

## WEST NORRITON PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes – February 20, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM

The meeting was attended by the following Planning Commission members: Kim Flanders, Jean Gambone, Kevin McArdle, Gordon McMeekin, Mike Purkis, Bruce Shoupe and Doug Smock.

The meeting was also attended by Maggie Dobbs, representative of the Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC)

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM.
2. Approval of meeting minutes.
3. Consensus on how we can best move forward with the West Main Street Corridor plan and how we want to engage with the public.
4. The Survey of the residence and businesses is now closed as of February 20, 2018.
5. Before continuing the discussion, Maggie provided the following context concerning the current zoning districts within the West Main Street corridor: It's defined as West Main Street from Forrest Avenue to Trooper Road. The area currently included eight Zoning District. There is also a Revitalization and Traffic Management district overlay in this area. Some properties are split zone districts. Areas of discuss should include:
  - a. Inconsistency with front yard requirements for various Zoning Districts that have minor differences. These inconsistencies should be resolved to ensure uniformity within similar Zoning Districts.
  - b. Current zoning districts do not include impervious coverage requirements which Maggie recommends incorporating into zoning revisions. Impervious surface requirements may affect parking lot sizes and other components of development.
  - c. If the Planning Commission want to increase density, we should investigate incorporating "Mixed Use" zoning. We could make Mixed Use a by-right use or allowed by special exception or conditional use.
  - d. The questionnaires submitted by the survey does not significantly include business or property owners. Jean Gambone indicated that business owners were invited to meeting held but response was poor. She also pointed out that many business owners rent their properties so their interest or capacity to implement changes may be restricted or not in their interests.
  - e. Maggie agreed with comments that the survey questions were very vague. She suggested that a physical preference survey may be a better approach.
  - f. If the Planning Commissioners have recommendation related to the corridor, we can include them in the guide book (wish list). This will help to establish our long-term vision.

- g. SEPTA bus stops: Some are not designed for handicapped. Overall condition of bus stops needs improvement. SEPTA does not install bus shelters. Shelters can be funded and maintained by township, developers or advertising agencies. SEPTA is looking at bus stop consolidation but often receive township resistance.
  - h. A Business Improvement management model may be an option to consider. Once the West Main Street Corridor plan is in place, the Township may qualify for grant funding.
  - i. Is there “bonus” zoning that we can consider?
6. Maggie will prepare material and present during Planning Commission meetings.
  7. One proposal to consider is to break the Main Street corridor into three areas. Different sections of Main Street have very different development characteristics. Each area has unique challenges which should be addressed separately.
    - a. Proposed zones are as follows:
      - i. East End-Residential/Commercial: Forrest Ave to Schuylkill Ave.
      - ii. Egypt-West Main: Schuylkill Ave to Burnside Ave.
      - iii. West End-Commercial: Burnside Ave to Trooper Rd.
    - b. Start with the most western most district. (Egypt Rd to Trooper Rd). This zone is the most complex and will require the most work by the Planning Commission. Anticipated changes to East End zone zoning will be minimal.
  8. Proposed timeline for zoning revision process:
    - a. March meetings-West End
    - b. April meeting-West End
    - c. May-Egypt Road.
    - d. June-East end.
  9. I want Main Street to be....
    - a. Building heights
    - b. Mixed use-where and how.
  10. Next Steps:
    - a. Maggie will present some recommendations that are feasible for the West End zone.
    - b. Assignment: Planning Commissioner send a minimum of one picture of what they'd like to see in West End zone.
    - c. Review the Schwenksville Main Street Plan PDF.
  11. If we decide to further engage the public, we should restrict it to moving the project forward versus revisiting areas that have been addressed.
  12. Public Comment
    - a. Is Schwenksville going to implement the plan?
      - i. Maggie responded that she's not sure if the plan will be implemented or when, but the plan has been adopted. Schwenksville did receive a grant to improve a large parking area. Resident stated that giving the plan a business development orientation will improve our ability to gain business owner support.

- b. Kim Hyman Geissler stated Schwenksville has the Perkiomen Trail and West Norriton doesn't so they are not comparable.
  - i. Maggie responded that the idea is not to adopt the Schwenksville plan but to consider the approach.
- c. Is West Norriton Township Golf Course included?
- d. Should we include what we don't like?
  - i. We can include that as well.
- e. We could look at outdoor dining.
- f. Can we include components of the plan to attract business patrons or attract demographics?
  - i. Land uses will be part of the plan. However, we can not dictate who lives in a residence.
- g. Automobile versus pedestrian oriented: Asking business owners why they selected a location might shed light onto what they are looking for.

Adjourn 9:08 PM

**Immediate Actions:**

1. Send a minimum of one picture of what they'd like to see in West End zone.  
Assigned To: All Planning Commissioners. Due Date: 3/14/18
2. Prepare recommendations that are feasible for the West End zone and present at the next meeting. Email presentation to Planning Commissioners for review prior to meeting. Assigned To: Maggie. Due Date: 3/16/18
3. Create a high-level plan for the review of three zones with effort (manhours) rough estimates and email to Planning Commissioners. Assigned To: Maggie.  
Due Date: 3/16/18

**New Business:**

**Next Meeting:**

Date: Tuesday, March 20, 2018

Time: 7:30 PM EST