

Borough of Malvern

Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes

March 6, 2014

Approved Minutes

A regular session of the Planning Commission was held on Thursday, March 6, 2014 at the Malvern Municipal Building. Members present included: Amy Finkbiner, Dave Knies, Chris Mongeau, Cecelia Oswald and Carroll Sinquett.

Also present: Dave Burton, Mayor; Neil Lovekin, Assistant Borough Manager; Tom Burns; Jamie Grossman; and Gail Newman.

Chairman Knies called the meeting to order at 7:34 pm.

Minutes: February 20, 2014 tabled

Public Comment:

Dave Burton stated that Malvern residents had requested that the Borough provide both a dog park and a skate park. A strip of land near the fire house and Randolph Woods might be possible sites. Amy Finkbiner suggested the Herzog property. Cecelia Oswald reminded the Commission that the King Street Developer would be contributing \$1000 per unit to the recreational fund. Syd Baglini discussed existing dog parks in the area and the pros and cons of on and off leash dog parks. Jamie Grossman noted that walking dogs on the Paoli Battleground has caused tension. A family has already approached Borough Council about a skate park. Dave Knies recommended that Dave Burton take his idea to Borough Council.

Candidate Interviews

There are six active candidates for the two positions on the Planning Commission. John Kohler has not appeared for an interview.

- Aaron Abel
- Tom Burns
- Dana Carasella
- Jeff Lorine
- Gail Newman

- Geoff Rubino

Jamie Grossman was interviewed for the first time; Tom Burns and Gail Newman returned to meet Chris Mongeau.

Jamie Grossman introduced herself. She lives on First Avenue and is an attorney. She teaches government at DCCC. Ms. Grossman has already agreed to serve on the Communication Committee which was recently created by Borough Council.

Tom Burns has lived in Malvern for 40 years. He grew up in a small town and is a retired Verizon engineer.

Gail Newman is a newcomer to Malvern. She likes a “balanced” approach to planning issues.

Candidates were asked about their ability to vote for a project that they did not like but met all the SALDO requirements’ their availability to attend meetings, complete the Master Planning course, what they liked about Malvern and what they would change, ability to read plans, knowledge of expectations for members of the Commission, and what a “small town” means to them.

Chris Mongeau moved and Carroll Sinquett seconded a motion to recommend Tom Burns and Dana Carasella to the Planning Commission. The motion passed; Cecelia Oswald noted that she was a “grudging aye.”

Dave Knies thanked Neil Lovekin for his work on the Borough web site.

SALDO Amendment for By-right Plans

A SALDO amendment drafted by the Borough Solicitor was circulated to members of the Planning Commission. Cecelia Oswald stated that it was not what she was looking for. She wants “yield minus one,” if a by-right plan at the proposed yield is not possible. She does not see the request of a “by right” plan as an onerous financial demand on the applicant and feels that the Commission has been far too lenient on waivers in the past.

Chris Mongeau stated that he did not believe that an amendment was necessary because the Commission can always request a “by right” plan. He will not, however, vote against the amendment.

Tom Burns commented that requesting a “by right” plan is a double edged sword and cited the Tidewater development as an example.

Amy Finkbiner stressed the need to get the wording of the amendment correct so that the Commission gets good plans.

Syd Baglini described her experience of the Rouse Development on the old Dupont Estate and the planned Tag project on Second Avenue. In the Dupont Estate Case, residents were able to reduce the number of units proposed by the developer.

Dave Knies will present the Commission’s concerns to the Borough Manager and ask that the Solicitor rework the wording of the proposed amendment.

New Business

2014 Planning Initiatives – Starter List for Discussion

Dave Knies distributed the list he created and asked for member input. The list includes: update the SALDO; recruit/train up new commissioners; forge/formalize links to BC, HC, and ZHB; begin process of borough acceptance of private road (Old Lincoln Highway); update sidewalk/pathways report; secure grant for 2015 work on ordinances and official map; identify and characterize Borough storm water trouble spots; initiate a planning communications newsletter; formalize arborist review of applications; finalize impervious area calculations procedure; create guidelines for public availability of applications and related documents; and create plan for neighborhood planning area network of agents.

Carroll Sinquett added revisiting the sidewalk survey and revising the Channing Avenue Streetscape.

Cecelia Oswald – Continuing service on the Commission

Cecelia Oswald noted that her husband has been appointed to Borough Council and asked if this would cause the Commission to want her to step down. The Commission members assured her that her husband’s appointment to the Council is not a reason for her to resign.

Traffic Issues

The school crossing problem on Roberts Avenue was discussed. Dave Knies and Chris Mongeau gave a history of traffic issues in the Borough. Dan Daley has been asked to make a recommendation.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Recorded by Marty Laney