

FERGUSON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Monday, OCTOBER 28 2019
6:00 PM

ATTENDANCE

The Planning Commission held its second meeting of the month on Monday, October 28, 2019 at the Ferguson Township Municipal Building. In attendance were:

Commission:

Bill Keough, Chair-person
Ralph Wheland
Erik Scott
Jeremie Thompson
Jerry Binney
Shannon Holliday
Rob Crassweller, Secretary
Dr. Ellen Taricani-Alternate

Staff:

Jenna Wargo, Planning & Zoning Director
Jeff Ressler, Zoning Administrator-Absent
Kristina Aneckstein, Community Planner

Others in attendance were: Summer Krape, Recording Secretary; Laura Dinnini, Ferguson Township Resident; Armen Sahakian, Ferguson Township Resident; Pam Salokangas, Parks and Recreation Director; Jim May, Parks and Recreation; Brian Stouffer, Stahl Sheaffer Engineering; Matthew Powers, Penn State Student; Richard Pish, Penn State Student; Natalie Bird, Penn State Student; Emma Werr, Penn State Student; Brendan Clarke, Penn State Student; Owen Keusch, Penn State Student; John Kosko, Penn State Student; Kyle Bolland, Penn State Student; Jim Carpenter, Parks and Recreation; Jim May; Director of Centre Regional Planning Agency.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Keough called the Planning Commission meeting to order on Monday, October 28, 2019 at 6:03 pm.

II. CITIZEN INPUT

III. DRAFT PINE GROVE MILLS SMALL AREA PLAN

Mr. Jim May, director the Centre Regional Planning Agency stated that since May of 2018 the agency has been helping the citizens of Pine Grove Mills develop a small area plan. He gave the Commission an over view of the small area plan. The group developed seven themes to organize themselves. The first is continuing to strengthen PGM as a place that engages community. PGM holds community events, such as a farmer's market, they have an active lions club, and multiple active churches. They thought about how to strengthen that with possible partnerships, better advertising, and the use of social media. Second was improving safety for multiple modes of transportations and overall making the village safer for businesses, schools, visitors/residents walking, and cyclists. There has been a number of implementation plans that address these issues. The third theme is PGM is a vibrant community. A lot of people see some local business potential in the village, PGM is also a gateway to Rothrock State Forest and could connect into a broader tourism spectrum.

The fourth them is embracing diversity of neighborhoods. There is a huge diversity in the difference of homes in PGM and they thought about ways to integrate the neighborhoods through pedestrian connections and schools. The firth theme is PGM History and Heritage.

PGM history is well documented, they are looking for ways to continue to keep this history alive through possible museums. The sixth theme is recreation, Rothrock State Forest is close to PGM. The group would like to strengthen the connection to Rothrock, improve park access to the trailheads, signage, and bicycle connection to PGM, Scotia, Musser Gap, and State College. The seventh and final theme is a community that values environmental stewardship. The group would like to increase awareness of natural resources and reduce community wide impacts.

Mr. May explained that the group gathered all information through community participation. A couple events were held and a public survey was sent to residents. Monthly meetings have been held for the last 18 months along with alignment meetings with the community. Mr. May stated that the implementation strategy is to organize the PGM community, build community support by implementing attainable actions first. Active and regular meeting engagement with the Township Board of Supervisors, Commissions, and staff, and build partnerships and alliances to implement larger projects. The next steps will be to have the Commission recommend approval and have the small area plan go to the BOS on November 4th and have the Board to take action on it. Mr. May stated that a PennDOT grant application will also be submitted that will build some pedestrian improvements. Mr. May stated that it was a pleasure to work with the residents of PGM.

Mr. Crassweller stated that the Township does have an ICDA that offers tax breaks. Mr. Wheland asked what is expected of the Township, only a few of the themes that were mentioned can be done by the Township Board. Mr. Wheland stated that he feels the most important thing at the moment is the Zoning in the village. Mr. May stated that he did not add that to his presentation but Zoning was a big discussion and it was suggested that a PGM be an overlay district. Mr. Keough stated that the whole process has been exciting and he wants to commend the people that have been attending these meetings on a regular basis. Mr. Keough stated that parking has long been a hug problem, due to lot size, traffic, alleyways vs. street. Business maintenance and ordinances are designed and geared towards Atherton Street instead of a village district. Mr. Keough feels that this effort needs a headmaster if any of this is going to move forward efficiently. Mr. Keough entertained a motion to forward this report of the PGM small area plan as prepared and presented to the Board. Mr. Wheland made a motion and Mr. Crassweller seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. WHITEHALL ROAD REGIONAL PARK RESUBMISSION

