

MINUTES OF MEETING
SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
November 18th, 2009

The Springfield Township Planning Commission (PC) held its semi-monthly meeting on the date noted above.

Chairman Bob Gutowski called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, present were Angela Murray, Amanda Helwig, Joe Gerber, Bob Gutowski, David Sands, James Mascaro, Mary Holland Absent: Joseph Devine

Commissioner Baird Standish and Rob Dunlop the Staff Liaison represented the Township and Jean Holland represented the Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) this evening.

Minutes

Minutes of the October 20th, 2009 meeting were read. A motion to approve the amended minutes was made by J. Mascara and seconded by A. Murray. All in favor.

Board of Commissioner Update

B. Standish

- The BOC voted in favor of approving the amendment to the AAA-AQ1 Age Qualified Residential Zoning District to allow for 20% of the homes to be occupied by residents below the age of 55, but still not allow for children under the age of 19 to occupy the premises for more than 3 months of the year. This brings the Ordinance in alignment with Federal Statute set forth by the Federal Fair Housing Administration.

Old Business

Springfield Township Historical Landmarks Ordinance. It was previously recommended that the BOC authorize Solicitor Review and Comment of the Draft Ordinance before the PC Proceeds further. R. Dunlop to follow up with D. Berger as to the status of the request.

New Business

The BOC requested the PC review proposed amendments to the Zoning Code in order to bring definitions more in line with Federal Law.

- Family Dwelling. The PC requests clarification if the definition is a Federal boiler plate definition, and whether B. is necessary. The PC in addition, requests clarification of “not withstanding” and “any number”.
- Group Home. The PC with much debate questioned why we would need to define the term if we are not acknowledging it as a use in our township, and would seek opinion whether it would be better to not have the definition at all. By defining Group Home, it may open up the township to groups seeking municipalities that permit such a usage.
Further questions raised by the PC:
 1. How many Group Homes currently exist in the Township. Information could be retrieved by contacting the PA Dept. of Welfare?

2. Does the PA Dept of Welfare have an obligation to notify or register with the municipality that these homes are operating in?
3. What would trigger an inspection of a home if this definition is accepted?
4. If the use is permitted, would it be a special exemption for any zoning type?

The PC also reviewed a Memo from Barbara M. Kirk, of the office of Zoning Hearing Board Solicitor. In the memorandum Ms. Kirk suggested amendments to the Township Zoning Code and the BOC wished to pass these recommendations along to the PC for their consideration and comment.

1. Agree
2. N/A felt it was a supporting comment for 1.
3. More information is needed
4. a. Yes, all definitions should be placed in one section of the code. However, certain definitions are only applicable to pertinent sections of the code and should remain where they are.
b. References General definition changes. The PC noted that many of these definitions have already been modified and incorporated into the code. PC requests that this memorandum be updated to acknowledge this and specify specifically which items Ms. Kirk still feel need to be addressed.

The remainder of the Memo's numbering was off, however in reference to
c. Section 114-121, cellular tower sites, the PC would like a purpose

d. Section 114-40, et al., signage. Upon review and discussion the PC felt that this section of the code needs review and amendment. Such items as off site advertising, size, landscape requirement, one side or two sides, hours of illumination, height restrictions etc were all touched upon. J. Mascaro made an option and J. Gerber seconded that the PC would like the BOC to give the PC permission to work on amending the Signage Section of the Code.

e.-h. Agree

Meeting adjourned 8:30PM made by A. Murray and seconded by M. Holland.

The next PC meeting shall be December 1st, 2009.

Amanda M. Helwig, Secretary