

The stated meeting of the Planning Commission of the Township of Abington was held on Tuesday, March 10, 2015 at the Township Administration Building, Abington, PA., with Chairman, Mr. Don Marquardt presiding.

CALL TO ORDER: 7:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: SPEARMAN, STRACKHOUSE, RUSSELL,
COOPER, WEGGEL, GAUTHIER, MARQUARDT
Excused: ROSEN

Also Present: Commissioner Kline
Director of Code Enforcement MATTEO
County Planner NARCOWICH

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Agenda Item PC1 – Review of Proposed Updates and Revisions to the Zoning Ordinance of the Township of Abington

Mr. Marquardt read agenda Item PC1 into the record, and called on Commissioner Kline, Commissioner of Ward 1, Vice President of the Board and Chairman of the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite Committee.

Commissioner Kline said before the Board this evening is notes taken by Mr. Penecale and Mr. Narcowich at the four Planning Commission meetings during the presentation of draft zoning ordinance. The next step in this process will be to present the draft zoning ordinance to the Board of Commissioners, which will represent recommendations by the Planning Commission that were made during those four meetings.

The Board of Commissioners will then take recommendations made by the Planning Commission and consider formulating them into their formal recommendations and that will go back to the Zoning Ordinance Rewrite Committee to make further revisions to the zoning ordinance.

The following recommendations made by the Planning Commission will be passed onto the Board of Commissioners for review and consideration:

To look at the 100 block of Shady Lane that is zoned RC, but there are several homes there and the suggestion is to rezone it to R-2 or R-3.

To further study language of the “wall-to-opening” in the zoning ordinance.

Review definition of “gross leasable floor areas” and use the industry standard.

To consider that impervious coverage should not include “gravel.” Gravel should be a permitted pervious surface with some restrictions and further examined in the SALDO.

Tighten up language for home-based businesses and low impact home-based businesses.

To consider that drop-off containers within front yards must be screened.

To review outdoor dining and the requirements to store tables and chairs indoors every night.

Review outdoor recreational uses within each commercial district.

Consider beekeeping and possible setbacks for hives.

Review Use C-9 - Convenience Store requirement of 3,000 square feet.

Review a minimum separation of parking deck if not connected to another building.

Consider a provision for a restaurant to have carryout or delivery services such as Outback/Cheesecake Factory, etc.

There was an issue with the 500 foot minimum separation for bars and instead create a “hub” of activity.

Consider reducing size of offset in the building length provision.

There was an issue regarding 90-day limitation on rental vehicles.

How should “fracking” be addressed?

Consider adding language for bike-shares.

Consider a recommendation for a setback of at least three feet from the side property line.

Consider language requiring vehicles being parked in the driveway instead of in the front or side yard.

Address the issue of the Building Code’s link to the commercial districts’ requirements for fire protection and noncombustible materials. Current ordinance lists the districts by name and those names will be changed.

Within the Community Service District - Use A-12 - Farmers’ Market- Seasonal, and consider whether it should be by conditional use approval.

Consideration of changing zoning of St. John's property from R-4 to CS.

Review certain percentage of buildings' front façade being a certain height such as it is 20 feet within the proposed MS-H District.

Recommendation to have dimensional requirements for each proposed MS-H, MS-L and MS-VC Districts to be on a separate page in the zoning ordinance.

A resident requested green space requirement to be increased from 10% in the MS Districts for multi-family units.

Consider having dimensions listed for offsets.

Consider adding a definition for the term "Sight Triangle" within Section 201 of the draft zoning ordinance.

Consider additional protections for historical buildings as it relates to the bonus system listed within the BC-Business Center District.

Review impervious coverage allowed within the triangle tract - 80%-85% vs. 25% green space requirement.

Consider idea that the railroad side of the triangle tract should be protected since the properties on the other side of the tracks are all residential.

Review description for bar/tavern sales 25% to 40% alcohol sales.

Copy change on LED signs six times per minute.

Make sure political signs have been reviewed by Township Solicitor.

Review with Township Manager - off-premise signs and billboard signs.

Make sure floodplain regulations are strict.

Review Riparian Corridor Overlay as it relates to properties that are 100% within the floodplain. Ex: Roslyn Park.

Define the term "Bank Flow" in the Floodplain District.

Review prohibited uses within the 100-year floodplain – retention vs. detention basins.

Review installation of public utilities within the limits of the 100-year floodplain – Ex: sanitary sewer lines, water lines, etc.

Review Steep Slope restrictions as it relates to retaining walls, foundations and walkout basements.

LED-Signage – review permitted number of changes per minute. Six would bring provision in line with what has been approved by the ZHB over the last 10 years.

Review signage restrictions for off-premise signage – {Billboards}.

Review parking of commercial vehicles within residential districts.

Review parking requirements for residential accessory dwelling units.

Review proposed size of onsite parking stalls for commercial uses.

Consider including preferred tree plantings list into zoning ordinance.

Review landscape buffer option as it relates to placement of 6-foot high fencing such as how far into the front yard setback area/sight lines.

Consider providing a sketch on various buffer designs.

Consider tree replacement with the addition of 500 sq. ft. of impervious coverage; removal of a 6-foot tree; and requirement to plant two new trees.

Review language for masonry wall within buffer such as stucco/finished wall design/brick, etc.

Request Township Solicitor to review requirement for permits to remove trees within the right-of-way or front yard setback area – Section 2401.A.1.b.

Review requirement for a minimum separation on wind turbines.

Add a requirement for emergency shutoff for accessory power. Ex: solar panels or wind turbines that back feed into the structure.

Request Township Solicitor to review how commercial subdivisions are to be addressed.

Review language for outdoor storage and display of goods and materials.

Review advertisements on commercial properties as additional signage. Ex: video displays as seen at gas stations and convenient stores.

Include massage ordinance requirements in the Adult Uses.

Recommendations made by County Planner will be passed onto the Board of Commissioners for review and consideration:

Main Street Districts – Remove reference to hedge in street wall regulations under MS Districts and Sidewalk and Streetscape chapter sine we are no longer permitting a street wall to consist of a hedge.

Principal buildings shall be constructed, so the build-to-lines are measured from a public street, main access drive, private street or secondary access drive.

Review lot areas in floodplain, as currently, yard areas are permitted and proposed ordinance would prohibit them.

Planning Commission was in support of accessory dwelling uses being a by-right use.

Appendix: Use Table – Correct SI District permission of a sit-down restaurant to say “must be in mixed-use building.”

Discuss with Solicitor about prohibiting signs from the right-of-way must be stricken and should it be for all signs or political signs.

Consider parking for accessory dwelling units and should it be one space per ADU rather than one space per registered driver.

Consider that all stumps of street trees shall be removed below the surface of the ground so that the top of stump shall not project above the surface of the ground. Language for stumps in remote areas is vague and the suggestion is to say, “Stumps not visible from a public street or abutting property.”

Discuss whether brewpubs and distilleries require a separate use category or address it under existing uses such as Taverns or retail operations.

ADJOURNMENT: 9:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Vile, Recording Secretary