

SWATARA TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
September 3, 2019

The Swatara Township Planning Commission regular meeting was called to order with the Pledge of Allegiance, on Tuesday, September 3, at 7:00 p.m., at the Swatara Township Administration Building, 599 Eisenhower Boulevard, Swatara, Pennsylvania 17111.

Members of the Commission present:

Chuck Bowser, Chairman	Karen Bear
Dave Downey, Vice-Chairman	Chad Martin
Mark Caruso	Frank Rubinic
Steve DeFrank	Pat Horner

Member(s) absent: Pat Blumenthal

Also, present: Robert Ihlein, Swatara Township Planning and Zoning Coordinator and Secretary to the Planning Commission.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes of the August 5, 2019 Regular Meeting: Steve DeFrank made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 5, 2019 regular meeting. Frank Rubinic seconded the motion and the motion carried with a 8-0 vote.

COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS: No communications and announcements at this time.

PUBLIC COMMENTS, INCLUDING REPORTING OF STORM WATER MANAGEMENT ISSUES: No public comments, or storm water issues at this time.

OLD BUSINESS: No old business at this time.

NEW BUSINESS - SUBDIVISION/LAND DEVELOPMENT PLANS: No new plans this month.

OTHER SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS:

Robert Ihlein reported on a meeting he attended with other staff from the Township regarding the I-83 Section 2 highway improvement project. The meeting was held on August 30th at the offices of the consulting engineer hired by PennDOT. The primary focus of the meeting was to review all of the preparations that are being planned for as

the project near final design. The project is massive and will be bid in four contracts. The first contract will be to build new connector roads on 40th Street and Old Paxton Road, and selected improvements to Derry Street and Paxton Street. These improvements should help with the flow of traffic as drivers try to find alternative routes as the next phases come under construction. There is a heavy emphasis on providing facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians in all of the phases of the project. The project is still undergoing the environmental clearance study, which should be completed in Spring of 2020. The Project Manager announced there will be another public meeting in the Fall of 2019. Construction is anticipated to start in 2022 and may last for 10 years.

OTHER PLANNING INFORMATION ITEMS, ISSUES AND DISCUSSION:

- (Information) Robert Ihlein gave an update of the Township Comprehensive Plan "Swatara Rising 2025". The Steering Committee is guiding the overall process. The projects are grouped into three "focus areas" to help discuss problems and identify solutions. These are 1) Transportation, 2) Improving Neighborhoods, and 3) Economic Development & Municipal Facilities. The Planning Commission will be the "sounding board" to review and discuss the various projects and make recommendations. The Board of Commissioners will be involved based on their current committee assignments.
- A draft of the Transportation Projects section of the Comprehensive Plan was distributed by Robert Ihlein. There are now 11 separate projects listed, with a couple of them having additional smaller projects that are in the planning stage. There are also 5 additional transportation related studies that are suggested to help plan future improvements or an impact ordinance to help fund them.
- The updated list of projects and potential future planning projects discussed by the Planning Commission. Mr. Ihlein asked if there were any other opportunities or changes that could or should be addressed as part of the "Swatara Rising 2025 Comprehensive Plan", for example, park and recreation facilities. The Commission recommended adding the addition of sidewalks along Orchard Road to connect the Chambers Knoll and Ivy Ridge developments to Harrisburg Street.
- (Discussion) Zoning Ordinance:
The concept of "flag lots" was raised by Mr. Ihlein a few months ago. There is no definition of them currently in the ordinance. A draft of a definition prepared by the Solicitor's Office was reviewed and commented on. Mr. Ihlein will work on preparing additional draft language for review in the near future.

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ZONING HEARING BOARD ACTIVITY:

The Commission was informed that the Zoning Hearing Board conducted a hearing on August 15th for a commercial property at 4220 Chambers Hill Road. The applicant is proposing to redevelop the property as an auto collision repair center and is seeking a variance and special exception related to parking requirements. The Board approved the Special Exception for a reduction of the parking requirements with no conditions and granted the Variance for parking on the gravel area. They deemed this to be a nonconforming use which they could continue. The applicant may now seek to obtain building permits for their project.

COMMISSION MEMBER REQUESTS AND COMMENTS:

No member requests or comments at this time.

COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

None.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting is scheduled for October 1, 2019, at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: Chad Martin made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mark Caruso seconded the motion and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Robert Ihlein, Corresponding Secretary