

**BIRMINGHAM TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
June 10, 2008**

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order by Chairman DiMarino promptly at 7:30 p.m. at the Birmingham Township Building. The following Township Officials were in attendance:

Nick DiMarino	Chairman, Planning Commission
Scott Boorse	Member, Planning Commission
Peter Davenport	Member, Planning Commission
Eric Hawkins (7:35)	Vice Chairman, Planning Commission
Debbie Hineman	Planning Commission Member
Janet Decaestecker	Planning Commission Member
Christopher Bailey	Planning Commission Member
Douglas Marshall	Planning Commission Member
Al Bush	Supervisor
Andrew McReynolds	Solicitor, Planning Commission
Mary Pat McCarthy	Planning Commission Secretary

Absent was Planning Commission Member, Scott Towler

Approval of April 8, 2008 Minutes

Ms Hineman moved to approve the May 13, 2008 minutes as with changes (approved all in favor) three abstention- Nick DiMarino, Christopher Bailey and Doug Marshall as they were not in attendance at the May Meeting.

Objectives for 2008

Chairman Di Marino suggested that to best utilize the resources of the committee the commission will focus on the objectives of Properties of Interest to Birmingham Township and Zoning Districts. The objectives of Township Building /Sandy Hollow and Roundelay Estate/ Roundelay Drive will be placed on hold until resources become available.

The Identification of Properties of Interest to Birmingham Township - team members are Eric Hawkins, Janet Decaestecker and Doug Marshall. Chairman DiMarino asked the team members to complete a needs assessment. The team needs to send letters to the identified organizations and contact RPOS. These organizations need to state their view of the needs the township has for open space, recreational areas or protection of sensitive areas. He requested that they send the organizations a letter so it is an official Township request

Eric Hawkins and Doug Marshall met with Jacquie Roach. Doug Marshall stated that RPOS has gone through something like this. He would like to get the data from **Michael Langer**. The needs assessment will be helpful to zero in on what the commission needs to have as its' focus. Doug stated in talking to Jackie that people tend to focus on Open Space and Land Development . The historical sites need to have money to purchase them and then a plan after the purchase, now that we have these historic sites or buildings what do we do with them.

Another outcome of the meeting was many of the subdivisions in the townships have open space and we need to catalog these. We do not want to lose track of these. Supervisor Bush suggested that the commission add this to its' objectives. He has information to get the process started. Doug Marshall would like to see the process be electronic. This can happen with information from The Conservancy and Supervisor Bush. Solicitor Reynolds was asked to support to the group as they catalog the information so they describe the property in the proper way. David Shields at the Conservancy was suggested as the contact to get the process started. Supervisor Bush suggested that they meet with him prior to going to the Conservancy.

Chairman DiMarino stated he wanted a recommendation to go to the board of supervisors in the September/October time frame. He asked the team to commit to have the needs assessment completed by the July 8th meeting.

Supervisor Bush suggested that the Commission make sure they are referring to the official map when going through this process and include the historical district. The only real way to complete this task is to go through the files. Also on the current map you can not identify the open space. Chairman Di Marino stated that will be one of the outputs of this process. We would also be able to identify properties of interest on the map. He stated before that happened we would take care to make sure people were notified before it ever showed up on a map.

Review of Commercial Districts – team members Chairman Nick DiMarino and Scott Boorse. Chairman DiMarino and Scott Boorse will physically review the properties and the zoning so they can get a very realistic idea of the areas. Chairman DiMarino stated that he, Scott Boorse and Solicitor Crawford need to sit down and review; this is what the properties are doing and this is what the zoning is currently. They would utilize Doug Marshall's spread sheet. This will be an evolutionary process.

Scott Boorse stated in a quick overview there seems to be 2 zones the large car dealerships and a smaller highway commercial district. He suggested that we do this for simplicity. Chairman DiMarino stated we have to be concerned with restricting businesses and the legalities of such a thing. Solicitor Crawford will be brought in to help with this topic.

Other Business –

1) Doug Marshall brought up the 202 Report of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. He stated that it had 6 or 7 recommendations for Birmingham Township and we need to agree or disagree and get back to them. We should not leave the recommendations dangling. We are past due on the request. Doug offered to provide an outline for this prior to the next meeting. Chairman DiMarino agreed that it will be on the next agenda.

2) Supervisor Bush suggested the Planning Commission revisit the sign ordinance with respect to looking at the new technology that is available. Supervisor Bush stated we have a responsibility to help the business community to prosper. We need to look at whether our sign ordinance prohibits them from prospering. Supervisor Kirkpatrick has one page of thoughts on the ordinance that will be made available to the Commission. He would like to have the Planning Commission offer an opinion and any changes would have to be very restrictive, be in the character of the Township and address safety issues.

3) Solicitor McReynolds brought up a memo that he and Solicitor Crawford prepared with the topic - Potential Acquisition of Interest for Recreation and/or Open Space Preservation. Supervisor Bush stated emphatically the acquisition of property through eminent domain is of no interest to the township if a property becomes available that is of interest, the township would like the right of first refusal.

No other business the meeting adjourned 8:15pm (Boorse)

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Pat McCarthy