

**MINUTES  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING SEPTEMBER 10, 2019**

Attendees: Sherri Glantz Patchen, Patrick Doran, Vince Manuele, Bob Dambman, Scott Quitel, Charles L. Guttenplan, AICP, Director of Planning & Zoning, Krista Heinrich, Township Engineer, T&M Associates, Amy Grossman, BOS Liaison and Dave Sander, Township Solicitor

1. Call to order: 7:00 PM by Chair Manuele
2. Announcements & Correspondence

**Announcements:** None

**Correspondence:** Fort Washington State Park Recreational Guide and Map were distributed to the members.

3. Approval of Minutes:

- Mr. Dambman moved to approve the minutes from the August 19, 2019 meeting; seconded by Ms. Patchen. Vote 5-0
- Mr. Dambman moved to approve the minutes from the August 27, 2019 meeting; seconded by Ms. Patchen. Vote 4-0-1 (Mr. Quitel abstained, not present at that meeting)

4. Zoning Hearing Board Appeals: None

5. Subdivision & Land Development Applications: None

6. Conditional Use Applications:

- CU#05-19 Janet Siegel/Main Line Therapy Solutions, LLC, 632 Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, PA; Medical Office. Janet Siegel, Licensed Psychologist/Certified School Psychologist/Co-Owner of Main Line Therapy Solutions, was present. Ms. Siegel stated they are a group therapy practice of Psychologists, Social Workers and Licensed Professional Counselors. They provide individual, couples and family counseling as well as psycho educational evaluations. They currently have 3 offices and are proposing to move the Conshohocken office to 630 Germantown Pike. This office will provide wheelchair accessibility, slightly larger office space and will provide a more convenient location for their clientele as well as herself. The majority of their clientele, about 60% are children/adolescents/young adults; they do not deal with substance abuse or serious mental illness, there is not a Psychiatrist on staff; they have adequate parking at this location, most clients are dropped off by their parents; there will be a maximum of 7 offices within their in use at any one time; staff and clinicians are consultants and make their own schedules; and sessions are typically 45-60 minutes.

Public Comment: Sydelle Zove, Harts Ridge Road, questioned the kitchen and other improvements confirming that they will all be done through the Township permitting process (yes); and was fire safety considered for the additional office space, concerned about the well-being of the children (Building & Codes Department will review with the Fire Marshal if necessary).

Motion: Ms. Patchen moved to recommend approval of the conditional use; seconded by Mr. Doran. Vote 4-0-1 (Mr. Quitel abstained)

7. Old Business:

- Comprehensive Plan (Selective) Update; Complete Review and Markup of Future Land Use Plan; additional review.

