

OPENING

CALL TO ORDER: The Planning Commission meeting of the Borough of Hellertown was called to order on Tuesday, April 12, 2011 at 7:00 P.M., at 685 Main Street, Hellertown, PA, with Mr. Phil Weber, Chair, presiding. He said this is a joint meeting with Lower Saucon Township.

ROLL CALL:

Hellertown Planning Commission Members Present: Phil Weber; Frank Pazzaglia; Joseph Pampanin; and Francene Drake; absent were Matt Milliren, Don Rohrbach and Ron Shegda. Also in attendance Cathy Kichline, Borough Manager, Bryan Smith, Joseph Chernaskey, Michael Corriere and Tina Krasnansky. Also see Sign-in Sheet attached to file copy of Minutes.

Lower Saucon Township Planning Commission members present: John Landis, Chair; John Lychak; and Craig Kologie, members; Jack Cahalan, Township Manager; and Chris Garges, Zoning Officer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

II. PUBLIC COMMENT/CITIZEN AGENDA ITEMS - None

III. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – HELLERTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION

Motion made by Francene Drake seconded by Joseph Pampanin, to approve the Meeting Minutes of March 8, 2011. Motion carried 4-0

IV. JOINT MEETING WITH LOWER SAUCON TOWNSHIP

A. APPROVAL OF JOINT MEETING MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 16, 2010

Motion made by John Landis, seconded by Francene Drake, to approve the Meeting Minutes of September 16, 2010. Motion carried 7-0

B. STATUS UPDATES ON PLAN RELATED CURRENT PROJECTS, ISSUES, NEXT STEPS - MANAGERS

Jack Cahalan, Manager of Lower Saucon Township, reported on the following projects:

1. Paving – Mr. Cahalan said in the past four or five years the Public Works Departments have been working together for various paving projects including a parking lot at the school district.
2. Rails to Trails – Ongoing progress has been made on the safety rails, road crossings and the trail surface, which will be ground, crushed concrete. The trail surface will be installed jointly by both Public Works Departments. The Borough of Hellertown is looking for bids for the gates which will be installed in two weeks. The opening of the trail is projected to be in May. Upper Saucon will have their ribbon cutting on June 11.

3. Joint Fire Company Consolidation – The groups have been continuing discussions at meetings to combine all five volunteer fire companies. Operational changes have already occurred including responding to fire calls as a group. In June, the various companies will review a draft of the merger/consolidation plan and will vote on whether they want to continue working toward a formal merger.
4. Library Consolidation – The Task Force is meeting on a regular basis and collecting data to explore the feasibility of a merger with the Hellertown Area Library and will bring a formal recommendation back to Councils within two years.
5. Recreation Authority – A grant from DCNR to hire a Recreational Consultant was awarded to the Borough, Township and Saucon Valley School District. She will be compiling information on the area's recreational needs over the next year and making recommendations.

Cathy Kichline, Borough of Hellertown Manager reported on the following projects:

1. Zoning Audit – The Borough and Lower Saucon Township are searching for sources of funding to complete a Zoning Audit.
2. Sustainable Communities Grant - The Borough was one of twelve municipalities selected to receive this Grant from the EPA. The grant will sponsor a one day workshop this summer to address such as walkability assessments, economically healthy development techniques and strategies.
3. Tumminello Property – A Lehigh Valley Greenways Grant was awarded by the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor for trail and riparian buffer plantings.
4. Thomas Iron Works Site – Planning grant in 2012

Bryan Smith from Barry Isett and Associates reported on the Walkable Communities Grant. The idea behind this grant is to make road and traffic flow improvements including using streets and trails by connecting parks to the schools. It uses strategies to slow traffic and enhance pedestrian use near Borough Hall. For the implementation, resources would come from mixed sources. The time frame is ten years. The Borough Hall “road diet” of Easton Road is funded for 2012.

Route 412 widening will only occur to Cherry Lane not to High Street as originally thought.

The curb and sidewalk improvement project on Cherry Lane including some storm water improvements and trees is progressing and should be completed by June.

Zoning Review – The Borough has been awarded a grant to look at Zoning Ordinance improvements including signage, building mass and parking. The current

Zoning Ordinance is dated and changes are being considered to enhance the attraction of business to the downtown area.

C. PLANNING COMMISSION UPDATES ON SIGNIFICANT PROJECTS – CHAIRS

Mr. Landis, Chair of the Lower Saucon Planning Commission, said there were only four new units approved in Lower Saucon Township last year. The plan for the Phoebe Continuing Care Retirement Facility on the corner of Meadows Road was rejected. The plan, which tried to define a “new use”, did not match the property. It can come back to Council. There is a facility for data storage going in at the Majestic site near LVIP VII. The IESI landfill on Applebutter Road Phase 4 modification has been approved. The plan to use the former Elementary School on Wassergass Road as an office park has been tabled. A copy of their Annual Report was received and will be attached to the file copy of these minutes.

Phil Weber, of the Borough of Hellertown Planning Commission said that Reinhard School will likely be demolished in June. After which a committee will be formed to consider the possibility of a community center in that location. As far as Planning Commission business, there were a few new businesses including a pastry shop. An auto body shop was denied and they reviewed and revised an ordinance regarding group homes. A copy of the report will be attached to the file copy of these minutes.

D. SELECTION OF NEXT MEETING DATE

The next joint meeting was tentatively planned for September 15, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. to be held at Lower Saucon Township.

E. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by John Landis, seconded by Craig Kologie to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 p.m. Motion carried 7-0.