

SMITHFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
COUNTY OF MONROE, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
REORGANIZATION AND REGULAR MEETINGS ON JANUARY 12, 2023 AT 7 P.M.  
MEETING MINUTES

**1./2. Call to Order and Members Present**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Scott Amori. Along with Commissioner Amori, Commissioners B. Moses, M. Albert, D. Schryver, C. Bowers, and D. Strunk were physically present in the meeting room at the Township Municipal Building. Commissioner M. Bowyer was absent. The meeting was also streamed via Zoom.

In addition to the above Commissioners, the other Township officials who attended the meeting were Supervisor Robert Lovenheim, Township Solicitor Ronold J. Karasek, Esquire of the Karasek Law Offices, LLC, Township Engineer Jon S. Tresslar, PE and PLS, and Township Manager Julia Heilakka, who were physically present in the meeting room.

Present also were Martha Carbone, Steve Hettel, and Lynn Lesoine.

**3. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag:** was recited.

**4. Reorganization:**

• **Nominations**

- Chair: D. Schryver nominates S. Amori for Chair, B. Moses seconds. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.
- Vice Chair: D. Schryver nominates R. Moses for Vice Chair, D. Strunk seconds. Vote: S. Amori, M. Albert, D. Schryver, D. Strunk, and C. Bowers in favor; R. Moses abstains: motion carries.
- Secretary: B. Moses nominates M. Albert for Secretary, S. Amori seconds. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.
- Recording Secretary: D. Schryver nominates Lucas DeBartolo for Recording Secretary, S. Amori seconds. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.

• **Meetings**

- Commissioner Amori motions to hold Planning Commission regular meetings on the second Thursday of the month, Commissioner Strunk seconds. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.
- Commissioner Amori motions to hold Planning Commission work sessions on the fourth Thursday of the month as needed, Commissioner Strunk seconds. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.

**5. Minutes of Regular Meeting of December 8, 2022:** Commissioner Albert motions to approve the minutes, Commissioner Schryver seconds. Vote: all in favor; minutes accepted.

**6. Public Comments on the Agenda:** None.

**7. New Business and Plans to Act On:**

a) **Franklin Hill Manor Land Development Plan.**

The proposed Plan subdivides a 6.1895-acre parcel into four residential lots and develops land on the eastern side of Franklin Hill Road at its intersection with Albert Lane (a private road). The residential lots that will take access from an improved Albert Lane.

While revisions have been made to the Plan, the township is still waiting on information regarding Sewer Planning Module and stormwater easements. The applicant asks the plan be tabled and has provided an extension through April 14, 2023. Commissioner Albert motioned to table the plan until the February 9, 2023 meeting, Commissioner Amori seconds. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.

Steve Hettel, a property owner near the site, states he has attended meetings for a year and will continue to do so. Jon Tresslar states a proposed cross pipe goes beneath Albert Lane, and the proposed riprap goes beyond the right-of-way and onto private property. Lynn Lesoine, also a property owner in the area, does not want additional runoff on his property. Jon Tresslar confirms the latest revision of the Plan is dated December 5, 2022. Commissioner Albert asks what happens if the applicant cannot secure the easements. Jon Tresslar states the existing pipe has been there for approximately 40 years. Mr. Lesoine states a Jim Litz installed the pipe.

Mr. Hettel states the water runoff has worsened over the years and does not believe the applicant can successfully mitigate the runoff. Julia Heilakka offers to provide Mr. Hettel's contact information to the applicant to encourage communication.

**b) Draft Solar Ordinance.**

The Township Board of Supervisors activated Section 609.2 of the Municipalities Planning Code regarding code deficiencies in solar and warehouse uses. The Board of Supervisors must act no later than March 27, 2023. Therefore, the Board must send the final drafts to the planning commissions at their February 8, 2023 meeting, so today is the last day for the Commission to make changes to the draft ordinance before final review. Commissioner Strunk submitted comments on the ordinance.

Commissioners Albert and Strunk discuss the height restriction on solar panels and the Commission determines at large to allow height restrictions to be governed by the underlying zoning district. Commissioner Amori states the township has no authority to forbid the use of chemical pesticides but can discourage them.

The Commission discusses where solar energy facilities should be allowed. After discussion between an overlay following the high voltage lines or a zoning district, the Commission recommends placement in the Industrial (M-1) zone.

The current draft ordinance provides a provision where accessory solar energy systems may be placed in the front yard setback (and in front of a residential structure) if certain setback requirements are met. Commissioner Albert disagrees with the zoning provision that accessory structures aren't allow in front of a singled family dwelling. The Commission discusses the setback and determines that accessory solar should comply with the front yard setbacks per the underlying zoning district.

Commissioner Albert asks for the status of the warehouse portion of the ordinance, and discusses zoning for warehouse uses. Solicitor Karasek replies the warehouse portion of the ordinance is still in development.

**c) Black Buffalo Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan (LDP).**

The property is located on the northern side of Airstrip Rd approximately 480' west of its intersection with Airport Rd. The proposed development includes the construction of a light manufacturing facility consisting of a factory, finished product warehouse, material warehouse, 3D printing space, and a two-story office. Black Buffalo currently has an extension with the township until February 9, 2023.

Solicitor Karasek states the Commission must discuss and take action tonight, as they will not meet again before the Board of Supervisors must act; he recommends denying the land development plan unless an extension is received. Commissioner Schryver spoke to a sales technology manager at Black Buffalo and was informed the company is under new leadership and are still considering construction of the large building.

Commissioner Strunk motions to amend the agenda to include Black Buffalo because of a pending township deadline and the next regular meeting is after the township deadline, Commissioner Albert seconds. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.

Commissioner Amori motions to recommend denial of the Black Buffalo LDP based upon the township engineer's review letters and failure to respond, Commissioner Bowers seconds. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.

**8. Old and Unfinished Business:**

**a) Discuss & Consider: That the Planning Commission ask the Supervisors to request the Planning Commission to develop, recommend for approval and then implement a specific onboarding plan for new Planning Commission Volunteers.**

**b) Discuss & Consider: A motion of the Planning Commission for a periodic report of activities of the Zoning Officer and Building Inspector or permits applied for, grated (or refused), Zoning Violations Cited and any Legal status of those Zoning Violations.**

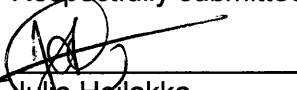
**c) Review of Action on prior recommendations.**

These items were carried over from prior meetings. No action was taken on any old or unfinished business.

**9. Adjournment:**

There being no other business before the Commission, Commissioner Amori motions to adjourn, Commissioner Strunk seconds. Vote: all in favor; meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Julia Heilakka  
Assistant Township Secretary  
Smithfield Township