

UPPER MORELAND TOWNSHIP
Community Development Committee
May 10, 2021 - Meeting Minutes

Community Development Committee Members - Commissioner and Committee Chair Kip McFatrige; Commissioners Anthony S. Prousi, Kevin C. Spearing; Paul E. Purtell, Director of Code Enforcement, David Elsier, Director of Public Works

I. **Moment of Silent Meditation**

II. **Pledge of Allegiance**

III. **Call to Order** - The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair and Commissioner Kip McFatrige.

IV. **Presentations/Announcements** - Nothing to report.

V. **Roll Call:** Commissioners McFatrige, Prousi, Spearing; Mr. Elsier and Mr. Purtell. Also, present: Matthew H. Candland, Township Manager; James Hersh, Township Engineer; Alex Baumlner, Township Solicitor.

VI. **Presentation** - Nothing to report.

VII. **Approval of Minutes** – April 12, 2021:

- Commissioner Prousi amended the minutes in Section XII (F), last comment to read, "Commissioner Prousi inquired on the upcoming cicada season. Dr. Saunders explained that the 17-year cicada hatch only lasts for a few weeks, there are no concerns as cicadas are harmless. However, bird-netting over young trees might be advisable as there are so many female cicadas depositing eggs into the trees, that they may harm very small trees."
- The meeting minutes were unanimously approved as amended.

VIII. **Other Items:**

- A. Multi-Modal Grant application for improvements at Blair Mill Road and Easton Road/Commerce Avenue and Maryland Road:
- Anton Kuhner, McMahon Associates, Inc., reiterated details of improvements planned for the Willow Grove Interchange area. The Township was awarded \$575,000, which will fund the Blair Mill Road and Easton Road portion of the project.
 - The Committee agreed that first priority is Blair Mill Road and Easton Road, second is Maryland Road culvert, and third is Moreland Road and Commerce Avenue.
 - Commissioner Spearing commented that the balance would be funded by the Bond.
 - The Committee recommends a discussion continue regarding the grant match at the May 24, 2021 Finance & Administrative Committee meeting.
- B. Request by the School District of Upper Moreland Township for a Waiver of Permit Fees for Parking Lot Improvements at Primary School:
- The Committee recommends the Board of Commissioners take action at the June 7, 2021 Regular Meeting.
- C. Request by Justin Kenyon for permission to place a fence at 38 Norwyn Road:
- Mr. Kenyon discussed details and Mr. Elsier provided recommendations and will assist to move the placement of the fence with regards to the sewer line and property line.
 - The Committee recommends the Board of Commissioners take action at the June 7, 2021 Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting.

IX. **Land Development/Subdivision** - Nothing to report.

X. **New Business:**

A. Historic Preservation Overlay District Amendments:

- Mr. Purtell explained that amendments to the administrative provisions of the Ordinance must be reviewed by Montgomery County and the Advisory Planning Commission. Montgomery County Planning Commission recommends that the Township separate the administrative provisions from Chapter 350 of the Zoning Ordinance and create a chapter for the Township's own administrative provisions.
- Commissioner Spearing commented about overlays for historic property and Mr. Purtell clarified that a property owner can apply for an overlay if they volunteer to register locally.
- Commissioner Spearing inquired about involvement of the Historical Association. Mr. Baumler stated that the Township codified a Historical Advisory Committee, which is referred to by the County and may be duplicative.
- Commissioner Prousi commented a reminder to post open positions for commissions and committees on the Township's website.
- Commissioner Whiting inquired about candidates applying for alternate member positions and Sue Worth-LaManna read a list of names.
- The Committee directs Mr. Baumler to prepare amendments to the Zoning Ordinance that repeal the Historical Commission and related administrative sections from the current Zoning Ordinance's Historical Overlay District.
- The Committee directs Mr. Baumler to prepare an ordinance that repeals the Historical Advisory Committee (Chapter 23 of the general code of regulations) and replaces Chapter 23 of the code with the Historical Commission provisions removed from the Zoning Ordinance. A new section will be added to the Historical Commission provisions that creates alternate member positions.
- The Committee agreed to continue a discussion at the June 21, 2021 Finance & Administrative Committee Meeting.

XI. **Old Business:**

A. Wayfinding & Signage Steering Committee's Recommendations:

- Mr. Candland reported that a request was sent to PennDOT for an extension to submit the Montco 2040 Grant Application. The signs should be completed by the end of 2021, but the gateway signs may require another extension.
- Mr. Purtell stated that signage artwork has been provided for review to the Board of Commissioners and the Historical Commission.
- Commissioner Scull commented that the signages' text is inadequate and suggested that the Historical Commission can provide better narratives.
- Commissioner Prousi requested a list of existing interpretive signs with text and Mr. Purtell replied that the Historical Association has the information.
- The Committee will continue a discussion at the June 14, 2021 Community Development Committee Meeting.

B. Zoning Ordinance Updates:

- Mr. Purtell reported that the Advisory Planning Agency and Montgomery County Planning Committee met twice to review the Zoning Ordinance.

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- The Committee will continue a discussion at the June 14, 2021 Community Development Committee meeting.

