

HALFMOON TOWNSHIP
Planning Commission Meeting
May 13, 2014
7:00 pm

Present: Danelle Del Corso, Melissa Gartner, Jeff Martin, Jason Little, Lorin Nauman, Sam Evans

Others present: D. J. Liggett, CRPA; Dave Piper, Township Zoning Officer; Nicole Gross, Recording Secretary

Not Present: John Stevens, Susan Steele, Township Manager

1. Call To Order

Chair, Ms. Del Corso called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Citizen Comments

None

3. Approval of April 15, 2014 Minutes

Motion. Mr. Nauman moved to approve the minutes of April 15, 2014. Mr. Little seconded. Vote: 6-0.

4. Reports

a. BOS Update

CATA presented its budget for the 2014-2015 fiscal year. Although bus ridership is on the decline, the BOS will continue to fund CATA for another year. The BOS will hold a public meeting to discuss improvements along Smith Road to add room for a bike path. This may require some land from adjacent properties.

b. Zoning Officer's Report

There was no report.

c. CRPC Update

Mr. Evans stated that the May 1, 2014 meeting included a rezoning in Patton Township to add a permitted use in the Planned Airport District. There was a presentation on a revised Master Plan for Toftrees West. The authorization for PennDOT funds was approved, but there is no final decision for appropriation of the funds. The rezoning of Hilltop Mobile Home Park was discussed. The Comprehensive Plan Implementation Priorities were presented. Ms. Liggett presented a proposal for a regional affordable housing program. The CRPC will be working with other organizations in the region to manage affordable housing in the area. The CRPC discussed the need for data collection and analysis and whether this should be done in-house.

d. Open Space Board Update

Mr. Nauman stated there is nothing to report.

5. Debrief - PSATS workshop on subdivision & land development law

- Uses not provided for – Ms. Liggett stated that the recommendation was that these be conditional uses decided by the BOS rather than the zoning officer.
- Ms. Gartner stated that she liked that the PC's discussions on revising the Ag zone are not considered down zoning.
- Mr. Nauman stated that when the farmers go to the bank to borrow money it is not based on the development potential for the land, but the farming potential of the land.
- Mr. Piper stated that he has been getting a lot of calls from real estate appraisers, so he disagrees with what the banks say about not using the potential of the land as a factor in giving a loan to farmers.
- Mr. Nauman asked how the planning commission will combat the perception of down zoning and the way some farmers/citizens may argue it. Mr. Piper stated that it is the Township's responsibility to be sympathetic towards this issue and deal with it on a case by case scenario.

6. Agricultural Zoning District - Bulk Regulations

Regarding the definition for Recreational Facilities, the following considerations were discussed:

- What isn't kept in the Ag Zone will have to be provided for elsewhere.
- The focus should be on the impact to the zone. For instance, a race track would generate traffic, noise and light issues. What harm will it have on the zone?
- The main theme is to maintain the Ag Zone for agricultural uses.
- The conditions that should be considered if things like a racetrack are allowed: fencing, sewage, traffic, etc.

The consensus is that the items under Bulk Regulations for the Ag zone that do the least harm on the zone are things that are natural to agriculture: i.e. conservation/preservation, horse stables and riding academy, community gardens, horseback riding, and private recreation areas. Mr. Nauman stated this is a good thing to think about when discussing the impact on the zone because if horseback riding and academies are ok, what about the shows they have at their academy? Mr. Nauman states that maybe the dividing line between permitted uses versus conditional uses should be based on retail sales. For instance, if the base salary is made on a horse boarding business, then if they have a retail sale shop (which would create more traffic flow in the area and cause more impact to the area) that would be a conditional use versus a permitted use.

Recreational Facilities -

- Permitted Uses - Consistent with the intent of the Ag zone
 - Community garden
 - Conservation/ preservation
 - Riding stable and academy

- Camping and Campgrounds – with temporary occupancy in cabins, tents, or outdoor recreational vehicles.
- Conditional Uses - will define a minimum acreage
 - Vehicular Racetrack
 - Golf Course

Telecommunication Facilities -

The current ordinance for Telecommunications Facilities states, “permitted in A-1 (Agricultural District)”. The bulk regulations page for the Natural Area zoning district also lists Telecommunications Facilities as a permitted use. The question is whether the Planning Commission wants to include the use in both zones or one or the other zone. Mr. Little noted that the Natural Area zone is the State Gamelands property, which is in a low-lying area of the Township. The Planning Commission recommended that Telecommunications Facilities be removed from the Natural Area zone and retained in the Agricultural zone. Vote: 6-0

7. Matter of Record

- The next meeting of the Planning Commission will be June 3, 2014.
- The agenda will include discussion of Yield Planning and conditions for Mining and Quarrying.
- BOS update - There will be a public meeting on May 29 for the Parks Master Plan Consultant to hear ideas for Autumn Meadow and Halfmoon Municipal parks.

9. Adjournment

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

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Nicole Gross
Recording Secretary