

**COLLEGE TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
REORGANIZATION AND REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
In Person and Via Zoom**



January 4, 2022- 7 p.m.
1481 East College Avenue, State College, PA 16801
www.collegetownship.org

PRESENT: Robert Hoffman
Bill Sharp
Peggy Ekdahl
Ray Forziat
Bill Sharp
William J. McKibbin
Ed Darrah
Jen Landry

STAFF PRESENT: Linda Magro, Senior Support Specialist/Engineering
Planning Commission Recording Secretary
Donald M. Franson, P.E., P.L.S, Township Engineer
Mark Gabrovsek, Township Zoning Officer
Lindsay Schoch, AICP, Township Principal Planner

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Franson called meeting to order at 7 p.m.

ZOOM MEETING PROTOCOL: Ms. Magro read the zoom meeting protocol.

ROLL CALL:

REORGANIZATION:

Mr. Sharp moved to nominate and elect Mr. Forziat as Chair.
Mr. McKibbin seconded the motion.
Motion carried.

Mr. McKibbin moved to nominate and elect Mr. Darrah as Vice-Chair.
Mr. Hoffman seconded the motion.
Motion carried.

Mr. Hoffman moved to nominate and elect Ms. Ekdahl as Secretary.
Mr. McKibbin seconded the motion.
Motion carried.

Mr. Darrah moved to nominate and elect Mr. Forziat as the Centre Regional Planning Commission representative.

Mr. Sharp seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Mr. Darrah moved to nominate and elect Mr. Sharp as alternate to the Centre Regional Planning Commission.

Mr. Forziat seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

Mr. McKibbin moved to nominate and elect Mr. Darrah as Council liaison.

Mr. Sharp seconded the motion.

Motion carried

Mr. Darrah moved to nominate and elect Ms. Landry as alternate Council Liaison.

Mr. Hoffman seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

REGULAR MEETING

OPEN DISCUSSION:

Mr. Darrah discussed the PC action on the Millbrook Marsh Spring Creek Education Building Land Development Plan and Council's review of the plan. He discussed the issue of Council not taking into consideration PC's position on the trail aggregate, lighting, and sidewalks. Mr. Darrah opined that Council deliberated for 2.5 hours and could not figure out if they liked lighting or hard surface pathway. Some Council members did not like that there were no sidewalks going down Puddintown Road. They accomplished nothing. He stated he was upset that the recommendations and hard work of PC were not taken into consideration.

Mr. Darrah met with the Township Manager and asked why PC even exists. PC spends a lot of time reviewing the plans a week ahead of time; they do their homework, and they come up with a recommendation. He was irritated that one Council member wanted sidewalks from the end of the property line along Puddintown down to Cedar Lane up towards College Avenue. There were selected calls made into the Council meeting and he opined that they were staged calls. They did not want any hard surface path at all even though PC wanted to see winter maintenance done on the path.

The PC recommendation was to use the alternate route that was suggested. The route could be 5 feet. It did not have to be bike path length. There is a bike path that runs along the marsh and goes across the bridge. PC did not suggest a multi-use path, but suggested a sidewalk.

Council was not in favor of the lights as required in the ordinance as it is a natural preserve. They had staged calls regarding the lights. PC never said they had to be at max illumination. Mr. Darrah stated that he was very frustrated and that PC did it's homework and spent a lot of time on this coming up with a safe passageway for people walking the bike path to the bridge.

There will be more discussion at the January 20, 2022, Council meeting as the plan was tabled. Mr. Darrah does not like the sidewalk coming down Puddintown as the marsh facility is funded by the taxpayers. With that, there is still a good plan for safe pedestrian travel.

Mr. Darrah offered that Council was looking for justification on why PC recommended what was recommended. PC recommended a sidewalk not an 8 foot multi-use path way.

Ms. Ekdahl echoed Mr. Darrah's sentiments. She stated that a lot of work was put into the recommendations. PC did their job. Mr. Darrah also stated that PC took staff recommendation on the plan and Council's discussion was like a snub at internal staff as well as PC. This does not present a team effort of accomplishing things in the Township.

Mr. Hoffman reminded PC that they are a recommending body. However, Council has previously not taken our recommendations as presented and PC would appreciate knowing why our recommendations were not followed

Mr. Sharp stated that PC did a good job in the recommendation on this plan. He recognized the frustration. He looked ahead to the conversations to be had on Dale Summit. He realized that there needs to be good relationship between PC, staff and Council. He recommended that the new Chair of PC meet with the Township Manager to discuss this further. He offered that there is a conflict that needs to be resolved. Ms. Landry appreciated the update from Mr. Darrah.

Mr. Forziat asked if Council was interested in having the sidewalk put in per the ordinance along the road the entire way. Mr. Franson stated that they did not but they wanted it from the western end of the property to Cedar Lane. He stated that they are giving the developer the opportunity to look at other options. Mr. Forziat inquired if a spur would be needed to access the site if the sidewalk was installed along Puddintown. Mr. Hoffman stated that Centre Region Code would likely require access.

Mr. Forziat shared the same concerns with PC members. The plan was tabled and Council has not formalized their decisions. He suggested waiting to see the final recommendation from Council. They may have had some resistance in dialog and since it was tabled, he suggested waiting to see the final approval recommendation.

Mr. Darrah stated that Council could not come to a consensus. After a short conversation after the Council meeting, the developer was perplexed by the Council discussion. Mr. Forziat stated that sidewalks have been a contentious issue for a very long time, hence the sidewalk masterplan. Not everyone will have the same appreciation of prior conversations regarding sidewalks. He asked staff to keep PC apprised of the developments on the plan as it progressed to Council on January 20, 2022.

Ms. Sue Smith, resident of Lemont, discussed future potential for ordinance banning single-use plastic shopping bags.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Darrah moved to approve the December 7, 2021 meeting minutes.
Mr. Sharp seconded the motion.
Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

OB-1 FBC Q&A

Ms. Schoch took questions from PC members relative to the webinars and information distributed on the Form Based Code. She indicated that more information could be found on YouTube. A work session is scheduled for January 11, 2022 at 6 p.m. to discuss this topic in more depth.

NEW BUSINESS: Nothing presented.

REPORTS: None.

STAFF INFOMATIVES: Planning Commission received recently approved Council minutes.

INCOMING CORREPENDENCE:

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Hoffman moved to adjourn the January 4, 2022, Planning Commission Meeting.
Mr. Darrah seconded the motion.
Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

Linda L. Magro

Linda L. Magro
Recording Secretary