

SMITHFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING – FEBRUARY 13, 2025, AT 7:00PM

A Regular Meeting of the Smithfield Township Planning Commission was held on February 13, 2025, at the Smithfield Township Municipal Center at 1155 Red Fox Rd, East Stroudsburg, PA 18301, and via Zoom.

Present are Commissioners Scott Amori, Chris Bowers, Dr. Nicole Carney, James Munet, Doug Schryver, David Strunk, and Jean Turn; Supervisor Robert Lovenheim, Solicitor Ronold J. Karasek, Township Engineer Jon S. Tresslar, Zoning Officer Matthew Helbers, and Township Manager Julia Heilakka.

Also present are Tammy Booth, Brett Cartwright, Kristine Karol, Pat Owens, Tim Schnaitman, Lynn Schwarz, and Tara Vecchio-Freeman.

1. Chair Scott Amori calls the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

2. The Pledge of Allegiance is recited.

3. Minutes:

a. November 14, 2024 Joint Meeting.

Commissioner Amori motions to approve the minutes, Commissioner Munet seconds.
Vote: all in favor; minutes accepted.

b. December 12, 2024 Regular Meeting.

Commissioner Amori motions to approve the minutes, Commissioner Munet seconds.
Vote: all in favor; minutes accepted.

c. January 9, 2025 Reorganization and Regular Meeting.

Commissioner Amori motions to approve the minutes with the correction that Commissioners Bowers was not present, Commissioner Turn seconds, and asks how the Township ensures conditions and engineer comments are complied with per page 3 of the minutes. Commissioner Amori states the applicant will not be able to start work until all conditions are approved. Vote: all in favor; minutes accepted.

4. New Business:

a. Introduce New Zoning Officer.

Matthew Helbers of Bureau Veritas, the Township's new Zoning Officer, introduces himself to the Commission. Dedicated office hours are 8:30AM - 4:30PM on Thursdays, and he is available by phone and email on other days. He has been involved in municipal government for seven years, six of which he's been a Zoning Officer, and has served as a UCC inspector, Zoning Officer, and short-term rental inspector.

Kristine Karol asks about being a Zoning Officer. Matt Helbers replies he's worked at Bureau Veritas for four years and is studying to get additional certifications.

Commissioner Carney asks about light meters, and Tim Schnaitman asks about availability. Matt Helbers states courts want official training for light meters, and confirms he will answer phone calls and emails five days a week. Martha Carbone states the lack of available training on light may be a reason to challenge a judge's requirement of such. Tammy Booth references a case where a local judge accepted sound meter readings because Robert Lovenheim has a degree in a related field. Commissioner Strunk suggests using a simple meter to resolve concerns and then pursuing credentialled services if the reading is challenged.

Tammy Booth states most problems are on weekends and weekdays, and wants a Township employee to work on weekends. Commissioner Amori confirms state police are not required to enforce local ordinances. Lynn Swarz asks if there are others to supplement Matt's work. Matt Helbers replies he is currently the only Zoning Officer.

5. Old Business:

a. Consider: 3 Point Garden Major Subdivision – Tabled. Deadline - 02.26.2025.

The Township received a request from the applicant to table this item. Commissioner Strunk discusses stormwater concerns. Jon Tresslar confirms that the developer is responsible for rainfall on that property, but is not responsible for detaining or infiltrating water that comes from other properties. Tim Schnaitman expresses serious concern for stormwater runoff in the area and an intermittent creek not acknowledged on the plans.

Jon Tresslar and Commissioner Strunk discuss potential road updates, swales, and upgrade requirements. Commissioner Strunk considers a condition on the developer to help mitigate water runoff in the area. Jon Tresslar ensures the Township will take a close look at the plan. Brett Cartwright asks how the Township handles stormwater problems. Jon Tresslar explains the review process and the criteria used by MCCD and himself to review plans.

Kristine Karol and Tara Vecchio-Freeman ask about the Zoning Officer selection. Julia Heilakka reached out to five companies and received proposals from three; Bureau Veritas was the least expensive option.

b. Consider: Franklin Hill Manor Minor Subdivision Planning Module. Deadline - 03.15.2025.

Commissioner Amori motions to recommend approval of the SPM to the Board of Supervisors, Commissioner Schryver seconds. Vote: all in favor; motion carries.

c. Consider: Water Gap Wellness LDP. Deadline - 03.12.2025.

The applicant contacted the Township on February 13, 2025, requesting to be tabled from tonight's meeting. This item is tabled.

6. Public Comments:

- a. Ron Karasek requests the Township double check the deadline for the Shukaitis Estate Minor Subdivision.
- b. Brett Cartwright asks if the Township will continue to bring to light errors from the prior Zoning Officer. Julia Heilakka replies it is more important to focus on moving forward correctly and as a team for the betterment of the Township than looking backwards and placing blame on the prior Zoning Officer.
- c. Tammy Booth, Pat Owens, and Tim Schnaitman ask about the oversight of a Zoning Officer. Julia Heilakka replies that the Zoning Officer is the sole interpreter of the Zoning ordinance; while he is under the supervision of the Board, no one can tell him how to interpret an ordinance.
- d. Kristine Karol asks for more information on a verbal approval issued by the prior Zoning Officer. Julia Heilakka replies the Zoning Officer is consulting with the Solicitor; details are not available to the public at this time.

- 7. Adjournment:** There being no other business before the Commission, Commissioner Amori, motions to adjourn, Commissioner Schryver seconds. Vote: all in favor; meeting adjourned at 7:56PM.

Minutes Recorded by Julia Heilakka

Respectfully submitted,



Julia Heilakka
Township Secretary