

THE SMITHFIELD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND
SMITHFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION JOINT WORK SESSION
MAY 15, 2024

A Joint Work Session of the Smithfield Township Board of Supervisors (“Board”) and Planning Commission (“Commission”) was held on May 15, 2024, at the Smithfield Township Municipal Center, at 1155 Red Fox Rd, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301, and via Zoom.

Present are Supervisors Jacob Pride, Robert Lovenheim, and Michael Albert; Commissioners Scott Amori, Chris Bowers, Dr. Nicole Carney, Robert Moses, James Munet, David Strunk, Doug Schryver; Conservation & Recreation Director Dr. Alex Jackson, and Township Manager Julia Heilakka.

Also present are Marguerite Vecchio, Tara Vecchio, Kristine Karol, and Bob Marki.

1. Chair Jacob Pride calls the meeting to order at 5:05PM. A quorum is present.
2. Public Comments on the Agenda – none.
3. New Business
 - a. Discuss: ADU Standards. Dr. Jackson discusses the draft language for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), which would add ADUs to the Township’s zoning ordinance. The use creates a space for extended families to exist on the same parcel while protecting the character of the area. Commissioner Strunk and Amori are concerned this is contrary to the Township's character. Supervisor Pride discusses the housing crisis and extended families. Commissioner Strunk and Supervisor Albert express concern that people will take advantage of the use to create rental units. Supervisor Albert states this as a way for individuals not able to live alone to exist independently. Commissioner Schryver states many SFDs are already multigenerational homes and expresses concern regarding enforcement of the use.

Commissioner Strunk states the current ordinances are not being enforced. Commissioner Schryver states that blight in the Township is more important than ADUs, and would like to table this item. The group discusses the housing crisis, Smithfield Gateway, and the proposed housing associated with the Gateway project.

Commissioner Bower discusses how this use could be helpful. Dr. Jackson provides an example of a young adult moving into a secondary home, and Julia Heilakka suggests elderly parents could live with their children as an alternative to assisted living facilities. Commissioner Schryver discusses the benefits for adults with cognitive disabilities but is concerned about enforcement. Commissioner Munet discusses research for property values and researching minimum/maximum square footage of ADUs.

- b. Discuss: Lighting Ordinance Update. The Township currently has minimal lighting standards, most of which are in SALDO, so they are only triggered for larger development projects. Supervisor Albert discusses enforcement and conformity concerns for projects that are approved but then make changes after approval.

Dr. Jackson states the MCPC recommended reviewing Coolbaugh and CJERP standards to augment the Dark Sky model ordinance. The group agrees to put lighting standards in a new chapter, have zoning and SALDO reference that section, and that regulations must be easily enforceable.

- c. Discuss: Sign Ordinance. Dr. Jackson discusses how the current draft compares to the current ordinance. The group discusses creating a standalone ordinance for signs, how to handle nonconforming uses, and whether lit signs should be addressed in the lighting or sign ordinance. Commissioner Strunk discusses monuments and memorials. The group decides that nonconforming uses will require conditional use hearings. The group decides to form a small subcommittee for signs comprised of Commissioner Strunk, Supervisor Albert, and Dr. Jackson that will redline the current ordinance to better understand changes, and then present that draft to the entire group.

4. Public Comment

- a. Kristine Karol states ADUs have become more popular. There is a housing crisis in the entire country; her own daughter cannot afford to live in the Township. She would prefer to put a cottage in her backyard for her daughter; this update is important. Commissioner Amori states this will increase house prices; he leaves at 6:17PM.
- b. Bob Marki agrees with Kristine Karol and expresses concern for enforcement. Supervisor Albert acknowledges the Township will need many safeguards so the use is not abused.

5. Supervisor Albert motions to adjourn, Supervisor Lovenheim seconds: meeting adjourned at 6:19PM.

Minutes recorded by Julia Heilakka

Respectfully submitted:



Julia Heilakka
Township Secretary