

**MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
UPPER POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP**

**NOVEMBER 14, 2016**

The regular meeting of the Upper Pottsgrove Planning Commission was held on Monday, November 14, 2016, at the Upper Pottsgrove Administrative Office, 1409 Farmington Avenue, with Elwood Taylor, John Bealer, John Ungerman, William Hewitt and Greg Churach present. Also present were Township Manager Carol R. Lewis, Recording Secretary Michelle Reddick and County Planner Donna Fabry. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Taylor at 7:00 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Motion by J. Ungerman, seconded by W. Hewitt and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of September 12, 2016, as presented.

**MEETING DATES FOR 2017** – A motion by W. Hewitt, seconded G. Churach, and unanimously carried to continue meetings on the second Monday of each month with the exception of October in which the meeting would be Wednesday, October 11, 2017.

**BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN THE AREA NEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT** –

E. Taylor initiated discussion regarding what some potential uses could be for this area and noted that it is currently zoned R-80. W. Hewitt advised he would like to make sure there is an option for open space around. He expressed that he would not be interested in seeing retail in this area but rather light industrial or office space. E. Taylor advised that they could draft an ordinance the way they want which could include a 50 foot or more buffer from residential. In response to a question from J. Ungerman, E. Taylor advised that water and sewer would be available from West Pottsgrove Township. In response to a concern expressed by J. Ungerman, E. Taylor advised that there would probably not be environmental issues. W. Hewitt noted that there is also access on Chestnut Grove Road. J. Bealer questioned whether it would be a change in zoning or an overlay district. E. Taylor advised that we can do whatever makes sense to make it a use that we want and one that is more marketable. He further advised that right now, the uses allowed are a farm or two acre lots, and he thinks the land will stay fallow based on the current zoning. G. Church questioned whether we could compete with other ones out there. E. Taylor explained that we don't know what someone might want to do in this area. He further explained there would need to be a change to the regional map, and this process could take about a year. W. Hewitt advised that we need to make sure there is a buffer to residential and no access to Chestnut Grove Road. D. Fabry advised that she agrees that it should not be retail. She noted that with the demand for retail, you are competing with areas that are closer to the bypass and south of us. She noted that it cannot hurt to look at options other than residential. E. Taylor suggested possibly a solar farm. J. Ungerman suggested an age-restricted or retirement community. D. Fabry supports the idea of an age-qualified or retirement community but noted she is not seeing a demand for age qualified. E. Taylor noted the demand for age qualified has decreased due to the recession, but this could change moving forward. C. Lewis advised that there have been age-qualified projects in Berks County that have been abandoned due to lack of demand. D. Fabry suggested looking at assisted living or elder care. G. Churach noted that most uses mentioned are saturated but the solar farm idea is viable and people are actually building them. D. Fabry advised that a new district could be created to allow for the types of uses mentioned; however, it would need to be decided whether a specific plan or master plan would be required. E. Taylor noted that a rezoning would be most appropriate to allow for the various uses. In response to a question from E. Taylor, D. Fabry noted she would have to research whether the County has had any experience with solar farms. D. Fabry questioned whether the overlay district would allow just for solar farms or for other uses. E. Taylor advised that it should allow for other uses discussed with the exception of townhouses or retail use. W. Hewitt suggested that we make sure State Street and Chestnut Grove Road are modified if this area is

**BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN THE AREA NEAR WASTE MANAGEMENT (cont'd.)** -

developed and make it so they don't have to come down State Street. In response to a question from E. Taylor, D. Fabry advised that there is time before we have to take it to the Regional Planning Commission.

**NOISE ORDINANCE** – W. Hewitt questioned whether the township has a noise ordinance. C. Lewis advised that a draft noise ordinance has just been provided to the Board of Commissioners for review. J. Ungerman expressed concern that A.J. Blosenski trash hauler is in Turnberry Farms as early as 5:30 am. C. Lewis advised that she would contact the company and address this matter with them.

**SIGN ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS** - D. Fabry reviewed recommendations for consolidation of references to “signs” in the Township Code of Ordinances. The Planning Commission agreed that it is appropriate to keep certain sign regulations where they are currently located in Code of Ordinances. J. Ungerman suggested D. Fabry take all our sign regulations and incorporate them into a similar ordinance as the County's model sign ordinance. D. Fabry advised that the model ordinance has some provisions the Township's ordinance does not have. E. Taylor suggested that we reference additions (things we don't have) and stuff we do have that are not included in the model ordinance. E. Taylor also noted that he would like the Board of Commissioners to have oversight over appeals. J. Ungerman questioned where the proper place is for the regulations, and noted he believes it is a zoning issue and not an issue for the Board of Commissioners. D. Fabry advised that it is typically a zoning issue. J. Ungerman advised that he agrees it has to be part of our zoning ordinance. J. Bealer advised that we are mostly concerned about sizes of signs, and what we currently have may work for residential and not commercial. He also noted that he is in agreement that it has to be identified in the zoning and suggested that we separate out what is appropriate for each zoning district. D. Fabry agreed to prepare a draft ordinance based on the County model ordinance and what we currently have in our regulations.

**ADJOURNMENT** – Motion by J. Ungerman, seconded by W. Hewitt and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle L. Reddick  
Planning & Zoning Administrator