

Dover Township
Planning Commission Minutes
December 4, 2019

Chairman Wayne Hoffman called the regular Planning Commission meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. Members present: Anthony Pinto, Eric Harlacher, Brian Kimball; alternates Justin Biggam and Mark Miller. Absent with prior notice: Michael Curley. Also present: Solicitor John Baranski, Zoning Officer John McLucas, Engineers Terry Myers and Cory McCoy, Steve Parthree, Steve Stefanowicz, Chuck Richards, Laurel Oswalt, Recording Secretary, and three citizens.

I. **Minutes**

Motion by Harlacher, second by Kimball, to approve the minutes of the meeting of November 6, 2019. All members voted aye; motion carried.

Mr. Hoffman noted that, in Mr. Curley's absence, Mr. Biggam will serve as a voting member for tonight's meeting.

II. **Zoning Cases**

None this month.

III. **Plans**

None this month.

IV. **Other Business**

Review of the draft Comprehensive Plan, scheduled for adoption

Mr. McLucas said that, following last month's Planning Commission meeting discussion on the Comp Plan, the Commission wanted to focus on the future land-use maps at tonight's meeting. Each member has a copy of the current map and the proposed map for reference.

Mr. Hoffman noted that the land-use map is an important tool for the Planning Commission members to do their jobs. Issues to address: along Route 74, toward York, from Royal Farms south, perhaps this area could be expanded commercially. Also, the farmland along South Salem Church Road is designated as future growth boundary for residential use – could this land be preserved as agricultural land? Designating this area as residential might preclude some people from doing what they would like to do, especially agriculturally, as it would now be in a residential zone.

Michael Landis, 4071 South Salem Church Road, was present. His concern is that if his property is re-designated for residential use, would his cabinet business be grandfathered as a permitted use? He noted that some of the land surrounding his property is for sale and re-designation may well prevent some buyers from using the land as they desire, having purchased it as agriculturally zoned.

Wendy Landis, same address, indicated that their desire is that the zone would remain as agricultural to prevent any negative impact on their property and business.

Discussion: where can the Township grow commercially? Where's a good area? Mr. Pinto says that it's important to consider access to these commercial areas and the roads. Mr. McLucas noted that there is still a fair amount of designated commercial land

in the Township that isn't developed. Along the same line, he feels it wouldn't make sense to re-designate the Landises' area with so much other space available to develop for residential purposes. So why is the Landises' area included in the future growth area? Mr. McLucas explained that for planning purposes, water and sewer are available, plus if any of the other areas are maxed out in the near future, it makes sense because of the availability of the public services.

Pinto – if municipalities are required to make land available for every use – how is that calculated – how is one to tell if enough land is actually available for each use?

What does Dover Township want to be? Don't lose the character of the Township. Pinto noted that most people don't work within five miles of home. Much mercantile business is conducted online. Is this push for commercial or industrial zoning because of increasing the tax base? Well, maybe we all need to pay a little more to keep the Township as it is. Mr. Kimball agrees.

If the idea is to grow commercially, where in the Township might that happen?

Mr. Hoffman noted that many of the Township's business consists of small business. Does the Township want to put any future growth for Commercial areas? If so, where? How about across from the golf course? Is that area large enough? Mr. Myers noted that the flood plain area would affect that designation. Also, think of the traffic onto Route 74 – must consolidate the entries/exits so that there isn't a driveway every 50 feet.

If an area is designated as a future growth area, as properties change hands, the purchasers/new owners would have other choices and be aware of possibilities.

A likely area for future commercial growth would be the area between Canal Road and the new hospital close to Route 30.

If shrinking the future growth boundary, then what? What's the rationale behind that action? If there are no intentions to designate that area as R1 in the near future, then remove it from the map and think about it in ten years. Apparently, it's been designated as the future growth boundary, and expansion hasn't happened in the last ten years.

Mr. Hoffman has no issue with the designated growth boundary as it currently exists.

Steve Stefanowicz spoke, referring to the Landis property, asking what if they sell the property within the next several years and new owners want to put houses on the property, and that property isn't designated as future residential use, then what? What message does that send to those purchasers?

Mr. Miller asked if the growth boundary is affected by the Zoning Ordinance. No. The growth boundary is guidance. Ms. Oswalt noted that whatever the growth boundary designation is will be the zoning in that area.

What if a request comes in very soon to preserve the Landis farmland – what would the ruling be? Would the Township have any objections? Per Ms. Oswalt, no one would object. Mr. Parthree asked about how long that preserved land stays preserved. Forever. No going back to its previous zone or designation.

The Landises spoke to that possibility, noting that they were hesitant to offer to purchase some of the surrounding land, having been told that they would likely not be successful in applying to include that land in the farmland preservation program, because it's designated in the future growth boundary. Not sure that's correct.

Mr. Bigham likes the drive in that area and would like it to remain as is.

Mr. Harlacher asked about the little “dogleg” area – what’s up with that?

