

**New Stanton Planning Commission
Minutes of Meeting
Council Chambers
November 9, 2022**

1. Call to Order

Jay Gomolak called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. Roll Call

A. Attendance: Commission members: James Evans, Jay Gomolak, Charlie Humes, George Miller and Tim Seale. Absent: Mina Crusan and Amy Damaska.

Other borough officials in attendance: Borough Manager Jeffrey McLaughlin.

B. Others in Attendance

Mayor Tom Smith.

3. Approval of Previous Meetings' Minutes

Charlie made a motion seconded by George to adopt the minutes of June 20, 2022.
Motion passed unanimously.

4. Audience Comments on Non-Agenda Items

There were no comments.

5. Audience Comments on Agenda Items

There were no comments.

6. Old Business

There was no Old Business.

7. New Business

**a. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action to Recommend to Council
Possible Changes to the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance**

Jeff reviewed a handout that outlined the role of the Planning Commission as stated in the PA Municipal Planning Code Section 303 where municipal comprehensive plans are adopted: *...any subsequent proposed action of the governing body, its departments, agencies and appointed authorities shall be submitted to the planning agency for its recommendations....*

Section 209.1 mandates that the planning agency *review the zoning ordinance, subdivision and land development ordinance, official map, provisions for planned residential development, and such other ordinances and regulations governing the development of land no less frequently than it reviews the comprehensive plan.*

Jeff handed out a section of the Borough's Comprehensive Plan that talks about making New Stanton more walkable and references the sidewalk ordinance. The committee reviewed the section of the plan as well as an additional handout which outlines the current Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance as it pertains to sidewalks which reads:

§ 22-607 Subdivision and Land Development: Sidewalks

[Ord. No. 2002-196, 9/30/2002]

1. In any proposed subdivision or land development with an average lot size or area per dwelling unit of 15,000 square feet or less, or where a subdivision is immediately adjacent to or within 1,000 feet of any existing or recorded subdivision having sidewalks, sidewalks shall be on each side of the street in accordance with Borough specifications, unless the developer can establish specific facts which obviate the need for sidewalks in the particular development or subdivision.

2. The Planning Commission or Council may require installation of sidewalks in any subdivision or development where the evidence indicates that sidewalks are necessary for the public safety.

A. Sidewalks shall be within the right-of-way of the street and shall extend in width from the right-of-way line toward the curbline.

B. Sidewalks must be at least four feet wide. In the vicinity of shopping centers, schools, recreation areas and other such facilities, sidewalks must be at least five feet wide and located within the street right-of-way.

C. Sidewalks shall be constructed according to Pennsylvania Department of Transportation standards.

Discussion

There was discussion about the pros and cons of sidewalks. George said that the general consensus of the Administration Committee and Council was that the requirement for sidewalks should be kept in the B-1 and B-2 Business Districts but not be required in the remaining zoning districts. He said particularly in residential districts they wanted to eliminate the burden on housing developers because of the cost of installation as well as the increased amount of impervious surface that could require additional stormwater management. He said that the goal of all of these proposed changes is to encourage development and to be more business friendly.

Jim commented on the rate of speed that people drive. He also stated that when there were no sidewalks, people questioned the need for them because no one was

walking, but now that there are some sidewalks people are walking. He said future residents will be thankful for sidewalks. He also mentioned that electric vehicles do not make noise and may come upon walkers in the street without their knowledge.

Charlie mentioned the narrowness of certain right-of-ways, like along Pine and Thermo Village which would prevent the installation of sidewalks.

George stated that speeding is concerning but there has to be balance. Sidewalks would be required in the busiest area – the business district. The idea of encouraging development must be weighed.

Tom pointed out that he lived in West Point and they did not have sidewalks but a lot of people walked. He said that even if the Broadview Estates subdivision did not have sidewalks people would walk because it is a dead end which would limit traffic and safety concerns.

Tim said that a state like Florida has sidewalks and bike lanes, but our area is not really conducive for that. He also expressed concern about the money a developer would be asked to spend as well as the amount of property that sidewalks would take up. Tim also mentioned the liability and maintenance of sidewalks.

Motion

Charlie made a motion seconded by Tim to recommend that the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance be amended to only require sidewalks in the B-1 General Business District and the B-2 Neighborhood Commercial District. Motion passed with Tim Charlie and George voting *yes*, Jim voting *no* and Jay abstaining.

b. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action to Recommend to Council Possible Changes to the Zoning Ordinance

§ 27-501 Zoning Ordinance Parking, Loading, Access Aisles, Fire Lanes and Driveways

[Ord. No. 2007-219, 7/19/2007; as amended by Ord. No. 2016-253, 6/28/2016]

(C) (1) Each required off-street parking area shall provide for parking spaces at a minimum of nine feet by 20 feet. Where access to such area is from a public street, adequate turnaround space shall be provided out of the right-of-way.

Discussion

Jeff gave an overview of the proposed change and there was a short discussion.

Motion

Tim made a motion seconded by recommend that the zoning ordinance be amended to allow for parking spaces to be a minimum of 9' by 18'. Motion passed unanimously.

§ 27-504 Sign Requirements.

[Ord. No. 2007-219, 7/19/2007]

5. Electronic Variable Message Sign. An electronic variable message sign may be permitted as a conditional use in B-1, B-2, V-1, LI-1 and LI-2 Districts when approved by the Borough Council, after submission and review by the Zoning Officer, and provided that all of the following requirements are met:

A. Sign change of message shall be subject to the following regulations:

(1) All messages shall remain unchanged for a minimum of one minute.

Discussion

Jeff gave an overview of the proposed change and there was a short discussion.

Motion

Jim made a motion seconded by George recommending to council that the zoning ordinance be amended to have Electronic Variable Message Signs remain unchanged for a minimum of 6 seconds. Motion passed unanimously.

**c. Discussion and/or Deliberation and/or Official Action to Recommend to Council
Possible Changes to the Zoning Map**

Discussion

Jeff gave an overview of the proposed change and there was a short discussion.

Motion

Charlie made a motion seconded by Tim recommending to council that the zoning map be changed to reflect that the R-2 section at the southern section of the map be changed to B-2.

a. Other New Business

There was no other *New Business*.

8. Adjournment

Jim made a motion seconded by Tim to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 PM. There were no objections.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey McLaughlin
Borough Secretary