

**FERGUSON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JULY 13, 2020
6:00 PM**

ATTENDANCE

The Planning Commission held its regular meeting of the month on Monday, July 13, 2020, as a virtual meeting and as an in-person meeting. In attendance:

Commission:

Jeremie Thompson – Chair
Rob Crassweller – Secretary
Shannon Holliday
Ellen Taricani
Bill Keough
Ralph Wheland
Lisa Rittenhouse
Qian Zhang – Alternate

Staff:

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

Others in attendance: Rhonda Demchak, Recording Secretary; Laura Dininni, Ferguson Township Supervisor; Troy Fruchtl, Penn Terra Engineering

Ms. Wargo took roll call and the Planning Commission had a quorum.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Thompson called the Ferguson Township Planning Commission's regular meeting to order on Monday, July 13, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES JUNE 22, 2020

Mr. Thompson called for a motion to approve the minutes from June 22, 2020. Mr. Crassweller noted that on page two under Community Planning – Covid-19 and Zoning that it should read 'Mixed' and not 'Mix'. Mr. Crassweller made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Wheland seconded the motion. Mr. Keough noted that a typo needs to be corrected on page one, the last sentence, under Community Planning – Covid-19 and Zoning, change 'shot' to the 'short'. The motion passed unanimously.

III. CITIZEN INPUT - NONE

IV. LAND DEVELOPMENT PLANS

A. Modification/Waiver application – Thistlewood Lot 19 Land Development Plan

Ms. Aneckstein introduced the request that was included in the agenda. PennTerra Engineering submitted the modification waiver on behalf of their client, Eric Reischer, property owner at Thistlewood Lot 19. PennTerra is requesting relief from section §22- 510.B.2a Erosion and Grading Control, §22-510.B.2b Erosion and Grading Control and §22-510.B.3 Erosion and Grading Control. The issue is the grading of the lot. The slope is greater than 3:1 ratio and makes excavation of the slope difficult. There is a conservation area located in the northeastern corner of the lot where grading is prohibited. Mr. Tony Fruchtl, Project Manager, from PennTerra Engineering, was in attendance and presented slides to give a better understanding of the issue. Mr. Keough asked if the modification will remain in affect after

construction. Mr. Fruchtl noted that it will remain in affect with slopes greater than 3:1 ratio and showed the Commission where they will be located. Ms. Taricani asked if the original plan was to build a house on the lot and asked where the runoff is going now. Mr. Fruchtl noted that it was always planned to be a single-family lot and the runoff is collected on site in an inlet on the street. The runoff goes into a pipe and into the stormwater system down to the basin. Mr. Keough made a motion to recommend to the Board of Supervisors that they approve the request for the Modification/Waiver request for Erosion Control. Mr. Wheland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Thistlewood Lot 19 Land Development Plan

Ms. Aneckstein introduced the overall land development plan that was included in the agenda. The lot is currently undeveloped. The parcel is 1.816 acres and is zoned Rural Residential. Mr. Fruchtl presented slides to the Commission. Water, sewer, and electric is available on site. He noted that there were some concerns with the Township Engineer regarding storm water management due to some revisions. The detention basin is managed by the homeowner's association. Mr. Keough requested that a reference be placed on the land development plan to the fact that there is a separate storm water management system. Mr. Fruchtl noted that PennTerra will add the reference. Ms. Taricani made a motion to recommend to the Board of Supervisors that they approve the Land Development Plan. Mr. Wheland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

V. COMMUNITY PLANNING

A. Review of Chapter 19, Signs and Billboards Draft Ordinance Amendments

Ms. Wargo reviewed the Signs and Billboards Draft Ordinance Amendments. Staff has completed the draft ordinance amendments to update Chapter 19, Signs and Billboards. The intent of this chapter is to encourage the effective use of signs as a means of communication in the Township, to maintain and enhance the aesthetic environment and the Township's ability to attract sources of economic development and growth; to improve pedestrian and traffic, to minimize the possible adverse effects of signs on nearby private property, to enable the fair and consistent enforcement of these restrictions, and protect the public health, safety, and general welfare. Ms. Wargo noted that this is the second time the Commission has seen this draft and incorporated comments via meetings and emails into the draft. Ms. Wargo also noted that Township worked with Happy Valley Adventure Bureau to ensure that their signs they were proposing would work with the ordinance. Also, in the ordinance are banners over Route 45. This can be achieved working with PennDot through a resolution by the Board of Supervisors. Ms. Holliday asked if there would be consequences if someone wasn't in compliance to any of the ordinances. Mr. Ressler referenced the enforcement section of the ordinance. He noted that they typically investigate the situation and then contact the person to fix the problem. Mr. Keough requested to change the word "district" on page 17 under 4.C of the ordinance to "lot". Mr. Ressler noted that he agreed, and it will be changed. Also, item #8 on page 18 regarding the removal of signs after the growing season. Mr. Keough suggested to change "growing season" to "harvest". **MR CRASSWELLER REQUESTED SOMETHING, BUT THE AUDIO WAS INTELLIGBLE.** Mr. Crassweller asked about the use of the term 'variety' versus crop. He stated that if he has a sign advertising a crop, it can stay up all year, but a 'variety', It will have to be removed. He wanted clarification on this wording. Mr. Ressler responded with the intent of the specific wording. Mr. Keough expressed concerns with item #17 on page 18 regarding

