

FERGUSON TOWNSHIP
PGM Small Area Plan Advisory Board Regular Meeting Minutes
June 24, 2021 4:00 P.M.

I. ATTENDANCE

The Pine Grove Mills Small Area Plan Advisory Board held its regular meeting on Thursday, June 24, 2021 via Zoom. In attendance were:

Committee:

Paul Tomkiel, Vice Chair
Liz Grove
Jordan Robb
Shannon Holliday

Staff:

Jenna Wargo, Planning & Zoning Director
Kristina Aneckstein, Community Planner

Others in attendance: Armen Sahakian, Lisa Strickland

II. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. by Jenna Wargo. She noted that Vice Chair Paul Tomkiel would run the meeting as Matt Heller, the Chair, was not in attendance.

III. CITIZEN'S INPUT - NONE

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve the May 27, 2021, Regular Meeting Minutes made by Mr. Robb. Seconded by Ms. Holliday. Motion carried unanimously.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

WEST PINE GROVE ROAD BANNER DISCUSSION

Vice-Chair Tomkiel noted that the first item under unfinished business was Mr. Sahakian's proposal but he was going to be a little late therefore proposed a shuffling of agenda items. He proposed starting with the banner discussion. Vice-Chair Tomkiel handed over the topic to Ms. Wargo, who introduced the topic and the PennDOT regulations that could limit the location of the banner over

W. Pine Grove Road (SR 45). Once PennDOT regulations have been met, the local municipality then has to pass a resolution basically confirming that it meets the requirement and when the banner will be placed and when the banner will be taken down. There is an application on PennDOT's website. Things to consider are site distances, what can the banner be hung from, (It cannot be hung from utility poles). Mr. Robb asked if there was a banner that was ready and someone wanted to hang. Ms. Wargo stated that the Farmer's Market had one. Mr. Robb asked what the next step was. Ms. Wargo stated that a location must be identified, noting site issues as one approached the intersection of SR 26 and SR 45 and it would be unlikely to get PennDOT approval. Mr. Tomkiel asked how far from the intersection does a banner have to be.

Ms. Wargo was unsure but speculated that it has more to do with site distance.

Ms. Holliday suggested a billboard rather than a banner. Mr. Tomkiel said that he foresees objections from locals over a billboard. He would rather see a mural-like sign on the side of a building.

Ms. Grove said she could start a dialog with Jon and Joni Arrington about a mural on the side of their building. Mr. Tomkiel like the idea as well.

Mr. Tomkiel asked if a banner would meet the Township's Sign Ordinance and if lamp posts were tall enough to hang the banner from. Ms. Wargo said she would look into specifics on size requirements. Ms. Wargo then noted that the lamp posts were 17 feet and that would unlikely be tall enough to hang a banner from.

Mr. Tomkiel noted that some home owners may be willing to hang banners from their homes, however the homeowners on the opposite side of the road must be amenable to hanging the banner as well.

Ms. Wargo recommended scheduling a time to walk the Village. This would allow an assessment on parking and it would be a good time to brainstorm viable locations for a banner. Seeing potential locations in person would be more efficient than speculation here.

Mr. Robb asked if a banner can be hung from a tree. Ms. Wargo will look into it and come back with an answer.

Mr. Tomkiel asked if poles could be installed for the purpose of hanging a banner. Ms. Wargo said yes, but this would have to go into the CIP.

Ms. Holliday expressed concerns over a high wind situation. How do we ensure the safety to the residents or property should a banner rip or fall from wind. These concerns are why she favors the mural.

Ms. Wargo noted that the engineering department would be involved to ensure safety. Mr. Tomkiel believes that banners these days are designed to withstand the weather. He then noted that the application to hang a banner Ms. Wargo put together looks great.

Mr. Robb said that if the banner is hung further down West Pine Grove Road, closer to where the Village District starts (at Kocher Lane), it could act as a traffic calming measure. People may slow down to read the sign and look for events advertised.

The Vice-Chair asked if there were any further discussion on the topic, seeing none, he closed the discussion.

REZONING REQUEST TAX PARCEL 24-7-2E - ARMEN SAHAKIAN

The Vice-Chair recognized Mr. Sahakian was now in the meeting and caught him up on the agenda shuffle to accommodate his late arrival.

Mr. Sahakian asked if he could ask a question about the banner before beginning. He asked if it were to be a welcome banner. He suggested a sign on his property that is undevelopable due to water and wetland issues. He shared his screen with a mockup of a sign in a little park-let type setting.

Mr. Sahakian noted that he meet that morning with Mr. Robb on site to talk about what rezoning could look like. He shared the Ferguson Township Zoning Code Quickviews to show what could and could not be done in the current zoning and the proposed Village Zoning.

Mr. Tomkiel asked to if Mr. Sahakian could show an aerial image of the property he is talking about. Mr. Robb shared that Mr. Sahakian is a Pine Grove Mills resident as well as a developer/ property owner. He genuinely wants to create a "magnet" for the area and rezoning could help that.

Mr. Sahakian noted that this could spark conversations in the community that something big is coming and that this group is trying to make Pine Grove Mills a destination, not just a town you pass through.

