

WEST NORRITON PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes – March 19, 2018

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM

The meeting was attended by the following Planning Commission members: Kim Flanders, Jean Gambone, Gordon McMeekin, Doug Smock

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

1. An announcement was made regarding the resignation of Kevin McArdle from the Planning Commission.
2. Maggie Dobbs presented on the West Main Street Study Update

West Main Street Study Update

- The research phase for the study will be divided into three geographical segments along West Main Street:
 - “Western” – Trooper Road to Egypt Road
 - “Egypt Road Intersection” – Egypt Road/Jefferson Avenue to Schuylkill Avenue
 - “Eastern” – Schuylkill Avenue to Forrest Avenue
- Discussion timeline:
 - April 16 – Western segment
 - May 21 – Egypt Road Intersection segment
 - July 16 – Eastern segment
 - *(note there is no discussion on the Main Street Study in June)*
- Discussion of the “homework” assignment
 - Planning commission members noted they would like to see the use of natural building materials like brick and stone to replicate “village” style architectural features
 - Prefer monument style signs for multi-tenant retail centers
 - Want provisions for outdoor dining
 - Would prefer moderate setbacks from the roadway with a maximum of three stories so the area doesn’t feel too “closed in”
 - Would want to see landscaping and low walls to separate properties from the street
 - Overall reduction in the “visual clutter” from signs, poles, wires, etc. but improvements to beautify the corridor like decorative banners or mural arts
- Ms. Dobbs presented on vehicular crash data to show potential conflict areas; the intersections of West Main/Lawn Ave and Egypt Road/West Main were primary collision points in the Western segment.

- Design discussion:
 - Planning commission members were divided on how landscape strips adjacent to sidewalks should be treated
 - Concerns with grass strips being a collector for trash and weeds
 - Support the increased buffer distance grass strips provide between moving traffic and pedestrians
 - Planning commission members stressed they want to be able to show how property owners can make incremental upgrades to their properties to create a more consistent look through the corridor without having to start from scratch and redevelop the whole property.
 - Don't want to see buildings with limited setbacks located directly adjacent to the roadway – prefer a setback deep enough to allow at least one drive aisle and one row of parking. Differing ideas on building heights:
 - Two story or three story height limits, or require a stepback for three story buildings.
 - No limit to building heights (or within reason) to be more open and accommodating to potential developers who will add value to area.
 - Would support shared access parking but concerned about property owners liability for shared parking agreements
 - Chaps and State Store have a shared parking agreement

Next Meeting: April 16, 2018