sponsors advertising on scoreboards may not exceed 25% of the surface area of the score board. He noted that they are paid for by advertising dollars that go to the organization that is sponsoring a league and it should be between the league and sponsor. Mr. Keough also noted that the word "youth" should be removed because adults will be utilizing these fields as well. **MR. RESSLER NOTED HE WOULD CHANGE SOMETHING HERE.** Mr. Keough noted that on page 19 item #23 that he had concerns with the two (2) square feet per face and suggested to have the size increased. Mr. Wheland suggested not placing a size limit but limit the time it is displayed. Mr. Keough requested to list a reference for customer directional signs on page 23 of the chart listing Automobile Service Station Signs. Ms. Wargo noted that they can do that for all the commercial entries. Ms. Dininni gave a synopsis of her request that was included on the Township's website. Ms. Dininni suggested to include the word "internal perimeter" with regards to the athletic fields. Ms. Dininni asked if we need #16 on page 18 regarding temporary signs such as Ag Progress Days. Ms. Dininni asked the Planning Commission about allowing a reasonable size projecting sign specifically in the Village Zoning District. Mr. Keough noted that if the Commission could reference the expansion of the signage in the Village District, he would be in favor of it being added to the ordinance. Mr. Keough noted that he would like to see flexibility with non-profit signage referenced in the ordinance and perhaps have a discussion in the future. Ms. Rittenhouse concurred with Mr. Keough. Ms. Wargo noted that most of the comments during the meeting will be added into the ordinance; however, with regards to the Village District, the Board of Supervisors just appointed an Advisory Committee. Ms. Wargo suggested receiving input from the Advisory Committee first. With regards to the height of wall signs, Ms. Dininni requested consideration to increase the height. Ms. Wargo noted that the height of signs has never been an issue. Mr. Keough suggested that Ms. Dininni present to the Board of Supervisors for their endorsement for the Planning Commission to examine a separate category for non-profit as they relate to the sign ordinance. Ms. Dininni agreed and will present to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Crassweller made a motion to recommend approval to the Board of Supervisors. Ms. Holliday seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Review of Chapter 27-720, Domestic Chickens and Ducks Ordinance

Ms. Wargo reviewed the ordinance. On November 18, 2019, the Board of Supervisors discussed a request from a resident of Pine Grove Mills to allow for the domestic keeping of ducks in residential zoning districts. The consensus of the Board was to exclude the request from the adopted Zoning and SALDO Ordinances and refer this to staff for further research. Staff completed the research and drafted an ordinance amendment to update Chapter 27, Section 720, Domestic Chickens to §27-720, Domestic Chickens and Ducks. The Board reviewed the draft at the June 15, 2020 regular meeting and referred the draft amendment to the Planning Commission for review, comment and recommendation. The intent of this amendment is to allow the keeping of domestic ducks on residential lots in certain zoning districts. Staff is prepared to provide an overview to the updated ordinance and answer any questions the Planning Commission may have. Ms. Aneckstein highlighted in yellow the changes to the ordinance. Mr. Wheland noted that ducks are much louder than chickens and is concerned that the Township will receive complaints. Mr. Keough is concerned with #9 of the ordinance regarding the removal of waste and wanted to know how it relates to backyard gardens. Mr. Wheland noted that chicken waste is excellent fertilizer. Mr. Ressler noted that there haven't been any complaints regarding chickens. Mr. Keough questioned why the use of scrap

and sheet metal are listed under #11.a. Mr. Ressler noted that they want to ensure people are not using scrap or waste board. Mr. Keough suggested under #11.b removing the period after the word "lines" and remove the rest of the sentence. Continued discussion ensued regarding temporary coops. Mr. Ressler noted that there is a one-time fee for the permit of \$25. Mr. Wheland made a motion to recommend approval to the Board of Supervisors the Chicken and Duck Ordinance. Ms. Taricani seconded the motion. Mr. Crassweller opposed due to H5N1 Virus. The motion passed. The Planning Commission supports the ordinance but expresses hesitation and concerns due to the H5N1 Virus.

VI. OFFICIAL REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCES

A. BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Ms. Wargo reported that the Board met on July 6, 2020 and passed the COVID-19 Flexible Business Support Resolution. The resolution was drafted based off comments and discussions from the last Planning Commission. The resolution will temporarily ease restrictions so businesses can safely operate during the pandemic. Ms. Wargo noted that the next steps for the rezoning process is to hold a Joint Board and Planning Commission meeting.

B. CRPC REPORT

Ms. Taricani noted that the Committee did not meet and there is no report.

C. LAND DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Ms. Aneckstein reported that the Thistlewood Lot #19 was presented tonight, July 13, 2020 and the only active Land Development Plan.

D. STAFF UPDATES

Ms. Wargo reported that staff reported to work last week at the Township Building and that the public is still not permitted entrance.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Keough made a motion to adjourn the July 13, 2020 Planning Commission meeting at 8:15 p.m. Ms. Holliday seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Rob Crassweller", is written over a horizontal line.

Rob Crassweller, Secretary
For the Planning Commission