

**Liberty Township, Adams County
39 Topper Road, Fairfield, PA 17320
Planning Commission Monthly Meeting**

February 18, 2020

The Planning Commission of Liberty Township, Adams County, met on Tuesday, Feb. 18, 2020, at 7:30 p.m. in the Liberty Township Municipal Building, 39 Topper Road, Fairfield, for the regular monthly meeting.

Present: Judie Hogan, Chair; Barb Ruppert, Secretary; Geoff Grant, Rich Luquette; Darrin Catts, Liberty Township Zoning Officer; Dominic Picarelli, Township Engineer

Not Present: Vince Gee, Vice Chair; Nancy Wenschhof, Alternate

Chair Judie Hogan called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

Minutes: There were a few minor corrections to the minutes. Geoff Grant motioned to approve the minutes as corrected, and Rich Luquette seconded the motion. The Jan. 21 meeting minutes were unanimously approved as corrected.

Public Comment:

Rich Luquette reported that the Board of Supervisors will no longer have workshop meetings and so will only have one regular meeting per month (first Tuesday evening).

Chair Comments

Judie Hogan noted that she, Geoff Grant and Rich Luquette went to the Adams County Municipal Involvement in Farmland Preservation Workshop on Jan. 30 and it was helpful.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Solar Farms

Dominic Picarelli had no comments on the proposed solar farm ordinance that Rob Thaeler of Adams County Planning assisted the Planning Commission in preparing. Rich Luquette thought we should use the title "Solar Photovoltaic Systems," which is the industry standard term, but he noted that Rob was not familiar with this being used widely. Rich thought the wording was too general, and a solar energy system does not have to be something that generates electricity; we should also cover a thermal system to heat water.

Darrin Catts noted that the goal of the ordinance is a higher-level approach, where those little differences aren't so important. Technology changes, and if we're too specific, we will be having to change the ordinance frequently; it's better to use the building code for specifics. The ordinance is meant to be a long-term governing document.

PC members understand the urgency to put an ordinance in place, as several large solar systems (600 to 1,000 acres) are in discussion in nearby townships. Anything will be allowed if there is no ordinance in place.

Geoff Grant motioned that we change principal terminology from "Solar Energy System(s)" to "Solar Photovoltaic System(s)" throughout the ordinance, changing the acronym ASES to AS-PVS and PSES to PS-PVS. Rich Luquette seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

Editorial comments:

1. Definitions, Solar Energy System: change "devise" to "device"
2. Section 301.9 c. 1. "Yard Setbacks" change simply to: "Setbacks: All setbacks should meet required Liberty Township setbacks in that zoning district."
3. Section 457 1. B. 2. Change "ASES" to "PS-PVS"
4. Section 457 1. L. Solar Easements should be labeled "K." instead of repeating L.
5. Section 457.2 H. 3. Change "extent" to "extend"

Judie Hogan motioned that we recommend the Board of Supervisors adopt this solar ordinance with the above changes. Geoff Grant seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

Barb Ruppert is to ask Township Secretary Wendy Peck to send the revised ordinance to the PC members to proof she made the above changes correctly.

Burn Ordinance

Judie Hogan noted that Carroll Valley's ordinance seems best suited for us to look at. The issue would be when burning could occur, if ever, and whether open burning, and who should be there. Also address fire pits, and comment on communication with fire department. And conditions in which it is permitted to burn.

Darrin Catts received this document from Brian, and it talks about the municipality's responsibility. We are required to have proper and adequate procedures in place to address solid waste management, and the ordinance shall not be less stringent than, or in violation of, the state law. The state law basically lists what can be burnt. Pressure-treated wood cannot be, per DEP.

Darrin says the township has had a number of complaints and he cannot enforce anything because there is no local ordinance. The only thing we have is a note on building permits that "no construction debris can be burned."

Geoff Grant's question on the Washington ordinance: It doesn't permit the burning of *any* debris. But there is no exception for brush trimming, which is too restrictive. 288 25 should include an exception for burning yard waste.

Rich Luquette and Dominic Picarelli recommended starting with Carroll Valley's and deleting anything that seems too restrictive. Geoff said none of our ordinances are written in this style. Outdoor fireplaces are permitted if designed for that purpose. Fire pits are ok. We just want to stop people from burning dangerous items such as treated wood. Complaints have been about neighbors burning a huge junk pile, a neighbor burning a sofa, and junk on other properties.

PC members will review the Carroll Valley and other ordinances. The PC recommends running them by Rob Thaeler, like we did for solar.

At 8:33 p.m., Geoff Grant moved to adjourn the meeting. Barb Ruppert seconded the motion. All voted yes, and the motion passed. The next meeting is scheduled for March 18, 2020, at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Barb Ruppert
Planning Commission Secretary