

MECHANICSBURG PLANNING COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES – APRIL 9, 2008

ATTENDANCE:

Planning Commission Members: Harry Baker, Kathy Bernd, Kirk Corliss, Tim DeWire, Chris Knarr and Ed LeClear

Absent: Daryl Ackerman

Borough Council: John McDermott arrived at 6:49 p.m. and Jay Stoner arrived at 7:09 p.m.

Borough Staff: Steve Barber – Borough Engineer, Cliff Ressler - Codes and Zoning Officer and Trish Hammaker – Codes and Zoning Secretary

Cumberland County Planning Commission: None

Applicants: None

Press: None

Others: Rick Castranio of Alpha Consulting Engineers, Alan Wirt and Don Farinelli

Work Session: April 22, 2008 @ 6:30 p.m.

Next Meeting: May 14, 2008 @ 6:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Chairman Corliss called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. Attendance was taken and a quorum was present.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

Chairman Corliss took the opportunity to thank Daryl Ackerman for his service as Planning Commission Secretary.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- 1. March 12, 2008 – Regular Meeting.** Bernd moved to approve the minutes as presented. LeClear seconded the motion which passed with all in favor. Baker abstained from the vote as he was absent from this meeting.
- 2. March 25, 2008 - Work Session.** LeClear moved to approve the minutes with all members reported present. Knarr seconded the motion which passed with all in favor.

CORRESPONDENCE/UPDATES:

- 1. E-Update – Pennsylvania Downtown Center.**
 - a. 02-29-08.** Included in member packets.
- 2. Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development – 2008 Governor’s Award for Local Government Excellence – Rejection Letter.** Chairman Corliss advised that the Borough did not receive this award. Vice Chair LeClear advised that it was awarded to the Lebanon Sewer Authority. He added that there were thirty-six applicants.
- 3. Tri-County Regional Planning Commission.**
 - a. Implementation Funding for Model Zoning Ordinance Memo.** Chairman Corliss advised that there was a copy of the model ordinance in the Borough Codes Office.
 - b. Implementation Funding for Model Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance Memo.** Chairman Corliss advised that a copy of this model ordinance was also available.
- 4. Joint Meeting – Shade Tree Commission and Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) - Minutes – Comprehensive Plan Implementation.** Chairman Corliss advised that this meeting was follow-up to the action plan and he credited Mr. LeClear for the great job he did overseeing the meeting. Mr. LeClear advised that the Shade Tree Commission, in conjunction with the EAC, is working on obtaining grant funding to aide in shade tree planting programs. They will meet again on May 20th.
- 5. Leadership Task Force --** Chairman Corliss advised that a meeting was held about two weeks ago with Manager Stough, Office Manager Boyer, Councilwoman Humes, the consultant and himself to discuss the establishment of a leadership task force of five people to oversee the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan action plan.

6. **TND – Silver Spring Township – Charter Homes.** Chairman Corliss advised that Mr. Knarr provided a website address regarding this local TND. Mr. Knarr suggested that the members drive out and take a look at it.
7. **Municipal Notification – Monroe Township – Trindle Station – Section 2 – Phase 2.** Chairman Corliss advised that this project was located behind the High School. He added that the Planning Commission was involved in the review for Phase 1 of this project.

PLANS:

There were no plans on the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Letter of Support – DCNR Grant – Parks and Recreation – Pool.** The members reviewed the draft letter and approved it to be forwarded to the Parks and Recreation Department to submit with the grant application.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Memorial Park Football Field – Field Turf – Alpha Consulting Engineers, Inc.** Rick Castranio of Alpha Consulting Engineers and Allen Wirt and Don Farenelli of the Wildcat Foundation were present. Mr. Castranio advised that he was in receipt of the Borough Engineer's comments dated 04/09/08.

Engineer Barber explained that the Planning Commission and Borough Council were concerned that in a heavy rain event; the detention basin will not hold the water and will overflow into the bleacher area. Mr. Castranio advised that he would show where the water would go in that type of event on the final plan to Council. Engineer Barber acknowledged that there is no where to go with the water and that Alpha is doing the best they can with what they have to work with. He added that no public facilities or residences will be affected.

Chairman Corliss asked how sinkhole concerns were being addressed. Engineer Barber explained that there will be a liner installed under the turf making it impermeable and the only place where a sinkhole can occur will be in the detention basin which is not an issue.

Mr. DeWire asked if the clean-outs will have caps. Mr. Castranio advised that they would.

