

**WEST DEER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
JANUARY 28, 2021 (Via Zoom)**

The Meeting was called to order with the following members in attendance:

John Butala, Kathy Rojik, Patrick Stark, Robert Bechtold, Suzanne Garlena, Mark Schmidt, and Alan Banks

Absent Members: None

Other Attendees: William Payne (Code Enforcement Officer)

Scott Shoup (Shoup Engineering)

Gavin Robb (Solicitor)

Dorothy Moyta (Zoning & Planning Administrator)

Outline and Order of Meeting

1. Planning Commission Reorganization (Pre - Meeting)
2. Approval of December Minutes
3. Zoning Ordinance Revisions/ Municipal Ordinances Updates – Park Zoning District/ Revisions to Zoning Map
4. Workshop Meeting: Public Comments
5. Impact Fee Committee Reorganization (Post – Meeting)

Planning Commission Reorganization

1. Chairperson: Mark Schmidt 1st: John Butala 2nd: Robert Bechtold
2. Vice Chairperson: John Butala 1st: Robert Bechtold 2nd: Kathy Rojik
3. Treasurer: Kathy Rojik 1st: Robert Bechtold 2nd: John Butala
4. Secretary: Dorothy Moyta 1st: Kathy Rojik 2nd: Robert Bechtold

Approval of Meeting Minutes

A motion to approve the December Meeting Minutes was made by Mr. Schmidt and seconded by Mr. Bechtold. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Gas Well Update

Mr. Payne received additional questions from CROWD, and they were forwarded to Mr. Robb to pass onto Olympus's attorney. Mr. Payne was asked to remind Olympus that February would be the last month that they can come into the Planning meeting before the scheduled public meeting at the end of March that may or may not extended again by Olympus. Mr. Robb will contact Olympus's attorney and convey the time frame.

Zoning Ordinance Revisions – Article XVII: P: Park District.

Mr. Payne presented 6 pages of updates and the following comments were made.

1. Mr. Shoup asked whether any gas well usage will be allowed within the Park district. Mr. Payne said that it is currently a conditional use and condition uses are not permitted in the Park district but the Board of Supervisors may change that when it is reviewed by them.
2. Mr. Shoup asked whether the Township had any jurisdiction in what is allowed in the County owned Park district. Mr. Robb stated that we can denote zoning in the county owned parks and Mr. Payne concurred that he has issued building permits for new structures in Deer Lakes Park and they have asked at time about our zoning requirements.
3. Mr. Shoup asked whether a facility such as a skating rink or any other appropriate facility would be allowed in the Park District. Mr. Payne stated that it would be consider recreational and would be allowed in his version.
4. Mr. Banks asked whether a 60' cross section would be entertained in updating the Parking in the new ordinance. He feels that the current 65' should be changed.
5. Mr. Schmidt said that currently we have 9' x 18' spaces with a 25' aisle. Hampton, Shaler, and O'Hara have the same. Pittsburgh Mills has a 60' cross section.
6. Mr. Schmidt said that Mr. Banks feels that our ordinance should be changed.
7. Everyone concurred on the 10' x 18' x 24' parking configuration.
8. Mr. Robb stated that in regards to 17.6.2 where the Board can make up whatever they want, something more objective needs to be put in for that.
9. Mr. Schmidt asked what Mr. Payne had changed in the Zoning districts. Mr. Payne highlighted R – 3 acre lot that lacks public utilities and RE Transitional.
10. Mr. Butala asked what is the difference between R and RE – What does this accomplish ?
11. Mr. Payne said that R is 3 acre or 1 ½ acre and RE is a new district.
12. Mr. Stark said that R needs to add additional language that the R district's intent is to preserve the Rural and agricultural aspects of the Township.
13. Mr. Stark asked why Bakerstown Road is R-2 as there are lots of large properties there with horses, etc. Mr. Payne said that is addressed in Animal husbandry. Mr. Payne said that there were family farms in R2. Also, not all R2 is zoned for agriculture; there are supplemental regulations.

