

**PENNINGTON BOROUGH
PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 10, 2014**

Chairman Thompson called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and compliance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act was announced.

Board Members Present: Eileen Heinzl, William B. Meytrott, James Reilly, Vice Chairman, Thomas Ogren, Alternate, Nadine Stern, Alternate, Winn Thompson, Chairman.

Absent: Mark Blackwell, Keelan Evanini, Deborah Gnat, Joshua Levy, Katherine O'Neill.

Absent: Cindy Coppola, Coppola & Coppola Associates, Borough Planner;
Edwin W. Schmierer, Mason, Griffin & Pierson, Board Attorney; John Flemming, Zoning Officer; Carmela Roberts, Roberts Engineering Group, LLC, Borough Engineer.
Present: John Flemming, Zoning Officer (left 8:00 p.m.), Mary W. Mistretta, Secretary.

OPEN TIME FOR PUBLIC ADDRESS – Mr. Thompson asked if there was anyone in the public who had comments or questions regarding items not on the agenda, there being none the public address portion of the meeting was closed.

APPOINTING BOROUGH PLANNER FOR THE YEAR 2015 - MICHAEL BOLAN

Mr. Thompson announced that a subcommittee had met to review the applications that were received for the planner position. The committee interviewed three applicants and recommended that the Board appoint Michael Bolan as Borough Planner for the fiscal year of 2015. Mr. Thompson stated that Mr. Bolan lives in Hopewell Township and has worked for Hopewell Township for a number of years and is familiar with Pennington Borough. Mr. Thompson introduced Mr. Bolan to the Board to answer any questions that they may have. Mr. Bolan stated that he has been a planner for the last 28 years and 21 of them were with Banish Associates. Mr. Bolan pointed out that he has previously worked with all the Board's professionals and is in Pennington on a daily basis. He worked for Hopewell Township for 11 years and represented both the Township and Pennington Borough when he prepared the Smart Growth Plan for Route 31 grant application. Mr. Bolan stated that he was familiar with the planning issues in Pennington. He is sole proprietor of his company and is accountable and responsible for all the work and feels it is a very efficient way to work. Mr. Ogren asked what other municipalities he was working with and Mr. Bolan responded that Lebanon Township was the only one at this time and he tries to limit the number of municipalities to enable better service.

Mr. Thompson noted that to date we did not have any applications for January and Mr. Flemming stated that there was a possibility that a conceptual plan may come in on the deadline day. Mr. Thompson also noted that the Board has a site plan review committee that includes the Zoning Officer and reviews the applications when they come in. Mr. Thompson also noted that American Properties had submitted a rough conceptual plan for the Board to use when they were reexamining the zoning ordinance for the Capital Health site at the corner of Knowles Street and W. Franklin Avenue and they would probably be coming to the Board with an application in the future. Ms. Heinzl updated the Board on a property that has frontage on S. Main Street and Vannoy Avenue. Most of the property is located in Hopewell Township with a small area with frontage on Vannoy in the Borough. The owner is willing to subdivide the property to enable Mr. Fucello to build a house on the new lot. Mr. Fucello asked Pennington Borough Council for a "will serve" letter stating that if he receives approvals for the subdivision he will get water and sewer from the Borough. Ms. Heinzl stated that they then met with the Township and they suggested that a letter should also be obtained for Mr. Sternberg, owner of the property, in case his sewer system cannot be sustained on the smaller property after the subdivision. Mr. Fucello must meet with the Hopewell Township Board of Health to get their approval regarding the septic and he then

must get approval from both the Hopewell Township and Pennington Borough Planning Boards.

Mr. Reilly made a motion, seconded by Mr. Meytrott to appoint Michael Bolan as Borough Planner for the year 2015. Voting yes: Heinzel, Meytrott, Reilly, Thompson, Stern, Ogren. Absent: Blackwell, Evanini, Gnatt, Levy, O'Neill. Not voting: none.

Ms. Mistretta stated that Ms. Coppola asked her to tell the Board that she was sorry that she could not attend the meeting and have a chance to say good bye, but wanted to tell them that she has enjoyed working with them. Mr. Ogren suggested that Ms. Mistretta make sure that she obtains all the Master Plan documents in Word format from Ms. Coppola.

