



Upper Uwchlan Township
Board of Supervisors Workshop
July 9, 2024
4:00 p.m.
Minutes
Approved

Attendees:

Jenn Baxter, Chair
Andy Durkin, Vice-Chair
Sandy D'Amico, Member

Tony Scheivert, Township Manager
Gwen Jonik, Township Secretary
Anthony Campbell, Zoning Officer
Tom Jones, Police Chief
Joe Carr, Police Lieutenant
Dave Stiteler, Detective

Kristin Camp, Esq., Township Solicitor

Bob Wise, Historical Commission Consultant, Richard Grubb Associates

The Workshop was held at the Township Building, 140 Pottstown Pike, Chester Springs PA 19425.

Jenn Baxter called the Workshop to order at 4:08 p.m., led the Pledge of Allegiance, and offered a moment of silence. No one planned to record the Workshop. She announced an Executive Session was held prior to the Workshop regarding a legal matter related to the Rockhill Real Estate / 500 Pottstown Pike Conditional Use Decision. There were 3 citizens in attendance.

Police Chaplains Swearing In / Oath of Office

Police Chief Jones and Police Chaplain Peter Drinkwater introduced several citizens interested in serving with the Chaplain program, which is expanding to assist Upper Uwchlan Police Officers, victims/families, first responders and neighboring communities. These individuals have completed a Chaplain training program. Gwen Jonik administered Oaths of Office for Chris Swansen, Wes Weber and Priscilla Depp. Scott Pollock will be sworn in at a future date.

Village Design Guidelines ~ Update

Bob Wise presented an updated Village Design Guidelines draft, dated June 21, 2024. The Township asked Bob to assist a committee of Boards and Commissions members to update the Village Design Guidelines of 2011. The committee met over a year and a half. These are simple architectural design guidelines within the Village Planning Area – mainly the Villages of Eagle and Byers Station - but they can be used by any resident regarding historic structures. It includes numerous photos of local structures to demonstrate what can/should be done in the historic villages. Currently there is no historic preservation and protection ordinance, nor an ordinance requiring these Guidelines be followed. The Guidelines include Secretary of the Interior Standards.

Sandy D'Amico asked if there are other villages in the County that have similar design guidelines? Bob responded that many villages are covered by Historic Architecture Review Boards (HARBs) or by Historical Commissions per the Municipalities Planning Code. Some guidelines might be included in ordinances, but not like this.

Jenn Baxter, a committee member, has been reviewing the Guidelines. Today's introduction is for Andy and Sandy. They'll review the document over the next several weeks and at a future meeting discuss adoption. The Guidelines will be included in the Village Concept Plan, which is also being updated, and the Village Concept Plan will become part of the updated Comprehensive Plan. Sally Winterton noted the committee wants these Guidelines to be enforceable, which will require incorporation into ordinances. We want to maintain the sense of character of the Villages, the sense of community, history, not big block buildings.

Jenn Baxter noted there needs to be a balance of implementing the Guidelines while spreading the villages toward commercial businesses.

Bob Wise noted that there are a lot of industrial properties within the Village Planning Area which are further away from the historic core and Villages so some of these guidelines won't be applicable.

Vivian McCardell noted new construction has to comply with design standards within the zoning ordinances; these Guidelines are above that. We'd like to amend ordinances, if we can, or incorporate the Guidelines by reference into the Village Concept Plan, which becomes an appendix in the Comprehensive Plan. While developers don't have to follow the Guidelines, some developers do so.

Sandy D'Amico asked how enforcing the architectural guidelines is different from a HARB. Bob Wise noted there's specific language within the HARB process. An Historical Commission can function close to that.

Sally Winterton commented that we don't want to prohibit someone from bringing their business into the villages, we don't want empty buildings in the villages. The CVS is an example of the Township and developer working together on the aesthetics of a building -- it accomplished the look of a Victorian train station.

Gerry Stein commented that when making decisions following a list of criteria, developers try to find the least expensive route. The Township should hold the line and ensure the "community" feel reigns. Vivian McCardell commented the renderings of the Ducklings Daycare don't reflect the character of the village, or a contemporary reflection.

Andy Durkin noted we're smattered with buildings that don't fit and we should try to achieve a balance.

Sandy D'Amico commented it is about balance; small businesses have to watch their costs and we have to be realistic about their resources.

Short Term Rental Ordinance

Kristin Camp introduced a draft ordinance dated June 17, 2024. Anthony Campbell and Kristin had incorporated suggestions from the Planning Commission. Kristin asked if it has to be conditional use. Anthony strongly suggests that so we can have some control from the start and verification that the short-term rental site exists. Sandy D'Amico asked about the parking regulations. Anthony noted if they don't have adequate parking, their permit won't be approved. Do they have to comply with regular off-street parking regulations? The language will be adjusted that the off-street parking locations will be as approved by the Zoning Officer. Kristin will make the change and send the draft to the County Planning Commission for their review.

Open Session

No comments were offered.

Adjournment

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, Jenn Baxter adjourned the Workshop at 5:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gwen A. Jonik,
Township Secretary