. AGENDA

MOTION BY Mr. Powell, seconded by Mr. Shane, to approve the agenda of the February 16, 2015 Planning Commission meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

3. PLANNING COMMISSION 2014 ANNUAL REPORT

MOTION BY Mr. Bittig, seconded by Mr. Powell to approve the Planning Commission 2014 annual report as submitted and present it to the Board of Supervisors. The motion carried with Mr. Wilson, Mr. Bittig, Mr. Shane, Mr. Powell voting in favor and Mr. Arslan abstaining.

4. INFORMAL DISCUSSION – ZONING MAP REVISIONS

Mr. Wilson stated that this was a result of the Steering Committees efforts; they met Saturday morning to get past the visioning stage to lay out some basic concepts. The Steering Committee was looking for comments from the Planning Commission on looking at the revised zones, and how the Planning Commission would envision changes to the Zoning Ordinance to match those changes.

Ms. VanderLaan presented the zoning map revisions being discussed by the Steering Committee.

- The zoning map currently has 14 colors/zones and they would like to reduce that amount.
- The Steering Committee focused on four items for the Township: Riverfront; Reading Country Club; Business Friendly; Mixed Use Town Center.
- The zoning ordinance is complicated, would like to make it easier to understand and as simple as possible.
- A more professional map would be done.
- The revised zoning map will possibly have five colors and also combine all residential zones with the exception of Rural District which would remain the same along with the Agricultural Preservation District.

- The Mixed Use Town Center District would be located through the center of the Township along SR0422 and the Steering Committee would like to combine the Highway Commercial and Shopping Center Commercial and where possible and plausible Neighborhood Commercial and Restricted Office Commercial. They would also like to expand MUTC on both sides of SR0422.
- For the purpose of discussion, they have eliminated General Industrial and Light Industrial and have made them into one.
- The area of Exeter Township that borders along Amity Township would be made into a new zone that mirrors what is currently zoned in Amity as PBOI/Planned Business Office Industrial District, but would be named something different in Exeter.
- Concerning the Riverfront District, there was a lot of discussion about the floodplain and this was taken into consideration.
- Instead of what can or cannot be done in a specific zone that needed to go before the Zoning Hearing Board for special exceptions they would prefer to change that to the extreme cases such as landfills, jails, or anything that would be a case of public health, safety, and welfare. Anything else would be a conditional use to go before the Board of Supervisors or a by-right use.

Mr. Powell asked what uses were allowed in the Riverfront District and stated he asked because he knew that there were some industrial uses in that zone. Ms. VanderLaan replied that they would be grandfathered in, but they were looking at mostly recreational uses. Mr. Wilson also responded they were looking at restaurants, boat access areas, and condos. Mr. Bittig asked about the consideration of the floodplain. Ms. VanderLaan responded that they weren't looking at development in the floodplain or floodway, but more looking at connecting the trails through that area. Ms. VanderLaan then asked the Planning Commission to look at what the difference was between the residential zones and would it be feasible to combine them into one zone. Mr. Bittig replied that he knew that mobile home parks are allowed in just one zone. Ms. VanderLaan replied that was why they needed help from the Planning Commission on the zoning map changes.

The consensus of the Planning Commission was that the Daniel Boone Homestead should not be included in the PBOI/Planned Business Office Industrial District. Mr. Arslan asked for an explanation of the difference between this district and the commercial area. Ms. VanderLaan stated that the PBOI would cover a larger mixed use than commercial zones. Mr. Rogosky explained it could be a mix of an office park, large scale industrial, small scale industrial, more flexible with a wider range of uses. Ms. VanderLaan explained that the idea of MUTC was to consolidate the commercial area along 422 and encourage mixed use where people could live above where their business is located. Mr. Bittig asked if the Steering Committee discussed running an access road through the lower area of the township that would allow commercial and industrial development on both sides as SR0422 was a disaster because of the jersey barriers. Ms. VanderLaan replied that they have discussed SR0422 and the township does not have the money to do that. Mr. Wilson stated that if the township felt strongly about that then they could put it on the official map. Ms. VanderLaan said that currently zoning states exactly what is and what is not allowed and we would like to get away from that.

- The Reading Country Club will be part of the Mixed Use Town Center District.
- A consultant would be brought in to write the language for the zoning ordinance and then it would be brought before the Planning Commission.
- The previous consultants were no longer contracted by the Township, although they could be brought back on a consultant type basis.
- It was suggested that the Agricultural Conservation Easements be added to the map.

Ms. VanderLaan stated that she would go back to the Steering Committee to let them know that the consensus of the Planning Commission was that the Daniel Boone Homestead should not be included in the PBOI; there were no comments about the Riverfront District other than not building in the Floodway. Ms. VanderLaan further stated that after the map was updated and cleaned up she would put it on the Planning Commission workspace for the members to review and asked any comments to be provided to her to pass along to the Steering Committee.

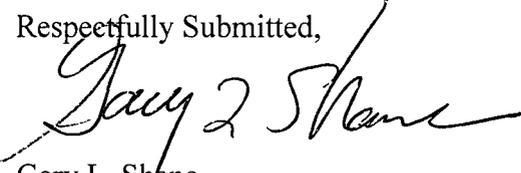
5. GENERAL DISCUSSION

Mr. Wilson welcomed the newest member of the Planning Commission, Mr. Mehmet Arslan. Mr. Wilson then introduced himself and gave a brief summary of his time on the Planning Commission, the Board of Supervisors and living in Exeter Township. Mr. Bittig, Mr. Shane, Mr. Powell also introduced themselves and gave brief summaries. Mr. Arslan responded in kind.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION BY Mr. Bittig, seconded by Mr. Powell, to adjourn the February 16, 2015 meeting of the Exeter Township Planning Commission at 8:45 pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary L. Shane". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "G".

Gary L. Shane,
Secretary
lrc