

The regular meeting of the Middle Smithfield Township Planning commission was held on Thursday, January 16, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. at the Schoonover Municipal Building.

Members present: Mark Oney, Bob Early, Parin Shah, Wayne Bolt, Dr. William Suriano and Patricia J. Griffin. (Carrie Wetherbee was absent)

Also in attendance: Planning Commission Solicitor Todd Weitzmann, Township Engineer Fred Courtright, P.E., Township Secretary Michele L. Clewell and Township Supervisor Annette Atkinson.

Mark Oney officially welcomed the newest members of the planning commission.

2014 Organization

The Planning commission conducted its organization for the year by electing the following officers.

Chairman – Mark Oney upon a motion of Wayne Bolt, seconded by Bob Early. Motion passed 6-0.

Vice Chairman – Bob Early upon a motion of Mark Oney, seconded by Wayne Bolt. Motion passed 6-0.

Secretary – Parin Shah upon a motion of Wayne Bolt, seconded by Mark Oney. Motion passed 6-0.

Approval of Minutes

Wayne Bolt made a motion to approve the December 19, 2013 minutes. Parin Shah seconded the motion. Motion passed 5 in favor and 1 abstention from Bill Suriano as he was not a member of the commission at the time.

Plan Submittals

None

Plan Reviews and Unfinished Business

Brian Craig-Wankiri Minor Subdivision Plan – A letter was received from Frank J. Smith, Jr. P.L.S. on behalf of the applicant, requesting action on the plan be tabled. Wayne Bolt made a motion to table the plan. Mark Oney seconded the motion. Bill Suriano asked what the purpose of the subdivision is. Following a brief discussion, the motion passed 6-0 to accept the letter to table action.

Reviews and Recommendations

None

New Business

Zoning Discussion Guide – Annette Atkinson stated that the guide was sent to the commission members for their review and to provide comments. The Board of Supervisors has a meeting next week with the consultant. If the members have any changes to forward the changes in order for them to be incorporated into the guide and the changed document will then be resent to each member for an additional review. Ms. Atkinson stated that the work session is open to the public but the supervisors have not reviewed the document with the consultant yet.

Parin Shah discussed the sign portion of the guide.

Wayne Bolt asked Annette Atkinson about a firearms ordinance. Ms. Atkinson stated that at one point the supervisors were thinking of doing an ordinance for the entire township, but the rules covering firearms are in numerous locations within the laws. There was discussion to have the constables enforce the laws, however, upon further review; it would be up to the zoning department to enforce a zoning ordinance and right now it would be better to educate the public first before legislating everyone.

Mark Oney stated that he agrees with the Conservation Development option, if land is to be developed. Option allows development on the tract with a percentage of the tract permanently preserved. As it is critical to make sure that the open space serves a valuable public purpose, and is not just leftover fragments of land that serves little purpose.

Pat Griffin stated that the guide states that HOA are to maintain stormwater, but that can be a problem too and this should be changed.

Bob Early questioned the reference on page 8 of the discussion guide with regard to the Water Gap Preserve PRD. Ms. Atkinson stated that they can no longer develop this property. Fred Courtright stated that the land was sold to a conservation fund and the approvals went back to one single parcel.

Adjournment

Parin Shah made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:29 p.m. Wayne Bolt seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Michele L. Clewell,
Township Secretary

