
WOLF TOWNSHIP

DATE: 11/15/2010
TO: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
FROM: WOLF TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION – (GARY PAPAY, GARRY BURGARD, DAVID GARDNER, STUART WOLFE AND MELANIE MCCOY)
RE: ANNUAL PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT

The Code of Ordinances of Wolf Township requires that the Planning Commission present an overview of transactions, findings and determinations to the Board of Supervisors each year. The following report meets the requirements identified in Section 1-206.

The organization of the Planning Commission is Chairman-Gary Papay, Vice-Chairman- Garry Burgard and Secretary- Melanie McCoy. Four of the five member board are citizen members, only Mrs. McCoy is employed by the Township. Meetings are held at 7PM, the first Monday of the month, unless the date falls on a Holiday. The new Township Engineer is Dan Vassallo and the alternate is Chip Amer from McTish, Kunkle and Associates.

The regular meetings of the Wolf Township Planning Commission were mainly work sessions in the beginning of 2010 dealing with various aspects of the Zoning Ordinance. The increased activity created by the Marcellus Shale exploration created requests and uses that had yet to be contemplated by the authors of our current ordinance. Along with this situation several residents were experimenting with alternative energy sources that also effected the Zoning Ordinance and required new ordinances be written, for example Windmills and Wind Energy Facilities.

The definition of Contractor's Shops and Yards is a building or buildings and space used for the storage of construction equipment and/or building materials. Such uses may also include equipment repair facilities and office space. It became clearly apparent early in 2010 that we needed zoning to deal with the staging facilities, water storage tanks and other uses that were arriving hand and hand with gas drilling. The Contractor Yard was the best fit and we added it as a Conditional Use to the General Commercial District. Along with this change the Board of

Supervisors is requiring that a Sketch Plan be submitted to the Planning Commission prior to Conditional Use Hearings.

“Mr. Jason Kline - Highland Farm, 64 unit townhouse complex off of Elm Drive next to Lime Bluff Recreation Area, did not experience any progress since 2008 due to the ownership issues concerning the waterline.” As of this date, Wolf Township has not received any notification from the Authority on ownership of the line. Part of the settlement was to receive as built plans of the water line, no plans have been received by the Water Authority and there seems to be some doubt that any exist.

The Planning Commission started work on new sign regulations. A new technique would be to use pictures or diagrams to identify different sign types. The sign ordinance is going to require a great deal of time to update. The Planning Commission feels that we need to enforce the Sign Regulations we have and support the interpretation of the Zoning Officer.

Trying to include all the changes and get the Code of Ordinances of Wolf Township reviewed and approved is close to impossible so, after the newest Zoning changes were passed, Keystate was given the go ahead to move forward. At the November Regular Meeting of the Board of Supervisors, the motion to advertise was approved. The Township and County Planning Commission will have the opportunity to review our work and due to the Zoning changes a public hearing will be held. Hopefully, new books will be received before the end of the first quarter of 2011.

The Planning Commission was approached on several occasions this year by developers, wishing to discuss their proposed subdivisions. Unfortunately, a new epidemic has occurred – they all seem to want to bend the rules, ask for waivers, basically change or ignore the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. Carlton Decker discussed Phase III with the PC in March. In November, the Preliminary Plan was reviewed for the first time. During the discussion, led by Dan Vassallo, who was following the Ordinance to the letter, several discrepancies arose. As the discussion progressed it was discovered that assumptions were made by the applicant based on the March discussions, that few or any of the PC members remembered discussing.

The Planning Commission decided that in future, it will be stated very clearly initially that discussions do not warrant approval. Any deviation from the ordinance must be presented to the Board of Supervisors and their decision must be in writing.

In June, the PC approved an Add-On Subdivision for Rob Tagge. This basically was a no brainer because it eliminated a future Township problem. We need to steer away from small unusable parcels of land being allowed with no one responsible. These pieces always eventually become abandoned, neglected and become an eyesore.

Members often bring attention to nuisance or zoning violations they observe in the Township. After discussion they may decide that a new remedy is required. One possible remedy that was considered was a Garage and Yard Sale Ordinance. The PC members felt it was unnecessary and would be very difficult to enforce. The one resident that seems to be having difficulty working with the Township and following the yard sale requirements will need to be acted upon in a very timely manner next year.

Other work accomplished in 2010:

1. Carl Schultz - Conditional Use Sketch Plan - Contractor's Shops & Yards
2. ELSD - Conditional Use - Windmill
3. Richard Umpstead - Conditional Use Sketch Plan - Contractor's Shops & Yards
4. Eric Berger - Conditional Use Sketch Plan - Contractor's Shops & Yards
5. T Ross Realty - Conditional Use Sketch Plan - Contractor's Shops & Yards
6. Dan Winder - Variance Hearing - Barn/Contractor's Shop
7. Dan Winder - Small Industrial Surface Mining Permit
8. Recommendation - Ordinance # 2010-01 - Sketch Plan for Contractor's Shops & Yards
9. Recommendation - Ordinance # 2010-02 - Windmill Zoning Amendment
10. Recommendation - Ordinance # 2010-03 - Expand Commercial Zoning District
11. Recommendation - Ordinance # 2010-04 - Transient Lodging and Motels - CU in Industrial Zone
12. Sketch Plan - Joel Schick
13. Sketch Plan - Lee Daye

The Wolf Township Planning Commission members are devoted to the land, its residents and the future. They possess a great deal of experience and continue to do the best work possible to recommend and advise the Board of Supervisors.

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