

July 6, 2016
7:00 PM

The regular meeting of the Monroe Township Planning Commission was called to order by Vice-Chairperson Brymesser. The Pledge of Allegiance was said by all.

ATTENDANCE

Sharon Nelson, Chairperson	Mike Pykosh, Solicitor
Sheldon Brymesser, Vice-Chairman	Erik Schroeder, Engineer
Dave DeNicholas	Gary Page
Carl Kuhl	Holly Wood, Recording Secretary

MINUTES

On the motion of Mr. DeNicholas, and seconded by Mr. Kuhl, and by unanimous vote of the members it was duly RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the June 1, 2016 regular meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

Vice-Chairman Brymesser acknowledged a letter from Borton Lawson Engineering with regard to the UGI Utilities project to run within the right of way along W. Trindle Road. Mr. Kuhl requested a color copy of the maps to better understand the route.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Hunter Allen of 581 Lucinda Lane said he is a member of Boy Scout Troop 284 and was attending tonight's meeting to obtain his communications badge as he works toward becoming an Eagle Scout.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Comprehensive Plan Review – Speakers Jared McIntire – Nutrient Management Specialist with the Cumberland County Conservation District

Mr. McIntire summarized the difference between a CAO (Concentrated Animal Operation) and a CAFO (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation) as explained in the handout contained in the July P.C. meeting packet. He explained that a CAO is regulated at the state level and that the state management has been handed down to the local conservation offices. Under the local conservation office, CAO are reviewed every 3 years as required by the State.

CAFO's are regulated at a federal level with PA DEP having to manage the oversight process. CAFO's need to submit quarterly and annual reports, submit to monthly and annual inspections, and are required to obtain their own NPDES every five years. Both CAO's and CAFO's are required to have Nutrient Management Plans submitted and reviewed. All new CAO's and new CAFO's are now required to develop and implement Odor Management Plans as well.

Mr. Kuhl stated that the Penn State Extension office has been cautioning on farm regulations and activities with regard to the Chesapeake Bay Initiative, are we at risk if we allow more CAO's and CAFO's? Should we implement more controls on these operations? Mr. McIntire and Mr. Stoner explained that the DEP "reboot" that is being talked about has more to do with follow-up by the Conservation Districts with farmers. There has been a push to get out and educate, now DEP wants the local Conservation offices to revisit and see if farmers are implementing suggested changes. The question was asked on how the animal numbers are enforced, do they count animals. Mr. McIntire said they do not count animals; they rely on experience, history, intuition, and trust. Individuals assigned to review these operations normally come from or with an agriculture background and have a sense of what is right and not right.

Mr. Kuhl asked if we should consider a lower ceiling on the numbers requirement for these types of operations. Mr. McIntire says the State regulation are sufficient. He cautioned against setting up any regulations that are stricter than the State regulations. He did say that many township are requesting to see such paperwork as manure management or nutrient management plan, but CAO's and CAFO's do not have to present them to the local governments. They are only required to present them to the State, or those acting on behalf of the State. Mr. Kuhl asked if we should then allow the State to watch our backs. Mr. Rogalski said we should probably review our Zoning Ordinance to create some protection by review conditional uses. Mr. Stoner suggested referencing the State regulations in the Zoning Ordinance as a certain level of protection.

Mr. DeNicholas stated that there seems to be a fair amount of oversight in place, but what happens if they do not follow the rules? Mr. McIntire stated that with CAO's that he inspects if a problem is found, it is documented and reported, unless immediately corrected. DEP will investigate, regulate, and fine operations if necessary; but actions are based on a case by case basis. Mr. Rogalski asked how many problems have been encountered on an inspections vs. problems basis. Mr. McIntire said of the 13 inspections he did in 2015 only 3 issues were encountered and none of those issues warranted reporting to DEP.

Mr. Brymesser said that there has been huge improvements over the years with education and technology. Farmers are trying to make a living but still do what they need to do to remain good stewards of the environment. He feels we should rely on the State and Federal regulations, farmers can and do receive assistance from the government, and will do what they need to do to maintain this assistance. Mr. McIntire added that many companies relying on these operations will require that the proper paperwork is in place before signing into any contracts. Mr. Brymesser stated that with regard to the Chesapeake Bay clean-up, things did not get bad in a short time period and clean-up is going to take time, it will not happen overnight.

There should be a better idea by the end of 2016 on how the Comp Plan should address MS4 components with regard to farms and the Chesapeake Bay Initiative. Revised floodplain maps should be out by the end of 2017. With revised maps a review of the Floodplain Ordinance should take place.

Mr. McIntire closed with asking the Board to please use the Conservation District if there are questions. It is the job of those employed there to help, and there is no cost to the municipality to acquire their assistance.

NEW BUSINESS

Greg Rogalski, Zoning Officer, mentioned the auction of the Allenberry properties, and said cluster development seems to be of interest to some. He said density bonuses may need to be considered again.

Mr. Kuhl asked if the parcels are being sold separately. It was agreed that this appears to be the case, but one buyer could purchase both parcels.

Mr. Brymesser questioned the issue with EDU's, to which Mr. Kuhl stated that the Ms. Araiza is working with SMTMA to possibly acquire more EDU's. Ms. Nelson asked if it was possible for a contractor or such to have their own separate contract with SMTMA. Mr. Kuhl and Mr. Rogalski both said that is a possibility. Mr. Rogalski also stated that there has been many concepts thrown around, so until there is a buyer, we have no idea where things may be going.

Mr. Rogalski also noted that the frozen development plans (ex. Ashcombes Development) of 2008 have become unfrozen and the clock is again ticking for these plans. He suggests approaching any of these plans with "what do you want to do?" Ms. Nelson asked if any of the approved plans could be purchased and used by a new owner, to which Mr. Rogalski answered yes.

Mr. Rogalski suggested we start looking at the future of certain corridors, the zoning map and the approved uses in certain zoning areas.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION - None

STAFF COMMENTS

Mr. Kuhl stated that the Board of Supervisors approved the home/farm-based business article for inclusion in the next newsletter. Mr. DeNicholas asked when that newsletter would be out and was answered with the end of the week.

Mr. Kuhl made note of the newly proposed PPL route plan. He stated that he and Ms. Araiza met with representatives from PPL and that the township is pushing burial of the line. PPL, however, is citing the cost to bury lines as much greater than the overhead line option. Mr. Kuhl also expressed some anxiety over the current UGI substation at the intersection of Old Stone House Road and W. Trindle Road and the lack of protection measures in place there, such as fencing and barriers, but understands these are State roads that the township does not maintain.

ADJOURN

On the motion of Mr. DeNicholas, and seconded by Mr. Kuhl, and by unanimous vote of the members it was duly RESOLVED to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly S. Wood
Administrative Assistant