

The monthly meeting of the Lower Moreland Township Planning Commission was held on the above date in the meeting room of the Township Municipal Building. Present were Messrs. Chapman, Krebs, Cohen, Rubin, Mayer, Frey, Mrs. Souder, Planner Gabriel, Engineer Woodrow, Assistant Manager Hoffman, Commissioner Sirken and Clerk Matyas.

Vice Chair Frey called the meeting to order at 7:30 P.M. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The minutes of the January 24, 2012 Planning Commission meeting were approved.

**Zoning Code Update** Mr. Stephen Gabriel, Township Planner, talked about the proposed zoning map and reviewed proposed changes with the zoning districts. Mr. Gabriel gave an overview of what would be reviewed at the meeting.

Mr. Gabriel talked about an issue brought up at the last meeting concerning the proposed lot size of a certain neighborhood and how the potential for subdivision would be high at that size. Mr. Gabriel explained he talked about this with the Zoning Committee and agreed to change the proposed zoning district to avoid subdivision potential. Mr. Gabriel talked about special exceptions and variances, what the differences are and how the zoning process works. Mrs. Souder talked about possible flag lots subdivisions and Mr. Gabriel noted under this proposed zoning district a flag lot subdivision is not allowed. Mr. Mayer asked where flag lots are allowed and Mr. Gabriel replied the current L and LL zoning district.

Mr. Gabriel talked about comments from the Board of Commissioners' meeting noting the possibility of making a residential area along Philmont Avenue into the REV district to help the property owners do more with their property. The Zoning Committee discussed it but decided it should stay residential.

Mr. Gabriel explained that the Board of Commissioners would like to extend the Village Center zoning district to the east of Huntingdon Pike to the Bryn Athyn boundary line. Mr. Mayer asked the difference between Village Center and Residential Office and Mr. Gabriel replied that Residential Office is residence use and low impact office use. Village Center will include retail, restaurants, shops, etc.

February 28, 2013

There was a brief discussion about the Lower Moreland Township School District land right by Buck Road and Huntingdon Pike. It is noted that the Buck Road access road to the High School is missing from the map and Mr. Gabriel said he would add it.

Mrs. Souder asked about the other side of Huntingdon Pike and Mr. Gabriel replied that the Board of Commissioners wanted to leave it Residential Office and not make it Village Center. Mrs. Souder asked if Residential Office properties could be turned into offices and Mr. Gabriel replied yes.

Mr. Mayer asked if there was any concern with having more allowable uses close to the schools and Mr. Gabriel noted the properties by the High School were not an issue due to the large size of the grounds. Mr. Gabriel talked about the possibility of rezoning the properties on Murray Avenue right off of Huntingdon Pike into Village Center.

There is a brief discussion about Murray Avenue properties close to the school being rezoned into Village center zoning district. The Planning Commission did not like the idea of having commercial properties so close to Murray Avenue School. They would like it to stay residential.

Mr. Gabriel talked about rezoning the area south of Elkins Field to the post office a general business zoning district and the property on Terwood and Welsh Road, the old landfill, would be allow townhouses on the outer collar of the landfill. Mr. Gabriel explained that the core of the landfill would be PR parks and recreational since that is a less stable area. There is a brief discussion about the landfill and potential uses.

Mr. Gabriel noted that the REV zoning district and general business zoning district have similar uses. Mr. Gabriel explained the post office area is being proposed as general business zoning district in the front and possibly have the back of the property, which is mostly floodplain, be parks and recreational.

Mr. Gabriel talked about the areas around the railroads REV zoning district and creating an overlay district within REV district to allow apartment uses.

February 28, 2013

Mr. Gabriel reviewed the proposed permitted uses in each zoning district. Mr. Gabriel talked about the Zoning Officer's difficulty in identifying if certain uses were allowed or not. Mr. Gabriel explained that due to vagueness with definitions the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) was adopted and those definitions used. NAICS is a known nationwide industry standard for definitions. Mr. Gabriel talked about how the definitions are broken up by sector and then even further broken down to specific uses. Mr. Gabriel continued to talk about the details of the definitions, how they are broken down, who would use them, etc.

