



**Township of Northampton
55 Township Road
Richboro, PA 18954**

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING OF
NOVEMBER 14, 2017
MINUTES**

Members Present

Dr. Arthur Friedman
Edward Ingle
Andrew Gannon
Patrick McGuigan
Michelle Druding
Steve Saddlemire

Others Present

Amada Fuller, Township Traffic Engineer
Craig Bryson, RLA, Township Planner
Mike Solomon, Director of Planning and Zoning

Dr. Friedman called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance. There was also a moment of silence for those in our armed forces.

Minutes

A motion (Ingle/Gannon) was made to approve the minutes from the September 12, 2017 meeting.

Approved - 6-0

Presentation by the Bucks County Planning Commission on the Township Comprehensive Plan Update

Mike Roedig from the Bucks County Planning Commission was present to give a presentation on the Northampton Township Comprehensive Plan Update.

Mr. Roedig provided an overview of the adoption process and outlined the purpose of a Comprehensive Plan. He began the presentation by giving an overview on community background, including the Township's demographic profile.

Mr. Roedig discussed the Township's community vision and plan principles, which include a livable built environment, a resilient economy, a lasting landscape, a healthy community, and responsible regionalism. He also presented graphics that show the Township's land use, natural resources, agricultural resources, historic and scenic resources, park and recreation resources, and transportation and circulation.

Future land use and implementation was also discussed. Mr. Roedig presented a future land use map. He also noted that the Holland and Richboro Master Plans will be included with the adoption of this Comprehensive Plan update.

At this point, Mr. Roedig outlined plan elements and recommendations, including an agricultural plan, a natural resources plan, historic and scenic resources, housing, transportation and circulation, and economic development.

Mr. Roedig concluded his presentation and opened up the discussion to questions from the Commission. Dr. Friedman raised a point about the small parcels and areas of future development, the potential for golf course development, and the potential closure and redevelopment of Rolling Hills Elementary School. He also raised concern about pedestrian crossing across Second Street Pike.

Mr. McGuigan noted that transportation and economic development go hand in hand.

Mr. Saddlemire inquired about funding opportunities. Mr. Roedig noted that Northampton Township has done a good job pursuing these potential funding sources.

Mr. Gannon discussed the potential for of preservation of the Rook Farm. He added that the Township is a bedroom community and should entice more commercial and nonresidential revenue. Mr. Ingle concurred with this point.

Mr. McGuigan further inquired about the potential impact of the State budget.

Mr. Weinstein stated that the County did a good job with the plan, but not everything can happen due to funding. He further thanked Representative Petri and Senator Tomlinson for securing \$500,000 of multi-modal funding for implementation of the sidewalk plan. He added that the Township is not an advocate for public transportation stops.

Mr. Solomon provided a timeline for adoption of the plan and noted that this matter will be before the Commission again for a recommendation.

The Commission thanked Mr. Roedig for the presentation.

Consideration of Zoning Ordinance Amendment - LED Signs and Sign Requirements

Mr. Solomon and Karen Lee Demerlis, Township Solicitor, were present to provide an overview of the ordinance amendment. Mr. Solomon stated that the ordinance amendment is to allow LED signs specifically related to identifying gas prices for gas station signs. With changing technology, it was deemed that this ordinance modification is warranted. This ordinance proposes conditions, which include the following:

- The size of the LED sign area related to the total sign square footage;
- Restrictions on the sign from flashing, scrolling, or imitating movement;
- Restrictions on time intervals;
- Restrictions on sign lighting and glare intensity; and,
- Setbacks from residential districts.

In addition, the ordinance proposes minor modifications to our sign ordinance to increase the size of freestanding signs for commercial properties. Currently, the ordinance is overly restrictive for shopping centers. This has resulted in numerous variance requests or sign installations that are difficult to read.

Mr. Solomon noted that the ordinance has been reviewed by the Township Solicitor as part of the process. He further noted that since this matter will be considered by the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Commission is required to make a recommendation on the ordinance as required by the Municipalities Planning Code.

In response to Dr. Friedman, Mr. Solomon clarified ordinance language and shopping center sign requirements. In follow up to Mr. Gannon, the colors of LED signs was also discussed. Mr. Saddlemire also raised points of clarification.

There being no comment from the public, the Planning Commission made the following motion:

I move to recommend approval of an ordinance amendment to the Northampton Township Zoning Ordinance, specifically Chapter 27, for the purpose of amending sections related to signage and requirements related to LED signs.

Approved - 6-0

Motion – Saddlemire Second - Ingle

Other Business

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Work Session

Discussion - Richboro Master Plan Traffic Improvements

The Planning Commission met in an untelevised work session to discuss the Richboro Master Plan, specifically related to the proposed traffic improvements in the plan. There was extensive discussion regarding the proposed round-a-bout, traffic interconnections, and specific intersections.

It was recommended to have the Township traffic engineer at a work session at next month's meeting to answer these questions.

Respectfully Submitted:

Michael T. Solomon
Director of Planning and Zoning