

**FERGUSON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**  
**Monday, March 11, 2019**  
**6:00 PM**

**I. ATTENDANCE**

The Planning Commission held its 1st regular meeting of the month on Monday, March 11, 2019, at the Ferguson Township Municipal Building. In attendance were:

**Commission:**

Lisa Strickland, Chairperson  
Bill Keough, Vice Chairperson  
Ralph Wheland  
Erik Scott  
Jeremie Thompson  
Jerry Binney  
Shannon Holliday, Alternate  
Rob Crassweller, Secretary, absent

**Staff:**

Ray Stolinas, Director of Zoning & Planning  
Lindsay Schoch, Community Planner  
Jeff Ressler, Zoning Administrator

Others in attendance were: Alainea Miller, Recording Secretary; Kevin Abbey, Land Conservation Manager and Suzy Yetter, Conservation Projects Coordinator, Scotia Young Forest Initiative - Clearwater Conservancy; Noah Tabacchi, Scotia Young Forest Initiative; Diane Albright; and Linda Esposito.

**II. CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Strickland called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**III. CITIZEN INPUT**

None

**IV. SCOTIA YOUNG FOREST INITIATIVE - CLEARWATER CONSERVANCY**

As a result of the presentation given at the February 4, 2019, Ferguson Township Board of Supervisors meeting, it was suggested that the Scotia Young Forest Initiative be presented at a future Planning Commission meeting. Kevin Abbey introduced himself as the Clearwater Conservancy Land Conservation Manager, and Suzy Yetter, the Clearwater Conservancy Conservation Projects Coordinator. Both provided a handout and sideshow presentation on the National Fish and Wild Life Foundation funded project (land areas around or in the Scotia Barrens). Mr. Abbey and Ms. Yetter explained the history and importance of the Scotia Barrens, discussed building a management plan that fits your personal goals for your land, described actions that create and sustain young forest wildlife habitat, and other opportunities for making the most out of natural spots.

After the presentation, they identified on a map and answered questions related to the background of the Braver Branch Gorge area and Natural Heritage Site. The Beaver Branch Gorge was identified as a Natural Heritage site in the 2002 Centre County Natural Heritage Inventory. The discussion concluded with the Ferguson Township Planning Commission giving feedback to assist them in the projects planning stages.

**V. FERGUSON TOWNSHIP ZONING AND SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT  
ORDINANCE REVISIONS**

Carolyn Yagle, Environmental Planning and Design attended several previous meetings to discuss facets of both the zoning and subdivision ordinance revisions. Ms. Yagle provided the Planning Commission with revisions to the QuickView charts and tables. Mr. Stolinis presented the new QuickViews; however, input was given to assist Ms. Yagle with the lot setbacks, minimum and maximum lot sizes, and appropriate accessory uses.

Mr. Stolinis presented the new area and bulk categories of use in the Rural Agriculture table:

- 1) Agriculture and Conservation Activities
- 2) Non-residential Uses
- 3) Dwellings: Single-family Detached on 50 acres as a primary use, single-family semi-detached, two-family dwellings, seasonal dwellings and small personal care homes.
- 4) Utility and Communication Facilities

Mr. Stolinis discussed the graphics on the QuickViews including the rows showing each designated lot size, building set back size with front, side, and rear for the various area and bulk categories. The categories differ depending upon lot size. Thursday evening March 14, 2019, the Board of Supervisors, the consultant and Planning & Zoning staff are meeting to review the information and set an ordinance adoption schedule. Mr. Stolinis invited the Planning Commission to give feedback on the revised QuickViews.

Mr. Keough inquired whether a home owner in the R1 district could rent out a home. Also, Mr. Wheland pointed out short term rental is listed; however, there is no indicated length for the time to rent. Mr. Ressler indicated the zoning ordinance does not distinguish between rentals and owner occupied.

Mr. Keough asked what the difference is between R-1B, Suburban Single-Family Residential, compared to R1, Single-Family Residential. Mr. Ressler reported the lot size in R-1B is larger. Mr. Ressler felt the lot sizes are correct which would not affect the non-confirming lot sizes. Mr. Stolinis discussed that increasing the impervious coverage would increase the need of the larger stormwater facilities.

Mr. Keough felt that the Industrial District should include a Research and Development component. Mr. Stolinis reported the Industrial Zoning District Purpose statement was orientated toward heavy industrial equipment with manufacturing and production type uses. Research can be found within the IRD in Mr. Stolinis' observations.

Under General Commercial, Principle Uses, the second column includes the Portable Well Water Pump Stations (Conditional Use). Mr. Keough asked if this is allowed with well head protection. A suggestion is to remove the word "Well" to clarify it is a Pump Station with no "Well" attached.

Mr. Keough suggested that in the R4 Multi-Family Residential District, there could be an Accessory Use listed as a "Commissary" within apartment building supplying everyday convenience items. He further explained this could be a convenience for residents in long-term senior living as well. Mr. Thompson felt that similar items offered at a coffee stand or bar could be useful in a building. Mr. Scott's point of view was that a small retail store may

not do well in this type of setting, which would only provide service to 800-1000 people. Ms. Strickland questioned if a commissary would fall under an accessory use category.

Mr. Stolinis responded to PC member's question on Places of Assembly as the Neighborhood, Community, and Regional definitions of these terms. Mr. Stolinis confirmed that Place of Assembly Neighborhood classification is within the surrounding the community, Neighborhood is one or more adjacent areas, and Regional is multiple communities. Mr. Ressler replied the numbers for sizes of Places of Assembly were identified within the current zoning regulations but will not in be the revised regulations. Mr. Stolinis said Mr. Ressler will review applications for Places of Assembly to determine the size on the applications.

