

HALFMOON TOWNSHIP
Planning Commission Meeting
April 1, 2014 (04-01-14)
7:00 pm

Present: Danelle Del Corso, Melissa Gartner, Jeff Martin, Jason Little, John Stevens, Lorin Nauman
Others present: D. J. Liggett, CRPA; Susan Steele, Township Manager; Nicole Gross, recording secretary
Not Present: Sam Evans

1. Call To Order

Chair Ms. Del Corso called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

2. Citizen Comments

None

3. Approval of March 18, 2014 Minutes

Motion. Mr. Stevens moved to approve the minutes of March 18, 2014. Ms. Gartner seconded. Vote: 5-0.

4. Reports

- a. BOS Update
None
- b. Zoning Officer's Report
None
- c. CRPC Update
Joint meeting on April 7, 2014.
- d. Open Space Board Update
Mr. Nauman reported the next meeting is April 2, 2014.

5. Meeting Change

Ms. Del Corso asked the PC if they would be willing to move the May 6, 2014 meeting to another location for the training course discussed at previous meetings. Ms. Del Corso asked the PC if the May 20th meeting should be changed to May 13th due to the primary elections being held in the meeting room. Mr. Nauman moved to approve. Mr. Martin seconded. Vote 6-0.

6. Bulk Regulations

Ms. Steele recommended that the placement and/or use of cell towers be specified on the bulk regulations for the Agricultural zoning district. Ms. Steele asked if the Planning Commission would like it listed as a permitted use or if they would like to move it to a different zone. According to Mr. Stevens, a cell tower needs to be on a ridge line like a wind turbine, so the landscape should be considered in the decision of where to place the cell towers in zoning. Mr. Little states that there will be a necessity for an access road to each cell tower also, which could bring up other issues later. Ms. Liggett stated that CRPA staff attended a webinar on cell towers where they learned

that a township cannot claim right of way and place restrictions on the cell towers, limiting their construction, but can use zoning to make sure cell towers are in the most appropriate place for the township. Therefore, it is important to place the cell towers in a specific zone so they don't encroach on residential areas. Ms. Liggett explained that ridge locations, which are not suitable for some types of development because of steep slopes and poor soils, would not present the same concerns for cell towers. Ms. Liggett stated that Patton Township will be revising its cell tower ordinance based on the information they received at the webinar and she suggested that the PC wait to see what Patton Township comes up with and then use that as guidance. Mr. Little stated that he is concerned about the visibility aspect of the landscape, so he asked that the PC design standards for cell towers to make them more appealing against the landscape. Ms. Liggett stated that there are limitations to a municipality's ability to regulate cell towers because they are federally regulated, but the PC can consider some regulations to screen and disguise towers to improve the look of them. She noted that there are cell towers in the Centre Region disguised as flag poles. Mr. Little stated that he has seen cell towers disguised as trees. The PC will look over the current cell tower regulations and consider the zoning district they prefer to place the cell towers in during a later meeting.

Ms. Liggett stated that the current Agricultural zoning district allows for a community sewage treatment plant in the bulk regulations. She noted that the PC should consider permitting community on-lot sewage systems in the Agricultural district instead.

Ms. Del Corso stated that the current bulk regulations do not require a minimum lot size for agriculture uses. Ms. Liggett stated that this could create an issue because residents could have large farm animals on 1 acre lots. Ms. Steele suggested that the PC consider a minimum agriculture lot size of 10 acres to make it similar to the "clean and green" regulations. Ms. Del Corso agreed that this is a good idea for the following permitted uses: agricultural uses; forestry uses; and horticultural uses. Mr. Little agreed but states that this should be specified for commercial use of agricultural, forestry and horticulture.

Mr. Nauman states that Bed and Breakfast; Dwelling (Single family); and Residence of caretakers and/or owner operators should also have a minimum lot size of 10 acres. Reasoning: what is the base lot size? If it is less than 10 acres than it is allowing residents to subdivide a lot into housing developments which is what the planning commission is trying to avoid in the Agricultural zoning district.

Ms. Del Corso asked if Preservation should be taken off the list of permitted uses because it is permitted in another zone. The PC agreed.

The PC agreed unanimously that 10 acres should be the minimum lot size for kennels. Mr. Stevens asked what is the definition of kennels? Ms. Steele stated the definition of kennels is "a facility for the boarding, breeding, grooming, sale or training of dogs and cats for which a fee is charged."

The PC agreed to delete "Public Ground," "Open Area" and "Open Land" from the Agricultural zoning district since they are permitted in another zone also.

Quarry/ Extraction Operations the state regulates this so municipalities are limited in what they can restrict. Mr. Little stated that the lot size should be limited. Mr. Nauman suggested that 50 acres be the minimum. Ms. Liggett and Ms. Steele suggested maybe moving this into another zone. Ms. Liggett agreed to review College Township's regulations to see which zone they use. Ms. Liggett suggested that Quarry/Extraction be listed as a conditional use under the Agricultural zoning district so that additional conditions can be placed to buffer it from adjacent land uses. The PC agreed to continue discussing this item.

Ms. Steele noted that staff can review the bulk regulations for lot coverage, setback distances and height and prepare a recommendation to the PC. Ms. Liggett noted that she will meet with the Zoning Officer to prepare a recommendation.

8. Matter of Record

- The next PC meeting will be held on April 15, 2014.
- The PC will continue its discussion on yield planning
- Staff is researching the plans approved since 1999 when the RPD regulations took effect to see which parcels are grandfathered under those provisions.

9. Adjournment

Motion. Mr. Stevens moved to adjourn. Mr. Nauman seconded. Vote: 6-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Nicole Gross
Recording Secretary