

SMITHFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
COUNTY OF MONROE, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
REGULAR MEETING ON MARCH 14, 2024, AT 7 P.M.
MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Scott Amori. Along with Commissioner Amori, Commissioners Chris Bowers, Dr. Nicole Carney, James Munet, Douglas Schryver, and David Strunk are physically present in the meeting room at the Smithfield Township Municipal Center, located at 1155 Red Fox Rd, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301. The meeting was also streamed via Zoom. Robert Moses was not present.

2. Members Present

In addition to the above Commissioners, the other Township officials who attended the meeting were Supervisor Robert Lovenheim, Solicitor Ronold J. Karasek, Administrative Coordinator Dyana Salvi, and Conservation & Recreation Director Alex Jackson.

Also present are Kristine Karol, Martha Carbone, Pat Owens, Joann Norris, and Jean Turn.

3. The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag: is recited.

4. Minutes of Regular Meeting of February 8, 2024: Commissioner Amori motions to approve the minutes, Commissioner Bowers seconds. Vote: all in favor; minutes accepted.

Commissioner Amori rescinds the motion to approve the minutes to make an adjustment. Commissioner Amori motions to approve the minutes with a change in reference from lack of zoning permits to lack of compliance with original lighting plan, Commissioner Munet seconds. Vote: all in favor; minutes accepted.

5. New Business and Plans to Act Upon:

a. Land Development Plan- Franklin Hill Manor- Tabled

Franklin Hill Manor has requested to be tabled. The active extension through March 29, 2024, is proposed now to the end of June. Ronold Karasek is awaiting signatures for the extension approval.

Commissioner Amori motions to table the Land Development Plan to the April 11, 2024, meeting, Commissioner Schryver seconds. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.

b. Discuss: Draft Lighting/ Nuisance Ordinance

Alex Jackson states that he has provided three versions of a lighting Ordinance to consider for the municipality: DarkSky, Pennsylvania Outdoor Lighting Council, and a standalone of the DarkSky and POLC. Municipalities within Monroe County have been considered when choosing the lighting ordinance standards. Alex Jackson notes the comparisons between the ordinances.

Robert Lovenheim references the BOS meeting on March 14, 2024. There is a lighting concern for the neighboring area. Robert Lovenheim states that he is in favor of DarkSky.

Commissioner Schryver states the lighting concerns could contradict the DarkSky ordinance. Schryver states that there is a lack of enforcement throughout the township and references an automotive shop on Franklin Hill Rd. Alex Jackson states that lighting enforcement needs to be well defined. The current enforcement is up to the discretion of the Zoning Officer; there is a need for performance standards that can be easily understood and met.

Commissioner Strunk references Chapter 22 of the current lighting ordinance. He states that while it is not specific, it does provide guidance. He points out an illustration of downward lighting, stating that this is the current requirement, which is not being met in the township. Alex Jackson states that this illustration can be argued for the definition of facing downward, reiterating that specific requirements are essential. Commissioner Strunk states that there can be enforcement by the township based on the current ordinance.

Commissioner Amori references current businesses with bright lighting/signs. Martha Carbone asks if the businesses have been notified of lighting complaints. Robert Lovenheim states that he has spoken with Pocono Beer over concerns. Jean Turn states that Brett Cartwright has spoken with Pocono Beer on two separate occasions regarding lighting. Alex Jackson states that with the standalone ordinance the BOS could deputize employees to use a light meter for enforcement. Discussion of overlay zones and existing non-conforming uses transpires. Alex Jackson references a 6 month "grace period" where non-conforming uses will be required to become conforming.

Pat Owens asks about the procedure for non-compliance. Ronold Karasek responds that if someone is in violation they will be cited, then they will follow the rules of criminal procedure before a magisterial district judge. Robert Lovenheim states if the Township adopts a stand-alone ordinance, it will be easier to enforce. Commissioner Amori discusses adding a lighting standalone chapter separate from zoning. Alex Jackson discusses merging the two ordinances. Discussion of changing building use transpires. Alex Jackson states there is a consensus to proceed with choosing a new chapter for lighting standards with a standalone ordinance, and SALDO/Zoning revisions referencing the chapter.

Commissioner Schryver motions to move forward with the approach of DarkSky ordinance and a standalone chapter, second by Commissioner Amori. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.

6. Old and Unfinished Business: None

7. Public Comments:

- a. Kristine Karol references page 15 of the DarkSky ordinance with zone 0; open space with no human presence. Kristine Karol asks that zone 0 be considered when creating the lighting ordinance. Alex Jackson states that this could be specific to certain parcels, such as the Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge, and Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area.

- b. Martha Carbone states that light could spill onto the property; adding zone 0 would help with light regulation.
- c. Pat Owens states that zone 0 would be a discussion point for the EAC.
- d. Joann Norris references the discussion surrounding changing business use and asks if the current lighting ordinance allows for enforcement. Commissioner Schryver states that the Zoning Officer asked for training in light enforcement.

8. Adjournment:

There being no other business before the Commission, Commissioner Amori motions to adjourn, the Commissioners second. Vote: all in favor; meeting adjourned at 8:02PM.

Minutes Recorded by: Dyana Salvi

Respectfully submitted,



Julia Heilakka
Township Secretary
Smithfield Township