Mr. Stolinis agreed to review an inconsistency on outdoor recreational activities in agricultural and conservation areas. Mr. Wheland felt the ordinance uses that were created protected the property owners if game commission diversified their lands. Mr. Wheland stated that solar and/or wind power should be permitted as Conditional Uses in the RA areas after the discussion on ground mounted solar systems as a permitted use.

Ms. Strickland and Mr. Stolinis agreed that land use tables in category 4, the 2-acre lot in R1 needs clarified when comparing the drafts. Ms. Strickland felt 2 acres could be a small garden plot or a pocket park less than 4 acres. Mr. Keough felt Centre Region Parks and Recreation's job was to maintain parks not the township or an HOA.

In the R1 District, Ms. Strickland inquired if "P" could be permitted and designated in the R1 under categories 1 and 4 Farmer's Markets. A suggestion is to have the board look at the categories. Ms. Strickland, in E graphic of side yard in the principle use, questioned how to look at the size of diagram. Mr. Ressler said the 5 categories are shown in the example aren't literal to the numbers. Mr. Ressler felt the diagram should be labeled of the 5 examples with the overall sizes not dimensions. Ms. Strickland felt each chart should be labeled for setback accessory vs. a primary structure. For example, R1 in R2 in single- family dwelling, 10-foot side yard with a principle use with a 10-feet shed on all sides. A suggestion is to add a note to it explaining the diagram. Ms. Strickland felt owners wanted more flexibility with some options on the lots.

## **VI. CONSENT AGENDA**

### **A. REVISED HARNER FARM CONCEPT PLAN AND GENERAL COMMENTS**

Planning Commission members received the latest Harner Farm Concept Plan (included in the meeting packet handout with the questions introduced at the prior Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors meetings along with the Concept Plan). Ms. Schoch anticipates a formal land development and subdivision plan be submitted in the near future. On Tuesday, March 12, 2019, the Harner Farm traffic scoping application will be reviewed.

The approval of the Consent Agenda was motioned by Mr. Keough and seconded by Mr. Thompson. The motion passed 6-0.

## **VII. PLANNING DIRECTOR REPORT**

Mr. Stolinis gave a presentation with Mr. Keough at the CBICC, titled "The Future's Blueprint" on Thursday, February 28, 2019. During the presentation, Mr. Stolinis reviewed the existing

Ferguson Township's ABC'S and keyed in on the functions of the Zoning Hearing Board and Planning Commission. Mr. Stolinis gave an overview on the requirements under the PA Municipalities Planning Code and the Ferguson Township Home Rule Charter. Mr. Keough gave his perspective on being a former township supervisor and current views on being a Planning Commission member.

#### **VIII. ACTIVE PLANS UPDATE**

Ms. Schoch reported Harner Farm Traffic Scoping Application will be reviewed tomorrow.

Ms. Schoch reported that she is working on the Pine Hall proposed Terms and Conditions and Workforce Housing Agreement. On Friday March 15, 2019, staff will be reviewing the draft Terms and Conditions with the Township Solicitor prior to forwarding revisions back to Residential Housing, LLC.

Ms. Schoch reported the Mobility Study open house was tonight. The concept images and comment card will be available on the Township Website. Interested parties will have the ability to fill out the comment card online.

#### **IX. CENTRE REGION PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT**

Marcella Bell, previous Ferguson Township PZ/PW Administrative Assistant is now the new Office Manager at the CRPA Offices.

Mr. Thompson reported that on April 1, 2019, the Centre Regional Planning Commission met at the Council of Governments Office. Centre MPO presented background information, and the MPO's responsibilities. The presentation can be viewed on C-Net, Facebook, and Twitter.

After the presentation, a discussion was held on the long-range transportation plan. Mr. Thompson reported the Patton Township Planning representative shared concerns on the traffic on Science Park Road, the need for a traffic signal on Sandy Ridge Drive, cut-through path and biking challenges on Circleville Road, the traffic issues on Park Hills, and how the Pine Hall project may affect upcoming construction projects.

After the discussion, Mr. Thompson gave an update on the upcoming construction projects: Valley Vista turning lanes will be finished this summer.

I-99 and I-80 will extend to the westbound off-ramp, embankment removal, and lighting installed at the intersection.

Atherton Street construction started today. Aaron Drive to Big Hollow will be paved and a culvert is being constructed. After each section, paving will be completed. On Tuesday April 12, 2019, at 12:15 p.m. the Transportation & Land Use Committee Meeting will be held at the Council of Governments office.

#### **X. ZONING AND SALDO UPDATE**

No Update.

**XI. PINE GROVE MILLS SMALL AREA PLAN**

Mr. Stolinas reported that the PGM SAP Steering Committee will discuss the status of Ferguson's Townships management and ownership of two parcels off of S.R. 26 on the top of the ridge toward Huntingdon. The purpose of the discussion is to recommend enhancing the properties or conveying the land to Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Mr. Stolinas reported the trees, some which are diseased and, in some cases, deceased, consist mainly of hemlock. Mark Potter, from PA Bureau of Forestry and Lance King, the Ferguson Township Arborist, will be in attendance for this discussion.

Mr. Wheland raised the question regarding the township's liability with the dead hemlocks too close to the road. He stated that the township has previously given 30-day notice to land owners to remove trees that are hazardous to the public's health, safety and welfare.

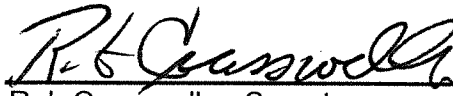
**XII. APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES FEBRUARY 25, 2019**

A motion was made by Mr. Keough and seconded by Mr. Wheland to approve the regular meeting minutes as presented. The motion was passed unanimously.

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no other business for the Planning Commission, Ms. Strickland adjourned the meeting at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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

Rob Crassweller, Secretary  
For the Planning Commission