Mr. Tomkiel referred back to the tax parcel in question. Ms. Grove asked if the Village Zoning District is mixed use. She thinks it would be a great place for young people to come start a little shop and live in the same building upstairs or something. Therefore she is in favor of expanding the village zoning district.

Mr. Robb supports this as well since it could change the density to allow for more uses and would like to know the process.

Mr. Tomkiel said that Dave Pribulka asked that two people form a subcommittee to work on the potential expansion of the Village Zoning District. Mr. Tomkiel asked Mr. Robb to join along with Mr. Heller, who expressed interest as well. Mr. Sahakian said he is willing to meet so long as he doesn't break any rules needing quorum.

Ms. Grove suggested looking at the Bellefonte waterfront area noting the progress they have made in that area.

Ms. Holliday asked Mr. Sahakian about specific uses he foresees on the tax parcel in question. What would top 3 potential uses of the space: Housing? Eatery? Laundromat? Mr. Sahakian noted that he can anticipate this type of question coming from Planning Commission as well. He is not interested in commercial development due to the water issues and access on the State Road. He is thinking residential, townhomes more specifically. They offer a diversity in price point and type of housing currently available in the Pine Grove area. They also add to the walkability of the area.

Mr. Tomkiel wrapped up the discussion by handing over the topics to the subcommittee group.

REVIEW OF THE PINE GROVE MILLS SMALL AREA PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE LOGO

Mr. Tomkiel noted that the committee asked Ms. Wargo for additional logo options.

Ms. Wargo shared her screen of several redesigned logos. Each committee member discussed their favorites and why. A few suggestions were made to adjusting fonts and placements. Mr. Tomkiel noted that a motion is written in the agenda, however he says to hold off on voting since some changes are going to be made. Ms. Grove said that we know which one we want, just with a few tweaks, so move on.

Mr. Tomkiel moved on to implementation updates to ensure everything is moving on and progressing. Mr. Robb gave a land use update. He spoke about the rezoning and his meeting with Mr. Sahakian. Ms. Wargo suggested just doing the meeting at the farmer's market to do the walking tour to look at the extension of the Village district. Start at the Farmer's Market and walk down, look at parking. There is some confusion over parking. Mr. Robb says there's probably over 100 spots between the Naked Egg and Ferguson Elementary school. Painting curbs or signage could help

people understand the spots available. Mr. Robb was unsure of the short comings of the sign ordinance and what should be changed. Getting feet on the ground would be the first step. Mr. Tomkiel asked Ms. Wargo what changes occurred. Ms. Wargo said no changes were made, when Liz had issues, we were in the process of updating our sign ordinance. Hopefully all the changes were made to the ordinance. Ms. Aneckstein added that staff is looking to add a complete streets to the CIP budget to get a study done in the next 5 years.

Ms. Grove gave an update on community engagement and events. She reminded all of the Facebook page, get out and like it. Send her things to be posted, anything that may be relevant and beef up content. Route 45 Getaways got \$4500 from grant for Community Engagement. We have 6 weeks to do something this year. Meeting Tuesday at 3 o'clock. Jordan has a logo for this subgroup. Mr. Tomkiel asked to see the logos now and having a brief overview. Mr. Robb shared his screen and spoken on his different designs. Mr. Tomkiel suggested Mr. Robb share with the community engagement subgroup.

Ms. Holliday gave an update on the History and Heritage of Pine Grove Mills. She was searching for vintage maps that would allow her to ID the areas, but some were so old they were hard to read. She found some data on an old baseball team and is looking for more information.

Mr. Tomkiel suggested some books on PGM history, the bicentennial book. There's a trilogy of updated information, Carol Ziegler is the most attuned to the history for more details. Ms. Holliday has a section on landmarks, including the Presbyterian Church, noting that there are other faiths in the area. Heritage, the landmarks are tied to the heritage, looking at demographics, trade, coach makers, flour mill. Mr. Tomkiel recommended looking into the Susquehanna Indian tribe. They were the main tribe in the area pre-European settlers. After that the Iroquois Indians took over.

Mr. Tomkiel added was that he thinks they should discuss alleyways and start disentangling them, but that's a long term issue. He hasn't received an update from Mr. Heller regarding economic development.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Future meeting format discussion: Mr. Tomkiel noted that since we are no longer under an emergency order declaration, virtual meetings are not required and sole virtual meeting are not permitted. Mr. Tomkiel suggested doing the walk of the Village District as the next meeting. Meet at the farmer's market and walk? He also asked if they need to advertise for sunshine laws. Ms. Holliday asked about doing a hybrid meeting. Mr. Tomkiel said it is an option, but reach out to Dave Pribulka.


Mr. Robb asked if they could meet the last Thursday, instead of the 4th Thursday. Requesting the meeting in person, do the walk on the 29th. Park at Ferguson Elementary and meet at the Church.

Liz added that she already got an OK from Jon Arrington about a mural. Mr. Robb said the next step would be to chat with Mr. Ressler.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Tomkiel asked for a motion to adjourn Ms. Holliday made a motion and Mr. Robb seconded it.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



Liz Grove, Secretary
Pine Grove Mills Small Area Plan Advisory Board