

WESTTOWN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Stokes Assembly Hall
1039 Wilmington Pike, Westtown Township
Wednesday December 5, 2018 – 7:30PM

Present

Commissioners – Planning Commission (PC) members Elaine Adler and Jim Lees were not present, all others including new member Kevin Flynn attended (5-2). Also present were Township Planning Director William Ethridge, and Township Solicitor Tony Verwey.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Pomerantz called the meeting to order at 7:30pm, Kevin Flynn led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Adoption of Agenda (JE/RH) 5-0

No changes made

Approval of Minutes

None

Announcements

- Mr. Embick made a motion to request that the PC and Comprehensive Plan Task Force (CPTF) receive copies of the draft Comprehensive Plan Update from the Board of Supervisors before it is released to the public, as a courtesy. (JE/RH) 5-0
- Mr. Pomerantz noted that some members should have received an email from the Brandywine Conservancy inviting them to attend a reception on 12/13.

Public Comment – Non-agenda items

None

Old Business

Sign Code Update - Tony Verwey , Esq. – Mr. Verwey provided an update on the status of the Sign Code draft language. Mr. Embick asked for a definition clarification in 170-1218 for “primary school” to mean “principal” use on the property. Regarding unsafe signs, PC members asked if 5 days was too long for the Zoning Officer to be given to address the situation with the sign owner. Mr. Ethridge explained that if there is an imminent danger to the public he can demand that the sign owner address the danger immediately. PC members agreed that the Zoning Officer should have the authority to require a sign be made safe immediately if there is a danger to the public.

Mr. Pomerantz asked for consistency in the application of liens against property owners if the Township takes action to secure a dangerous sign. He suggested the language say “shall” in all sections and not “may”. All members agreed.

Mr. Verwey informed members he would prepare a clean copy for their vote and recommendation to the Board at their January 9, 2019 meeting.

Mr. Hatton and Mr. Embick discussed several methods to advertise to residents and the business community that the sign code is going to be updated including the Gazette, listserv, website, and

perhaps a note in the next utility bill. Mr. Verwey suggested the County Chamber of Commerce would be interested as well.

PC members then briefly discussed political signs, which are still up in many places several weeks after the last election. Mr. Ethridge explained that, previously, he and Mila Robinson have driven the main roads in the Township to collect those signs from locations where they are not permitted. PC members discussed the ordinance in the City of Philadelphia that allows the city to fine campaigns for not removing their political signs, and the applicability of adopting a similar ordinance in Westtown.

Mr. Pomerantz asked Mr. Ethridge to discuss with Mr. Pingar bringing one or more interns on for duties like this. Mr. Ethridge replied that he would do so.

Mr. Verwey then discussed the latest changes to the bi-directional antenna language that the Township was considering to adopt as an appendix to its existing construction code. He noted that the appeals process has been modified to reflect the PC's desires. There is now language that directs appeals to the West Chester Area Council of Governments (WCACOG) UCC Board of Appeals which functions similar to a zoning hearing board.

PC members voiced their satisfaction with the language and asked for a clean copy to vote on at their next meeting in January 2019. Mr. Pomerantz asked Mr. Ethridge to make sure a copy goes to the WEGO PD and local fire departments for their comments.

PC members thanked Mr. Verwey for his attendance.

New Business

None

Public Comments

None

Reports

Board of Supervisors public meeting 11/19/18 – Jack Embick

Adjournment (JE/RH) 5-0

Meeting was adjourned at 9:35 pm

Next PC meeting – January 9, 2019, 7:30 pm – Township Building

PC Representative at next Board meeting: December 17, 2018 – Jack Embick

Respectfully submitted,
William Ethridge, Planning Commission Secretary