Mr. Hoffman asked if some of that area might be rezoned agricultural.

Motion by Kimball, second by Bigham, to recommend approval to reduce the future growth boundary line back to the existing growth boundary. Three members voted aye; Pinto and Harlacher *abstained*. Motion carried.

How about adding to the future commercial area? Expanded commercial uses will require the basic infrastructure – does that exist? Can the Township roads support such businesses? How about “fun” stuff? Mr. Bigham said if he and his family want to do something fun, they have to leave the township. How is that good for the Township? It was noted that many citizens requested more “fun” stuff.

Mr. Myers noted that citizens said if we have more services, it’d be better. So where to put this type of business?

Does the Planning Commission want to designate any future possibilities of commercial expansion? How about East Canal Road? How about if the 83 interchange goes in? How might that affect things? And is that even a possibility within the next 15 years?

Mr. Myers asked if it make more sense to expand the commercial zone in areas where there’s some open space rather than in an area that’s classified as residential now?

Mr. Miller noted that his property may well be affected by any changes to the zoning. He’s losing his hunting rights because of a residential development next door to his property. His poinsettia/greenhouse business is affected by lights, and he doesn’t want to diminish his income. A solution? If Mr. Miller’s property were designated Commercial, he would be permitted to borrow more money to deal with the light issue for his plants, such as fencing or something, that wouldn’t be permitted in the residential zone now. So how does that benefit the Township? How to designate the area as Commercial without actually changing the zoning? Mr. Myers noted that to include the Miller property, the primary growth and future growth boundary lines will need to be shifted.

How about the intersection of Carlisle and Blackberry – there’s a little corner where the Conservation zone extends. Should that area be included in this zone or in the Business Park? Ms. Oswalt noted that no sewer services are available to that property, so keep that in mind.

Motion by Harlacher, second by Pinto, to recommend approval to adjust the designated and future growth boundaries to change Mark Miller’s property to Commercial, for the purpose of getting commercial properties on both sides of the road. All members voted aye; motion carried.

Mr. Bigham sees Commercial growth down near Dunkin’ Donuts, between Pine and Emig Mill, making it more than one lot deep. Mr. McLucas isn’t happy with that option, as it would create one very unhappy resident! Mr. Pinto would leave it as is for right now. Mr. Harlacher says Mr. Bigham’s idea makes sense. Mr. Kimball feels that it should be left alone. Mr. Hoffman agrees with Justin. Mr. Myers feels it would make sense to have commercial properties on both sides of the road, making the corridor one lot deeper on the west side of Grandview. It was noted that rezoning all those residential properties would be make them non-conforming uses. Hmmmmm... Mr. McLucas

advised the Planning Commission members to be prepared to defend their positions for any changes to be made. Mr. Hoffman noted that there is plenty of commercial area available without expanding anything.

Motion by Bigham, second by Harlacher, to recommend approval to designate future commercial land use from Emig Mill south to Pine to encompass one lot west of Grandview Avenue. Three members voted aye; *Kimball and Pinto opposed*. Motion carried.

No discussion of R1 or R3 or R4 land...

Industrial? No discussion.

Mr. Myers discussed the sewer map – on Carlisle Road, with the addition of the pump station, the surrounding properties will be added to the sewer system in the planned service area. The Public Sanitary Service Area map would need to be changed.

Motion by Harlacher, second by Pinto, to recommend approval to expand the planned service area of the Public Sanitary Service Area Map as recommended by the Township Engineer. All members voted aye; motion carried.

Motion by Harlacher, second by Kimball, to recommend approval of the proposed Comprehensive Plan and to transmit the draft of the amendments to the Board of Supervisors with the future land use map and the public sanitary map as amended. All members voted aye; motion carried.

Mr. Pinto asked if the following information could be available for the next meeting – if the Landis property weren't part of the future growth area, would they still be able to do what they want to do? Mr. Richards told the Landises what would be required.

Members of the public

Chris Moul spoke regarding the farmland preservation applications. He feels that there's a ranking system, so there might be a longer wait for a "less desirable" property than if there are other "more appropriately" zoned properties whose owners have applied.

Mr. Moul has a farm on West Canal Road, previously leased by Glen-Gery for mining, which is not occurring anymore. He'd love it if the mining overlay designation could be removed. The overlay is a result of a lawsuit between Dover Township and Glen-Gery. Is the overlay only for red clay for brick? Or are there other mining materials contained on that land to which the overlay might be applied? Attorney Baranski will research this matter to see if the overlay can be removed.

Mr. McLucas presented each member with their attendance for the year to determine everyone's pay. Don't spend it all in one place.

Has there been any feedback from the Borough on the Comp Plan? Ms. Oswalt reported that the Borough's Planning Commission hasn't met yet. What if the Borough doesn't approve the Township's Planning Commission's recommendations?

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 2, 2020; 7 p.m. Note the change of date for that month!

Motion by Kimball, second by Harlacher, to adjourn. All members voted aye; motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie B. Maher, Recording Secretary