WORK SESSION

Ms. Heinzel brought up the regulations for illuminated signs. She stated that a sign issue came up when the Chicken Dog Café opened and they were not allowed to have a neon sign. Mr. Flemming stated that neon and lit signs have increased throughout the Borough and almost every property on Route 31 has neon signs. Mr. Flemming stated that the technology for signs has grown since our ordinance was adopted and it should be reviewed. Mr. Flemming stated that he did ask the Café to take down their sign, but pointed out that window signs are not actually addressed in the ordinance. It was agreed that a special subcommittee would be appointed at the next Planning Board meeting to review the sign ordinance. (Mr. Flemming left the meeting.)

Mr. Thompson asked if there were any comments regarding the reappointments of Edwin W. Schmierer as the Board Attorney and Carmela Roberts as the Planning Board Engineer. Mr. Schmierer has indicated his interest in continuing as the Board's attorney and Ms. Robert's contract with Borough Council continues through the year 2015. Mr. Schmierer and Ms. Roberts will be placed on the reorganization meeting agenda for reappointment for the year 2015.

MINUTES – Mr. Meytrott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Reilly to approve the August 13, 2014 Planning Board minutes and the minutes were approved.

DRAFT – MASTER PLAN ELEMENT– OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN

Mr. Ogren explained that the document came from the Borough's Open Space Committee which is recommending adoption of the plan. It is a revision of the previously adopted plan of October 2000. The plan is required by the Green Acres Program for planning incentive grants and will allow the Borough to get annual grants. The format follows the Green Acres guidelines and gives more detail than the present plan, including recreation and trails. There have not been any substantial changes to the present plan, just additions and minor changes. Mr. Thompson noted that on pg. 2, no. 4, W. Franklin Street should be W. Franklin Avenue. In regards to the landfill on pg. 4, he thought that perhaps there could be suggestions as to what should be done with the three acre hill on the landfill site. Mr. Ogren responded that once there was a development plan for the rest of the site it would help to figure out what should be done with the open space area. Mr. Ogren reviewed the open space acquisition section of the plan and stated that the Greenbelt is still included. The Greenbelt shown on the Open Space Map is a little different and is more defined by roads that are on the perimeter of the Borough. They include the eastern boundary which extends to Mercer Meadows along Federal City Road and the western boundary which extends to Scotch Road. The northern boundary extends to Yard Road and the southern boundary extends to the Pennington Circle and Blackwell Road. The Greenbelt includes more land potential for acquisition. Mr. Ogren stated that a paragraph addressing "greenway corridor

roads” has been added and priority for preservation should be given to sites on these roads. The roads are within two miles of the Borough and include Washington Crossing-Pennington Road and Pennington-Titusville Road that extend to Alliger Park and Washington Crossing State Park, Federal City Road which leads to Rosedale Park and Mercer Meadows and Pennington-Rocky Hill Road which includes the Bristol-Myers site. Mr. Ogren stated that the Bristol-Myers Squibb site is important to preserve since it is a huge area and is close to the Borough. He felt that it should be suggested to Hopewell Township that more permanent preservation plans be made for this area. Roads that are more suitable for biking and that have access to the trails have also been included in the plan.

Mr. Ogren explained that the document is meant for guidance and would be part of the Master Plan. Mr. Thompson pointed out that he thought there was an agreement with Howe Commons and the Borough regarding community events and it would be nice to include it in the plan. Ms. Mistretta noted that there was a license agreement and she would provide a copy. Mr. Meytrott questioned the wording regarding public use of the area behind Toll Gate School since the Board of Education usually prohibits organized activities in that area. Mr. Ogren responded that it is open space and members of the public use it daily. Mr. Thompson also noted that Curlis Avenue is not on the trail map. It was agreed that the amended Open Space and Recreation Plan will be placed on the agenda for the next Planning Board meeting.

Ms. Mistretta stated that the regular November meeting for 2015 is on a holiday and would have to be rescheduled. The Board agreed to reschedule the meeting to November 12, Thursday.

MINUTES

Mr. Meytrott made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ogren to approve the August 13, 2014 minutes and the minutes were approved by voice vote.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary W. Mistretta
Planning Board Secretary