

**FERGUSON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 11, 2021
6:00 PM**

ATTENDANCE

The Planning Commission held its first meeting of the month on Monday, January 11, 2021, as a virtual meeting. In attendance:

Commission:

Jeremie Thompson – Chair
Jerry Binney – Vice Chair
Rob Crassweller - Secretary
Shannon Holiday
Bill Keough
Lisa Rittenhouse
Dr. Ellen Taricani
Ralph Wheland

Staff:

Jenna Wargo, Planning & Zoning Director
Kristina Aneckstein, Community Planner
Dave Modricker, Director of Public Works
Lance King, Township Arborist
Jeff Ressler, Zoning Administrator

Others in attendance: Rhonda Demchak, Recording Secretary

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Thompson called the Ferguson Township Planning Commission's regular meeting to order on Tuesday, January 11, 2021 at 6:35 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES DECEMBER 1, 2020

Mr. Thompson called for a motion to approve the minutes from December 1, 2020. Mr. Keough made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Holiday seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously

III. CITIZEN INPUT

None

IV. COMMUNITY PLANNING

A. Tree Preservation

Ms. Wargo introduced the draft ordinance that was included in the packet. The Public Works and Planning & Zoning Department drafted an amendment to Chapter 22, Subdivision and Land Development to establish a new part, Tree Preservation. The intent of this chapter is to encourage the protection of trees through sound land use and tree management practices. This chapter will preserve, protect and maintain existing trees in Ferguson Township, as well as, increase the overall tree canopy and understory with native species. It will aid in improving tree and ecosystem health on both public and private lands. The Board authorized staff and the Ferguson Township Tree Commission in September of 2018 to draft a Tree Preservation Ordinance.

Mr. Binney requested to include and clarify Condo Associations within the ordinance. Ms. Wargo will review with the Township Arborist. Ms. Wargo noted that existing Condo's will not be affected by the ordinance.

Mr. Keough reviewed his questions that included concerns with the language under

Definitions with the use of "legal activity". Ms. Wargo will have the Township Solicitor review and prepare a response. Mr. Keough expressed concerns with the definition of Farm-Based Business and would prefer using the Clean and Green definition. Mr. Keough thanked the staff for changing the definition of Hedgerow. Mr. Keough suggested including a definition for minor alterations. Ms. Wargo will add the definition. Mr. Keough proposed including language referencing the Arborist to take into consideration of slopes and flood plains under the section of Tree Preservation and Protection. Mr. King stated that he would rather have the certified Flood Plain Manager make the determination. Mr. Ressler noted that language can be added. Mr. Keough inquired about Protecting Fencing with regards to the minimum of 8 feet and constructed of chain link or other material approved by the Township Arborist. Mr. King state that each situation would be carefully considered on what would be approved material. Mr. Keough felt that a \$1,000 fine is excessive and requested adding "paying a fine up to \$1,000". Mr. Ressler reviewed the Violations and Penalties. Mr. Ressler and Ms. Wargo will review and rework the language to include Violations and Penalties under item G.vi-1, Protect Fencing. Mr. Keough noted that referencing perpetuity would not be good legislation and suggested changing the language.

Due to the suggestions and changes, Ms. Wargo and Mr. Ressler will make the edits and bring back the ordinance to the Planning Commission for final review at the January 25, 2021.

V. PERSONAL DELIVERY DEVICE (PDDs)

Ms. Wargo reviewed the PDDs. The Pennsylvania Senate approved Bill 1199 that assist businesses, health systems, and consumers in deploying innovative technological tools and resources to more effectively cope with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. PDDs are autonomous robots designed to deliver packages to consumers and from business to business, within a small radius of approximately 3 miles. PennDOT is requesting feedback that could be included in the policy that would take effect on January 30, 2021. Ms. Wargo noted that First Responders will receive information on all PDDs operating in the Township and how to stop or disable if need be. PDDs are classified as pedestrians and must yield to other pedestrians and cyclists. Educational campaigns are required for all PDDs operating in the Township.

Mr. Keough suggested having a local discussion on hours of operations, zoning designations, handicap residents, etc. Ms. Wargo stated that PDDs can operate at 25 mph and are equipped with brakes, lights, and audible warning sounds. Ms. Holiday expressed concerns that 25 mph is too fast on a sidewalk. Ms. Aneckstein noted that the PDDs for Pennsylvania have a maximum of 4 mph on sidewalks. Mr. Thompson expressed concerns with the ability to steal items from a PDD. Ms. Aneckstein provided examples of PDDs via screen share to display the size of PDD's.

VI. OFFICIAL REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCES

A. Board of Supervisors

Ms. Wargo noted the Board met on January 4, 2021 and a new Chair and Vice Chair were elected. Laura Dininni was nominated as the Chair and Lisa Strickland as the Vice Chair. Also, Betsy Dupuis was nominated as the new Township Solicitor. The Workforce Housing Ordinance was adopted. The Board will be meeting on January

18th regarding PDDs and the Tree Preservation Ordinance. There will be a Work Session regarding Stormwater Fee on January 12 at 6:00 p.m. via zoom.

B. CRPC Report

No report.

C. Land Development Plans

Ms. Aneckstein noted that they are still reviewing the West College Student Housing and received the third submission. Final comments from the reviewer are due back mid-week of next week. Also, two small subdivision plans were submitted and hoping to introduce them at the next Planning Commission meeting.

D. Staff Updates

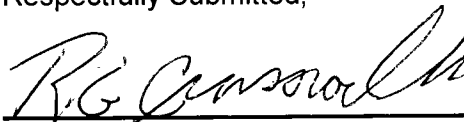
Ms. Wargo noted that an email was sent to the Planning Commission regarding the upcoming Winter/Spring 2021 Land Use Decision-making webinar series sponsored by Penn State Extension. They will be recorded in the event a person missed it live.

Mr. Thompson noted that the first Coffee & Conversation will be held on January 16th at 8:00 a.m. via zoom.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Crassweller made a motion to adjourn the January 11, 2021 Planning Commission meeting at 8:25 p.m. Mr. Binney seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,



Rob Crassweller, Secretary
For the Planning Commission

