

Planning Commission Meeting

January 11, 2017, 7:00 P.M.

Minutes of Meeting

1. Call to order

Chairperson Denise Smyda called the meeting to order at 7:04.

2. Roll call

Commission members in attendance: Barbara Bishop, Jim Evans, Jay Gomolak, Calvin Kaufman, and Tim Seale, Denise Smyda Ray Strosko. Others: Emil Bove and Jeff McLaughlin.

3. Election of Officers

a. Chairperson

Denise asked for nominations for the office of Chairperson. Ray nominated Jay Gomolak. Jay stated that he would accept, but wanted the members to know that he would not be available at the February or March meetings. There being no other nominations, Jay was unanimously elected Chairperson.

b. Vice Chairperson

Denise asked for nominations for the office of Vice Chairperson. Ray nominated Jim Evans. There being no other nominations, Jim was unanimously elected Vice Chairperson.

c. Secretary

Denise asked for nominations for the office of Secretary. Tim nominated Denise Smyda. There being no other nominations, Denise was unanimously elected Secretary.

4. Approval of minutes

Jay took over his duties as Chairperson asking that the minutes of the October 12, 2016 be considered for approval. Tim made a motion seconded by Calvin to approve the minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Audience comments on general or agenda items

Tom Smith thanked the board members that served as officers the past year and congratulated the new officers. He asked that he be allowed to comment on items during the meeting.

6. Old Business

a. Comprehensive Plan

Jay mentioned that the comprehensive plan will be discussed at every meeting to ensure that it is being implemented.

Jeff stated that the comprehensive plan will be considered for adoption on February 7, 2017 at 6 PM just prior to the council meeting. Even though not yet adopted, it was thought that we should begin meeting on how to implement the plan.

Jeff mentioned that the only comment that he is aware of came from a neighboring borough and had to do with the lack of mentioning the fire department in the goals of the plan. Emil mentioned that that we should consider including mention of the fire department in the goal on page 61 regarding public safety.

Jim made a motion seconded by Tim recommending to council that they include in the comprehensive plan a paragraph regarding the future of the fire department and that Jeff work with Mackin to formulate the language. Motion passed unanimously.

Jim asked if the terms were up for any of the planning commission members. Jeff reviewed the terms and no members' terms were up at the end of 2016.

The group began reviewing some of the goals of the plan:

- The hiring of a Code Enforcement Officer. Jeff stated that the position has been advertised and about 8 resumes have been received. The deadline for resumes is January 18th or whenever the job is filled. He stated that the Personnel Committee should meet shortly after the 18th to interview candidates and may have someone picked out as soon as the February council meeting for council's consideration. Jim asked about the hours and pay. Jeff stated that council budgeted \$7,500 which averages \$15 an hour, 10 hours per week for 50 weeks and given that the person would not begin until at least 6 weeks into the new year, there would be available funding for more than 10 hours per week.

Jim made a motion seconded by Ray recommending that council front-load the hours, perhaps having the newly hired person work 20-30 hours per week initially to address the backlog of code issues. Later in the year they would then work less. All members voted *yes* except Calvin who voted *no*.

- To create a more pedestrian-friendly community and a sense of place in New Stanton, goals of the comprehensive plan, Jim made a motion seconded by Denise recommending that council consider developing mini-parks at the properties atop of the I-70 ramps on either side of the Center Avenue bridge over I-70 in place of the ramps. Motion passed unanimously. Jeff and Emil pointed out that PennDOT has stated that they do not plan to return the properties to the former owners when the

ramps close because it would be difficult to track them down given the passage of time.

- Jeff stated that the business directional sign at the top of the ramp should be moved when the ramps close. Jim stated that the signs are not attractive. Jeff agreed and stated that all of our signs need to be redone: welcome signs, event signs, business directional signs, etc. Tom mentioned that new event signs could be a good Eagle Scout project.

Jim talked about accessing grant funding to pay for projects such as parks and signage. Jeff stated that to be successful accessing grant money, funders are looking for community buy-in, drawings, a project budget and matching money. All of this would need to be completed before we start applying.

- Jeff updated everyone on the roundabouts. At this point, landscaping and signage is only being proposed for the Rachel Drive Roundabout. The other two roundabouts, because of the amount of traffic and the speed of the vehicles going through them will probably be concrete. The borough has sent back its comments on a proposed Rachel Drive Roundabout agreement and we are presently awaiting PennDOT's response.
- Jeff also touched upon the traffic calming methods that are suggested in the plan. Because of the narrowness of borough streets many of these ideas are not applicable to our situation.
- Emil mentioned the possibility of having the trail from Youngwood run on Sandworks Road over the Sewickley Creek and then have it turn right to parallel the creek to the park. A major impediment to this would be that right-of-way would have to be purchased. Calvin said it would be difficult to follow the creek once the trail would get to the park because of the slope of the land alongside the creek.
- Jeff stated that the borough has been negotiating with PennDOT regarding the Bair Boulevard retention pond agreement. The borough wants to ensure that PennDOT will allow storm water outflows from the watershed to go into the pond, particularly considering the post-interchange development that is anticipated for the area. Emil stated that PennDOT has taken ownership of the pond but the borough is to maintain it. Emil pointed out that the borough's storm water management ordinance presently requires that the post-development storm water outflow rate from a property be 80% of the pre-development rate for the entire borough. He stated that he did an in-depth study of the watershed feeding into the pond and is recommending that for the part of the watershed he calls *Watershed B*, the borough adopt a 50% post-development storm water outflow rate. He stated that PennDOT

may be more willing to adopt the retention pond agreement at the lower outflow rate.

Jim asked about the expense to developers. Emil said it would probably cost 30% more to reduce the amount of water runoff from the current 80% to the proposed 50%.

Jim made a motion seconded by Ray recommending that council pass amend the borough's storm water ordinance to lowering the post-development storm water outflow rate from 80% to 50% of the pre-development rate for the entire borough. Motion passed unanimously.

Emil asked that the Planning Commission consider a second motion that would be applicable to just *Watershed B*.

Jim made a motion seconded by Ray recommending that if council is unable to adopt a borough-wide amendment lowering storm water outflow from 80% to 50% in a timely manner to complete the Bair Boulevard Retaining Pond Maintenance Agreement, it should do so for the area known as *Watershed B*. Motion passed unanimously.

b. Any Other Old Business

Jay asked if there was any *Other Old Business*. There was none.

7. New Business

Jay asked if there was any *New Business*. There was none.

8. Adjournment

On a motion by Denise the meeting adjourned at 8:32 PM.