Mr. Gabriel noted there are six (6) proposed residential zoning districts and they match up with the existing zoning districts. Mr. Gabriel talked about some of the permitted uses in the residential zoning districts. He discussed how the layout for uses is in chart form and allows a quick reference as to what is permitted, conditional use or special exception. Mr. Gabriel explained that a conditional use is a mirror image of a Special Exception except it is processed through the Planning Commission and approved by the Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Gabriel talked about some changes from existing zoning districts and proposed zoning districts. He discussed the possibility of removing the mobile home zoning district due to lack of interest in mobile homes in Lower Moreland Township.

Mr. Gabriel noted there are little non-residential uses allowed in residential zoning districts but some include agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting. Most would not occur in Lower Moreland Township.

Mr. Gabriel talked about home occupancy uses which would include an employee, clients/customers visiting the home/business and parking that would need to be provided. Mr. Gabriel noted there was a discussion about whether to allow this as a Special Exception or Conditional Use application. Mrs. Souder asked if buffering must be between the home occupancy dwelling and neighbors and Mr. Gabriel replied yes.

Mr. Gabriel explained that no-impact home occupancy is a permitted use, which could be an accountant who does all his business by mail and no clients/customers come to the house. There is no impact to the residential area.

There is a brief discussion regarding home occupancy including the details that are reviewed when an application for home occupancy has been submitted. Mr. Chapman and Mr. Frey think home occupancy should be a conditional use application. Commissioner Sirken asked if a Conditional Use application is appealable and Mr. Gabriel said no more appealable than a denied Land Development application. Commissioner Sirken noted that the Zoning Hearing Board has a mechanism for appeal so having the home occupancy as a Conditional Use would be a better choice.

Mr. Gabriel said this was a good place to stop for the night, and next meeting the rest of the use chart will be reviewed.

Mr. Frey noted that a lot of work has gone into this proposal and it was done well including better definitions which will help make interpretations clearer. Mr. Gabriel explained there is a section for uses not provided. If a use is presented that is not in the zoning code it would fall under this section.

### **Legislative Review**

Mr. Tim Woodrow, Township Engineer, talked about the Board of Commissioners approving the School District/Township subdivision. Mr. Gabriel noted that FEMA has released new floodplain maps and Montgomery County has put out a model ordinance for communities to consider for adoption that would comply with the latest FEMA regulations. Mr. Gabriel explained that if the model ordinance was adopted as is, it would shut down development on Philmont Avenue and in the REV district so the Township Staff needs to look into all this and figure it out.

Mr. Frey asked when the Wawa Convenience Store will be opened and Mr. Woodrow replied he did not have a finish date but they are moving along nicely. Mr. Christopher Hoffman, Assistant Township Manager, noted that at the preconstruction meeting they hoped to be done by April.

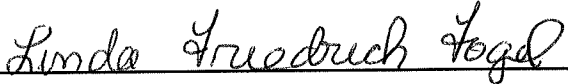
Mr. Hoffman explained that for the March agenda along with reviewing the proposed zoning code there will be two (2) plans to be reviewed. The Lords New Church subdivision submitted a revised plan and the High School is proposing modular classrooms and a reconfiguration of the parking lot. Mr. Frey asked if they were expanding the high school and Mr. Woodrow replied not today but installing six (6) modular classrooms for temporary classroom space and doing some internal renovations. Mr. Woodrow noted that the School District said temporary would be a couple of years.

**New/Old Business**

The Planning Commission reorganized with Mrs. Friedrich Fogel being Chair, Mr. Frey being Vice Chair and Mrs. Souder being the Secretary. The Planning Commission also changed their meeting time from 7:30PM to 7:00PM starting the next meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for March 28, 2013.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Planning Commission, a unanimous vote for adjournment was in order at 9:15 P.M.

  
Linda Friedrich Fogel, Chair