14. Mr. Bechtold said that in many large areas of R2, people have large tracts of land that he felt should be R1. Mr Payne said that there will be changes to the zoning map and we can review them at that time.
15. Mr. Schmidt said that large parts of R2 don't have utilities, utilities are close to a large part of R2 though.
16. Mr. Bechtold asked how other Townships are dealing with this. For instance, should we leave it R2 or should we leave it in the hands of zoning?
17. Mr. Schmidt said that we need to look at Zoning as a comprehensive plan. Eastview farms was a zone change and was developed as a 17 acre cluster. The R-1 zone change was instituted as utilities are close by.
18. Mr. Payne said that C1 was located next to old coal mining neighborhoods. Discussion was held about the term existing coal mining neighborhoods and it was determined that the designation was not needed.
19. Regarding waivers, Mr. Robb said that it is not appropriate to have waivers as those should be considered variances and the Board will decide on every instance separately.
20. Mr. Schmidt asked what rights the utilities do have. Mr. Robb said that utilities are regulated by the PUC. This includes cell towers and the right of way. What about ancillary properties.
21. The Duquesne Light "staging area" on 910 was brought up as this parcel has turned into a storage and junkyard of sorts. Mr. Bechtold said that this is a Gateway to West Deer, and it is unsightly. Is there anything that could be done to clean up this area? Mr. Payne will investigate this.

Zoning Ordinance Revisions/ Zoning Map Updates:

Mr. Payne showed the changes that he suggested on the Zoning Map that were depicted in shaded parcels.

1. RE zoning district is proposed in Northwest corner of the Township on both sides of Bakerstown Culmerville Road. These areas are larger tracks of land that are adjacent to housing communities in Richland Township.
2. R3 zoning is proposed in the C-3 sector where Hampshire Estates apartment complex is located.
3. In the B-6 sectors the zoning was changed prior by a Township initiated zoning map correction. This is merely an update to the map.
4. Should split parcel zoning be used? Mr. Schimdt thought that in some cases it was appropriate but each parcel should be looked at individually as to ensure it makes sense for the overall vision of the Township. The rest of the Board concurred.

5. Blanchard Park (Sector C-6) and Curtisville #1 park (Sector I-6) are added as Park Districts.
6. R3 districts are being added adjacent to Deer Lakes Park off 908 ext. road.
7. The medical building in sector C-1 is now a Specialty Flooring showroom and corporate office. It was brought up that there is a holding tank that is 4000 gallons.
8. Patrick Stark asked whether it would be possible to have a map in Zoning with the water and sewer utilities overlaid or would it be possible to have a separate map. Mr. Shoup felt that the GIS maps could be utilized. Mr. Schmidt concurred and asked if we could get the shapefiles from utilities.
9. In the sector A-3, Rose Ridge golf course was split zoned and was changed prior by a Township initiated zoning map correction to R-2 as well as a parcel (currently Premium Landscape Supply) that was split zoned and is now exclusively SU. This is merely an update to the map.
10. In the A-3 sector is Nike site, West Deer Senior Center and adjacent ball fields, which is proposed to be changed to the Park district.

Workshop Meeting: Public Comments:

Mr. Tim Resciniti thanked the Planning Commission for all their help in getting the questions answered regarding the gas wells.

A motion was made by Mr. Schmidt to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Mr. Stark.

The February meeting will be on February 25th, 2021. It will be conducted via Zoom. The meeting link will be posted on the web site.

Impact Fee Reorganization - Post Meetings:

1. Chairperson: John Butala
2. Vice Chairperson: Mark Schmidt

Impact Fee Workshop

1. The Impact Fee Board should consider appointing another person. Mr. Stark is being considered. Perhaps this position should be advertised for. Mr. Payne said that the committee can have 3 or 5 people and will check on the specifics.
2. Mr. Payne reported that the Impact fee was raised to take effect incrementally over a 3-year period.
3. Mr. Butala said that perhaps we are too limited in what the traffic impact fee can be used for. We need to figure out how we can use the funds. The limitations are crippling. We need to get some informed guidance on what we can use the impact fees for.
4. Mr. Payne will circulate his informational books on the Traffic Impact fee.

5. Mr. Schmidt wants to bring the Impact Fee group to full size.
6. A motion was made by Mark to extend the yearly appointments and seconded by John Butala. Motion carries.