

LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP PLANNING/ZONING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JULY 8, 2020

THOSE PRESENT: Steve Miletta, Vice Chairman	Greg Yacabell
Joe Miletta	John Tisa
Tony Lamanteer, Zoning Officer	John Knoop
Fran Hancock	John Roesly
George Ripper	Erwin Sheppard
Kathy Rodman, Secretary	Nathan VanEmbden,, Solicitor

THOSE ABSENT: Al Humeny**	**Excused
Veronica Sergiacomi**	
Delbert Peterson**	

The Lawrence Township Planning/Zoning Board held their monthly meeting on Wednesday, July 8, 2020. This was an in-person meeting and was held in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act and was opened by Vice Chairman, Steve Miletta.

The first order of business was to approve the minutes of the April 8, 2020 teleconference meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Tony Lamanteer and seconded by George Ripper.

The next order of business and the purpose of this meeting was to discuss any concerns or suggestions the board has in reference to our Development Ordinance so that we can forward them to the Planner to incorporate in the new Master Plan. We have not had a review of our Master Plan for quite a few years and now we have a Planner and would like to have some concerns and suggestions addressed.

The following is a list of items that was discussed that the Board feels should be addressed in the revisions to the Master Plan:

Agricultural housing is currently permitted in R-1, R-2, R-3 and Ag-Zones. There may be some reason for focusing the location of agricultural housing in the agricultural zone. The concern raised by the Board is that the current structure may inadvertently encourage agricultural housing for remote employment, so we want to encourage agricultural housing for nearby utilization. The discussion included the overlay of the State Fire Marshall's regulation of such housing and description of the housing as being more than five unrelated persons. As you may be aware, the Court decisions addressing unrelated occupants residing in a house have restricted limitations based upon "family" and the cases emanating from the Glassboro State College decisions.

Perhaps an Airbnb use ordinance should be incorporated into the Master Plan. The Board is inquiring whether or not there is a template that would address Airbnb utilizations and give us some level of supervision and control over such uses and perhaps limit them to a definition.

Group Homes. It was noted that the group homes are very heavy users of emergency services at a much higher rate than non-group homes. This may be more of a police function and definition in the ordinance rather than the Master Plan, but the Board is considering strategies to at least make such uses pay their own way perhaps through the assessment of fees for utilization of emergency services over and above a minimum.

Renewable Energy. Although Dakota Power pulled out of its proposed development, the Board wants to create an inviting environment for future renewable energy applications perhaps by creating a zone or an overlay which describes how renewable energy might be implemented and work with existing zoning.

There was discussion about making an industrial area the length of the railroad line or some portions of it including the Redpack property.

There was sentiment to establish a set of criteria for moving residential structures into the township requiring inspections prior to the move.

The Board wants to encourage alternative energy including windmills and solar.

The Board also discussed at length the need to encourage improvement of Main Street. It was a recognition that the structures and residences on Main Street are serviced by septic systems, and that is a significant limiting factor on improvements. The premise of eventually tying into the county sewer line or common sewer line serviced by Bridgeton or Millville was further discussed, and it was recognized that Downe Township has decided to go with a package plan and service their own needs instead of waiting for all of the other townships and the county to come to consensus and agreement.

It may be appropriate to incorporate the site improvement standards as a guide for future improvements of properties in the Main Street area which would trigger the installation of sidewalks and encourage walkability.

Our Zoning Officer, Tony Lamanteer, brought up the issue of setbacks for fencing being changed. Also brought up was the issue of flag lots. If they are part of a subdivision, they are allowed, otherwise they are not allowed.

With no further business, there was a motion to adjourn at 9:35 p.m. made by Erwin Sheppard and seconded by George Ripper.

Respectfully submitted.

Kathy Rodman, Planning Bd. Secretary