

## FERGUSON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Regular Meeting  
Monday, October 26, 2015  
6:00 pm

### I. ATTENDANCE

The Planning Commission held its second regular meeting of the month on Monday, October 26, 2015 at the Ferguson Township Municipal Building. In attendance were:

**Commission:** Marc McMaster, Chairman  
Scott Harkcom  
Kurt Homan  
Richard Killian  
Lisa Strickland

**Staff:** Ray Stolinis, Director of Planning and Zoning  
Lindsay Schoch, Community Planner

Others in attendance included: Heather Bird, Recording Secretary;

### I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. McMaster called the Monday, October 26, 2015 Planning Commission meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

### II. CITIZENS INPUT

### III. DRAFT WEED & GRASS ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

Mr. Stolinis stated that on October 7, 2015 Township staff met with Darlene Chivers and Doug Ford to discuss changes and language on the draft weed and grass ordinance. Mr. Ford brought some examples of natural landscape regulations for the Township to consider. Township staff is incorporating these regulations and comments into the ordinance amendment.

Mr. Homan commented about residents who would plant these types of gardens to avoid mowing and maintaining their yard. Mr. Stolinis stated that several examples were very well kept landscapes.

Staff will continue to work on the draft ordinance.

### IV. CENTRE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY REGIONAL PLANNING PROJECT PRIORITIES

Mr. Stolinis stated that the memorandum provided to the Commission included fourteen draft priorities, seven of which the Township provided. A joint meeting with Centre Region Planning Agency and Transportation and Land Use Committee will meet on October 29, 2015 to discuss these projects further and prioritize the list.

Mr. McMaster stated that he supported the Township's comments on the regional student housing marketing analysis.

Mr. McMaster commented on the area under the sustainability of agriculture where it states viable agriculture can exist in lots less than 50 acres and that Ferguson Township can be modeled for this. If our regulation is 50 acres why would we be modeled for lots less than 50 acres? He agrees that viable agricultural can occur under 50 acres but that is not the current regulations in Ferguson Township. Mr. Harkcom stated that he understood this to be if a change was made in Ferguson Township's current zoning ordinance than the Township could serve as a model. Ms. Strickland stated that she was not sure this should be a regional priority, this should be handled within Ferguson and maybe Halfmoon Township but not be a regional priority.

Mr. McMaster stated that he supported the Township comment on inventory of vacant non-residential buildings and undeveloped parties. He stated CBICC and others already handle this and it seems like a repetition of work.

Ms. Strickland commented about the affordable housing clearing house. She stated this seems to be out of the scope of CRPA. There are already several non-profits in the area that are and could be handling this such as the Centre County Housing Authority. Mr. McMaster stated that he agrees but it seems that the lists are not properly managed. Ms. Strickland stated this should be handled as a social service project and not as a regional planning project.

Ms. Strickland asked if there was anything specific in this area that would relate to the neighborhood improvement districts about declining neighborhoods.

Ms. Strickland stated that the inventory of vacant non-residential buildings and undeveloped properties comes up a lot at CRPC on development potentials for these areas. She stated this does not make sense to keep an inventory of these because this would use a lot of staff time and the properties changes so often. She stated that unless this objective includes trying to get rid of vacant land this list would not be necessary. Mr. Stolinis stated that there does need to be a better inventory of available lots for larger scale development that can come into the community. Ms. Schoch stated that this is a way to work toward bringing in large industry to this area. Mr. McMaster stated that CBICC is supposed to be working on this and drawing in outside companies to the area. There should only be one entity to do this.

## **V. CENTRE REGION BICYCLE PLAN**

Mr. Stolinis stated staff met with Trish Meek on the proposed Centre Region Bike Plan. The plan scope was to identify gaps in the regional bike network, make bicycles a more viable form of transportation and increase recognition for bicycles as a form of transportation. The benefits of cycling are outlined in the plan. The categories of bicyclists are strong and fearless, confident, interested but concerned and no way no how. Many individuals are afraid to be on the roadway, 56% of those participants with survey would like to have more off road paths. In Ferguson Township 15.5 miles of future bikeway are proposed. The plan is anticipated to be adopted by December.

Ms. Strickland asked if the proposed bike corridors will see a physical change or will those only include a change in the designation. She would like to see the bike corridor extended further on Route 45 to Fairbrook Park and the school

Ms. Schoch stated that the proposed bike locations will be placed on the Township Official Map once the bike plan is adopted.

Mr. Homan asked if future construction on roadways will require that it include the provisions for the proposed future bike lanes and corridors.

Mr. Homan asked why Whitehall Road from College Avenue to Tadpole Road is not listed as a future bike corridor.

Mr. Killian made a motion to RECOMMEND APPROVAL of the Centre Region Bicycle Plan to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Harkcom seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **I. PLANNING DIRECTOR REPORT**

Mr. Stolinis stated The Cottages at State College submitted their subdivision and lot consolidation plans. The review comments for The Cottages PRD plan are due back to the Township tomorrow. Mr. Stolinis and the Township Assistant Manager attended a Centre County Housing and Land Trust meeting for the affordable housing proposed ordinance and memorandum of understanding. He developed a draft executive summary on the West End of College Avenue and is awaiting technical information on the urban village located in the Borough to be included in the summary. The Pennsylvania House Bill 33, which allows for alternates on the Planning Commission, has been approved. The Board will consider adding alternates at their next meeting. Staff has had meeting with developers regarding the Pine Hall Traditional Town Development and the commercial development of this plan. It is anticipated that the ReFarm Cafe will be submitting a land development plan shortly.

## **II. ACTIVE PLANS IN THE TOWNSHIP**

Ms. Schoch reviewed the Township's current active plans which include the Bowman subdivision, Kline-Muth subdivision and lot consolidation, The Cottages, Whitehall Road Regional Park, Young Scholars and the Ferguson Township Fire Safety Storage facility.

**III. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 28, 2015 MEETING MINUTES**

Mr. Harkcom made a motion to APPROVE the Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes from September 28, 2015. Mr. Killian seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**IV. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Killian made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Strickland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

With no further business, the October 26, 2015 regular Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Scott Harkcom", written over a horizontal line.

Scott Harkcom, Secretary  
For the Planning Commission