- The first topic of discussion was on the maps that should be included in the Comprehensive Plan (Trail Map & Outfall Map); that the Outfall Map could not be overlaid because it is done in a different program, would be difficult to accurately align. In the Action Plan, “Develop Scenic and Natural Resources Inventory...” (Land Use Goal, Policy 3, first action item)—this mapping task to be changed to new ‘near term’ category for completion in 2020 instead of ‘mid-term’. Outfall map available on our website; requested that new Future Land Use Map with Trails be put on website.
- **Mixed Use Nodes:** No Planning Commission comments. Eli Glick – Whitefield Drive, wanted to clarify that the node on Bethlehem Pike is above the train track (no, a portion drops below tracks on Bethlehem Pike); is Harth’s property in the node (no, it is shown as park/open space. May be more property-specific in zoning); wants to make sure this area is protected, is in Floodplain/Riparian area. Mr. Manuele pointed out that the Planning Commission had references to ‘high density’ in the nodes removed from the text. Frank Scarpello, Arlingham Road, will mixed use be better defined in zoning (yes, but character areas are generally defined in Comprehensive Plan); it’s hard to know what plan mark-ups are if you hadn’t attended the meetings (can’t spend money for the consultant to change the maps multiple times).
- **Waterfront:** No change; as indicated previously, appropriate recommendations from 2010 and 2016 Riverfront Plans, to be incorporated into Update document. Eli Glick, Whitefield Drive, suggested strengthening language indicating need to protect this sensitive environmental area.
- **Past Plans/Other Issues:** Sydelle Zove, Harts Ridge Road, wetlands should be included regardless of size; the consultant was asked to bring more of the specific recommendations from the 2006 open space plan and drop them into this plan; she commented some of the referenced plans on page 5 should say “2006 As Amended”. Mr. Manuele stated they need to highlight applicable parts of ancillary plans and include them by reference to the extent they are relevant. Eli Glick, Whitefield Drive, asked if everything from past plans has been completed; is there an ability to strengthen standards of Riverfront Plans. Steve Kauffman, Harts Ridge Road, asked will other documents be incorporated by reference (Mr. Doran and Mr. Manuele would like to see pdf’s with embedded links; Mr. Guttenplan stated it is not part of the current scope with the consultant, will present all recommendations to the consultant and see what can be done as part of the contract).
- **Residential:** Not much to comment on; is the ‘residual’ when all other land uses are mapped.
- **Golf Courses:** discussed previously, no new comments.
- **Parks & Open Space:** consensus is that mapping will need to be refined based on additional inventory to be done later (see second bullet above under ‘Old Business).
- **Quarries:** Mr. Guttenplan provided in the packets what the settlement plan from end of 2012 for litigation between the Township and Highway Materials included for future of Holes 2 & 3. They are a combination of residential and open space. The Land Use Map generally reflects the settlement agreement. (Agreement species Hole #2 – 193 residential dwelling units/35 acres of open space; Hole #3 – 263 residential dwelling units/100 acres of open space)
- Roy Wilson, 4006 Butler Pike (Abolition Hall Property), would like to object to the classification of open space on this property. Why is this single property being classified as open space. This is an unjust taking of the land without compensation. Wants to know why we don’t have an ordinance that they’re not taxed, if it is so important to keep these properties maintained. Support historic properties financially.
- **Action Plan:** Mr. Manuele made some general recommendations on the action plan: reorganize list by priority of when items are to be done; adopt a numbering convention and filter by phase, goal-policy-action item ex. 1.1.1 (Goal 1, Policy 1, First Action, etc.); add a priority category “near term”, which would begin immediately and finish within first year. Also discussed that some actions need to be more specific. Various edits and changes in priority were discussed for all four policies under ‘Goal 1, Land Use’. Commission would like these to be incorporated into revised document.

- Mr. Guttenplan stated there is money budgeted to do a zoning update in capital budget. To do a complete update on what the Planning Commission is looking for is not feasible within a year. Mr. Manuele suggested the need to prioritize zoning ordinance changes and do some high priorities quickly and/or first.
- Eli Glick thinks there should be only one “Tree Ordinance” SALDO vs. Chapter 55 and that the Shade Tree Commission should take a pause before finalizing revisions to Chapter 55. The Planning Commission understood the concern with provisions on trees in two chapters but it was explained by Dave Sander and Charlie Guttenplan. Sydelle Zove stated that ordinances should clarify what takes precedence when there are inconsistencies between ordinances. Mr. Quitel was asked to draft out language related to 1.3.1. (Viewsheds and Natural Resources). Linda Doll, Fairway Road, has issues with the Arborist and feels the fee in lieu needs to be tightened up.
- Ms. Patchen was asked to draft language related to 1.4.1 (Historic Preservation) and to address the PHMC comments and to incorporate new historic areas and reference other historic areas outside of the HARB controlled areas. Ms. Zove also commented on the provisions in the draft plan regarding historic areas and it was suggested that Sydelle Zove work with Ms. Patchen on this topic.
- Mr. Manuele asked that the Planning Commission members to try to have their homework done before the next meeting. Mr. Guttenplan will distribute whatever he receives prior to the next meeting. Discussion on additional sections of the Action Plan will continue then.
- Eli Glick thinks the Planning Commission meetings should be televised.

8. New Business: None

9. Public Comment:

- Elise Kaplan, 102 Black Walnut Lane, asked is there anything in the land use that is going to deal with all the sinkholes and building near the sinkholes and any special protection for building around the sinkholes. Mr. Manuele stated the SALDO has numerous references to the geologic and environmental conditions and those would subsume the sinkholes so the sinkholes would be considered part of the SALDO evaluation under those sections.

10. Adjournment:

- There being no further business, meeting was adjourned at 9:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

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Charles L. Guttenplan, AICP, Director of Planning & Zoning

The Planning Commission is appointed as an advisory group to the Board of Supervisors and the Zoning Hearing Board with respect to comprehensive land use planning, existing land use, and various land use and zoning applications in Whitmarsh Township. No formal decisions are rendered by the Planning Commission. Formal decisions are rendered by the Board of Supervisors or Zoning Hearing Board, as prescribed by law, based on the type of application.

All written or graphic material that is presented to the Planning Commission at a public meeting shall be kept in Township files and is subject to examination under the PA Right-to-know Law.