Mr. Keough stated that he is turning the chair over to Mr. Rob Crassweller as Mr. Keough serves on both the Planning Commission and is the Ferguson Township appointee to the Centre Region Park and Recreation Authority. Mr. Brian Stouffer from Stahl Sheaffer Engineering is here on behalf of the project manager Ms. Robyn Froelich. Mr. Stouffer stated that he has worked closely on this project and can answer any questions the Commission may have. Mr. Stouffer presented the resubmission plan to the Commission. Mr. Stouffer went over all the park amenities and where they will be located. Mr. Stouffer went over all of the site plans such as grading, utility, lighting, parking, and landscaping. Mr. Stouffer explained that the current landscaping plan has a more robust landscaping buffer that includes more trees and stated that trees will also be placed in the parking islands. Mr. Binney asked for the trip generations for PM peak hours and Saturdays. Mr. Stouffer stated that he doesn't have the numbers but he does know that a traffic study was done in conjunction with the Cottages project. The Commission had concerns over traffic and the

exiting of traffic from the park after big events and discussed if a second exit should be considered. The Commission also discussed the possibility of traffic using the Yard's as a secondary exit being a possible issue for the residents. The Commission discussed parking and bus parking and locations of each. The Commission discussed CATA bus service and if the park would be serviced or if it would only be the yards/cottages. Mr. Jeremie Thompson stated that he would also like to see a traffic study for the Regional Park, the Cottages, Pine Hall development, and all other developments in the Township. The Commission agreed and would like to see this study in conjunction with the future road projects. The Commission discussed the lighting plan, Mr. Stouffer showed the Commission depictions of the downward facing lights.

Ms. Holliday asked about the playground equipment and what age group it will service. Mr. Stouffer stated that he is not equipped to answer those questions, Centre Region Parks and Recreation Director Ms. Pam Salokangas know the playground inside and out to answer those questions. Ms. Salokangas stated that the playground will be about 17,250 SQ FT with a poured in place surface. There will be adaptive equipment and standard equipment for all ability kids in this playground. There will be a "we go round" which is a wheelchair accessible merry go round. The playground will have equipment for 2-5 year and 5-12. The central area will be a mix used and mix aged area, where parents can use the equipment with children as well. Ms. Salokangas stated that there will be challenging pieces for able bodied and also challenging adaptive equipment as well.

Mr. Crassweller asked about the Musser gap boarder and what was decided with that because there was discussion on moving the trail to the middle of the park. Mr. Stouffer stated they are keeping the trail where it is currently located but there will be an alternative access point in the middle of the park as well. Mr. Keough asked staff if it would be possible to have the Township traffic engineer present at the next Commission meeting, not for this plan but to give the Commission an overview of all development traffic studies. Sense of what the traffic studies in larger picture looks like. Ms. Wargo stated that she will talk with staff.

X. OFFICIAL REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCES

a. BOARD OF SUPERVISORS REPORT

Ms. Kristina Aneckstein stated that they had a public hearing on October 21st for the Zoning/SALDO amendments for the ordinances. The public hearing was continued to the November 4th meeting and vote will take place then. Discussion on the Zoning Map amendments started and a timeline will be approved at the November 4th meeting.

b. CRPC REPORT

Mr. Thompson stated that the next meeting will be November 7th at 7:00 pm in the forum room at the COG offices.

c. LAND DEVELOPMENT PLANS

- i. **WATKINS SUBDIVISION** – Comments sent back to applicant
- ii. **HARPSTER** – Received comments back and are currently addressing them.
- iii. **W. CHERRY LANE** – Comments were returned to the applicant
- iv. **WHITEHALL ROAD REGIONAL PARK** – Staff is currently reviewing the latest resubmission.
- v. **HARNER FARM REPLOT AND ORCHARD VIEW SUBDIVISION** – Comments have been sent back to the applicant. Mr. Keough asked when the Commission will see these plans again. Ms. Aneckstein state that the Harner Farm replot will be on the next agenda.

Mr. Binney asked to bring the Township's traffic engineer to meetings. Township traffic engineer present to answer any questions.

d. **STAFF UPDATES**

Ms. Wargo stated that she attended the American Planning Association PA Chapter conference. She received a good land use law update. Mr. Ressler is currently at the Governors safety conference. Mr. Keough stated that he attended the Storm Water Advisory Committee and gave the Commission a brief overview of what that committee is doing.

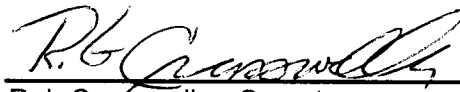
XI. APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OCTOBER 14, 2019

Mr. Keough entertained a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the October 14, 2019 Planning Commission meeting. Mr. Binney moved the motion and Mr. Erik Scott seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The Planning Commission meeting for Monday October 28, 2019 was adjourned at 8:05pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "R. Crassweller", is written over a horizontal line.

Rob Crassweller, Secretary
For the Planning Commission