DeWire moved to recommend that Council approve the plan noting the Borough Engineer's comments dated 04-09-08 and that the Planning Commission only reviewed the plan for stormwater. Mr. Baker seconded the motion which passed with all in favor.

2. **Zoning Ordinance Revisions.** Mr. Knarr advised that he and Mr. Ressler met with Carolyn Yagle of Environmental Planning and Design (EPD) and discussed administrative issues. Mr. Knarr added that the Planning Commission members should review the initial working draft between now and the Work Session and be prepared to discuss it. He added that EPD wanted the comments immediately after the work session.

Mr. Knarr added that he, Cliff and Carolyn discussed application procedures and the process. They decided that the HARB application should come first to streamline the process as this would cut out one step. He added that mixed use 1 and 2 should submit architectural renderings to HARB first and then to the Planning Commission as part of the Land Development submission.

Mr. Knarr stated that the Comprehensive Plan was designed to keep the building stock and give incentives to attract businesses.

Mr. Knarr advised that they discussed issues with lots containing duplexes, and the subdivision of those lots. He stated that currently the applicant would have to obtain a variance, and changing this would give the opportunity for lots created before a certain date to be allowed to subdivided without a variance.

Mr. Knarr advised that the following issues were also discussed:

1. Commercial daycare would be permitted by right in the mixed use and commercial general zoning districts.
2. Massage therapy would be a permitted use, but they would need to be properly licensed.
3. Boarding and rooming houses would be by conditional use in the mixed use district.
4. Allowing flexibility for owner occupancy of the first floor occupancy in the mixed use district.
5. Music related uses to be created.
6. Requiring the submission of architectural renderings for proposed in-fill after demolition in the mixed use district.

Chairman Corliss asked about setting a decibel level with respect to noise. Mr. Ressler stated that this would not be enforceable without the proper equipment to measure the decibels, and that the cost of the equipment and its upkeep would be very expensive. Engineer Barber stated the issue had been discussed by Council and was not passed due to the high expenditure. Chairman Corliss stated that perhaps the ordinance could address only decibels at the property lines in the Manufacturing and Commercial-General Districts, and the owner would have to prove compliance with sound metering instruments. The item was left open for further discussion at a later meeting.

Mr. Knarr requested that Mr. Ressler review that performance standards and prepare comments for EPD. Mr. Ressler will do so.

Chairman Corliss asked what would happen in the case where architectural renderings are provided for proposed in-fill construction and are disliked. Mr. Knarr advised that this procedure would be in place to protect the residential neighborhoods. Mr. Corliss asked if this was covered in the draft. Mr. Knarr advised that it is addressed in Article IV.

Mr. LeClear commented that the members should remember that when there is ambiguity in the Ordinance, it always goes in the favor of the applicant, so the requirements should be precise.

Mr. Barber advised that the process requiring the applicant go before the HARB first should take into consideration that if the plan would be denied at the Planning Commission level that there would be applicant expended additional funds that may not have been necessary. Mr. LeClear advised that no matter what the process is, this could happen. He suggested that a pre-development conference be held to avoid unnecessary expenses. Mr. LeClear stated that contingent approvals may be the solution.

Mr. Knarr advised that EPD would develop three to four "paths" so that the Planning Commission can make an educated decision as to what order the process should go in with respect to in-fill, re-use, redevelopment and demolition.

Mr. Knarr advised that he needed to review the contract with EPD to see if changes to the sign regulations were included. He advised that he does not believe that they are as this topic is highly controversial. He added that contracting for this service could cost up to \$30,000.00.

Chairman Corliss asked which sections were most important for the review process. Mr. Knarr advised that if members do not have time to review the entire document, they should focus on the district regulations and conditional uses which would be Articles IV and VII. He added that the Borough Solicitor should review Articles I and III. Mr. LeClear suggested that a punch list be created for Borough Council so that input can be obtained before the final document is forwarded to them.

Mr. Knarr advised that the map was provided by the County GIS office and that it needed to be tweaked.

Chairman Corliss reminded the members that the April Work Session would be held in the second floor conference room due to elections.

3. **Hess Farm – Traffic Circle – Allendale Road.** Engineer Barber advised that he forwarded Jason of McCarthy Engineering the consensus of the Planning Commission that the traffic circle was acceptable to them

ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

Mr. Knarr advised that there will be a seminar on 05/02/08 for the Pa Chesapeake Bay Strategy and it will be held in Wildwood. He added that another seminar regarding in-fill development will be held at the 4-point Sheraton in Harrisburg on 05/08/08. Mr. Knarr can provide brochures for anyone interested in attending.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:58p.m., Bernd moved, DeWire seconded, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.