

**FERGUSON TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, JUNE 22, 2020
6:00 PM**

ATTENDANCE

The Planning Commission held its regular meeting of the month on Monday, June 22, 2020, via Zoom. In attendance:

Commission:

Jeremie Thompson – Chair
Jerry Binney – Vice Chair
Rob Crassweller – Secretary
Shannon Holliday
Ellen Taricani
Qian Zhang – Alternate

Staff:

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

Others in attendance: Rhonda Demchak, Recording Secretary

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, June 22, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES MAY 11, 2020

Mr. Thompson called for a motion to approve the minutes from May 11, 2020. Ms. Taricani made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Binney seconded the motion. Mr. Thompson requested that a correction be made to reflect that Ms. Laura Dininni was in attendance as a Ferguson Township Supervisor. The motion passed unanimously.

III. CITIZEN INPUT - NONE

IV. LAND DEVELOPMENT PLANS

A. Modification/Waiver application – Thistlewood Lot 19 LDP

Mr. Thompson noted that the modification/waiver application was pulled from the agenda. Ms. Wargo noted that the Commission will see this in the near future.

V. COMMUNITY PLANNING

A. Covid-19 and Zoning

Ms. Wargo reviewed the short term and long term topics that should be considered in order to meet new COVID-19 safety protocols for reopening businesses and schools. Most zoning laws will need to have a quick reform. Provided with the agenda was an article that summarizes a few issues and trends facing communities. Staff would like to discuss other restrictions within the Township Ordinances that may need to be temporarily eased to enable businesses to safely and effectively operate on their property in conjunction with implementing the Governor's Office, PA Department of Health, and other agency and industry guidelines regarding social distancing, sanitation, and public health. Ms. Wargo noted that there have been multiple municipalities that have passed resolutions in response to COVID-19. In the event that COVID-19 government restrictions continue, Ms. Wargo reviewed the short and long term topic that were included on the agenda. The Township has

already laxed the temporary signage, especially when everything was closed in the beginning of the pandemic. Other municipalities are having curbside pick-up on public and private parking spaces, drive-thru's, walk up windows, outdoor seating and display areas such as sidewalk sales. Other long term topics that the Township might have to explore are distribution facilities, Virtual "Ghost" Restaurants which are establishments with just a kitchen for takeout, potential reduction in "brick-and-mortar" of retail and office space, and repurposing of buildings. Included in the agenda are resolutions that were passed by other municipalities in Pennsylvania.

Mr. Ressler noted that the Township received requests from the Centre Learning Community Charter School. The Charter School has requested to place a 40x40 tent to be utilized for the return of students in the fall while the weather is still moderate. The Mixed Martial Arts School has also requested to use the vacant neighboring lot for outside classes on a temporary basis from 5:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. There are a lot of factors to check within the ordinance to approve these requests. Ms. Wargo would like to have this topic as a resolution to the Board of Supervisors so that they are aware of these requests. Mr. Crassweller requested a list of restaurants in the Township to be proactive if we receive request such as curbside pickup, decks, street parking, etc. Ms. Holliday shared information from Penn State's Townhall meeting on June 22nd. Ms. Taricani shared her concerns with students returning to the area and how would the Township enforce regulations. Ms. Wargo noted that the they don't want to be overly dictative, but the Zoning Administrator can't overlook certain issues. Mr. Thompson went through each of the short and long term topics to obtain more ideas and have further discussion. Mr. Ressler noted that there should be a resolution for temporary signage to make it more definite. Continued discussion ensued regarding curbside pick-up on public and private parking spaces. Mr. Ressler noted that walk-up windows in the Township will not be a problem. Mr. Thompson asked if a person wanted to set up a tent on a parking lot to sell items, would it be allowed? Ms. Aneckstein noted that it is something to consider and would be on a case by case basis. Discussion regarding Penn State's return to campus in the fall continued.

VI. OFFICIAL REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCES

A. BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Ms. Wargo reported that the Board met on June 15, 2020 and noted that the Board of Supervisors reviewed the Chicken and Duck Ordinance. The Board referred the Ordinance to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission has a goal for the Board to review the Sign Ordinance soon. The next Planning Commission meeting is July 13, 2020 and expect to see the updated Sign Ordinance.

B. CRPC REPORT

Ms. Taricani reported that the Commission met recently and noted that Penn State had been renting bikes on campus, but now they are getting rid of them. Also, land development and conservation issues were discussed. Foxdale will be putting in a bird garden. The next meeting of the CRPC will be held on July 2, 2020.

C. LAND DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Ms. Aneckstein reported that the Thistlewood Land Development Plan should be on the next agenda.

D. STAFF UPDATES

Ms. Wargo reported staff is still rotating every other week. Staff is working on the Affordable Housing Ordinance and Sign Ordinance.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Crassweller made a motion to adjourn the June 22, 2020 Planning Commission meeting at 7:35 p.m. Mr. Binney seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

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

Rob Crassweller, Secretary
For the Planning Commission