XII. Acceptance and Approval of the following monthly reports for April:

- A. Code Enforcement Department Reports - Nothing further to report.
- B. Public Works Department Report and Recycling Report:
 - Commissioner McFatridge inquired about the volume of recycling. Mr. Elsier replied that there is less recycling and trash this year as compared with last year at this same time.
 - Commissioner Spearing inquired about the Consortium and Mr. Elsier stated that a meeting will be scheduled, because contracts are up for renewal and reports will be available.
 - Commissioner McFatridge commended the trash and recycling crew for their work.
 - Commissioner Scull inquired about repaving Cherry Street. Mr. Elsier replied that it will be done this Summer.
 - Commissioner Spearing inquired about a traffic calming device on Cherry Street. Mr. Elsier replied that the device will be installed in the next few weeks.
 - Commissioner Scull shared residents' concerns about bee nests on two utility poles. Commissioner Spearing replied that the utility companies are very slow to respond. Mr. Candland suggested that the Public Works crew evaluate the poles to determine a solution.
 - Commissioner Whiting inquired about a property with fox infestation. Mr. Candland stated it is private property, in no violation of ordinance, a civil matter, and requires contacting a specialized contractor. Commissioner Spearing replied that there is a need for an animal control officer, which is a matter for Police Chief Block to partner with neighboring municipalities. Dr. Lynnette Saunders, Environmental Advisory Council, commented that there is no habitat remaining for foxes and, as a result, they are living on private properties.
- C. Engineer's Report - Mr. Hersh provided the following updates:
 - Commissioner McFatridge inquired about Fair Oaks Park Basin. Mr. Hersh explained that parking lot bases, relocated playground structure, and landscaping are installed, and the area around the basin will be completed shortly.
 - Commissioner Spearing inquired about Acme Box. Mr. Hersh replied that most underground utilities are installed and the paving will begin soon.
- D. Landscape Architect's Report - Nothing further to report.
- E. Traffic Engineer's Report - Anton Kuhner, McMahan Associates, reported the following:
 - Received the last property owner's signoff for Byberry Road and Davisville Road signals and documents have been sent to be recorded. The bid will be posted once Highway Occupancy Permit is received. The bid is anticipated to be awarded at the August 2, 2021 Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting.
- F. Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) - Dr. Lynnette Saunders, Chair, provided the following updates:
 - Earth Day Fair, held on Saturday, April 24, 2021, was a successful event. A food truck and involvement from schools will be planned for the 2022 event.
 - Discussions continue on establishing a Shade Tree Commission.
 - Looking into requirements for the Township to become a Tree City USA.
 - A vine clearing event will be held on June 12, 2021, 10 a.m., at Veterans Memorial Park.
 - Water quality issues are becoming apparent and the need to assess the steep slopes i.e. along Maryland Road, which appear to be eroding into nearby creeks.
 - Proposing a native plant rain garden with signage installed near the basketball court on Mill Road.

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- Looking into partnering with the schools to develop educational curriculum featuring the rain gardens at the Middle School as well as other topics.
 - Proposing a clean-up event of trash in the rain gardens.
 - Planning to have an information table set up at the Juneteenth event.
 - Commissioner McFatridge commented that the Middle School has a curriculum on the rain gardens. Dr. Saunders replied that there is one, but additional help will be offered.
 - Commissioner Spearing suggested that a Middle School faculty member volunteer on the EAC. Dr. Saunders stated that a high school student currently participates on the EAC but will graduate this year. The EAC will be looking for a new student.
 - Commissioner Prousi commended the Earth Day Event for being a successful event.
 - Commissioner Prousi inquired about a trash clean up event at the rain gardens. Dr. Saunders suggested establishing a regular routine rather than an event. Commissioner Whiting recommended contacting the Superintendent, because the issue was discussed and it was suggested that a community committee be formed to perform the work.
 - Commissioner McFatridge commented on overgrowth of vines in Veterans Memorial Park. Dr. Saunders explained that mowing cannot be performed up close to the trees and the EAC continues to pull out porcelain berry from the area.
- G. Upper Moreland Historical Commission - Sue Worth-LaManna, Chair, discussed the following:
- Questioned the location for wayfinding signage at the school. Commissioner Spearing confirmed that it is located on Davisville Road and will replace the Historical Association signage.
 - Questioned text on signage and intent to replace all of the signs. Mr. Candland replied that all signs will be replaced at some point due to age and condition. Commissioner McFatridge explained that the initial pilot program was for a limited selection and had related costs.
 - Commissioner Spearing encouraged more input on the signs.
 - Suggested specifically branding of Township signs, offering an online tool that provides detailed historical site information, and identification and placement of gateway signs in anticipation of the 250th Anniversary of the United States.
 - Thanked Heather Greenleaf for her work and dedication to the Commission.
 - Anticipating changes to the Ordinance that will permit two alternates on the Commission.
 - Commissioner McFatridge inquired on cost to repair the face of the old signs. Commissioner Scull replied that 12 years ago each sign was approximately \$800.
 - Commissioner Spearing inquired about using Quick Response (QR) Codes on signs, which allow users to scan for instant information. Commissioner Prousi explained concerns about managing updates and prefers a website address.
 - Commissioner Prousi recommended that signage text be condensed to hold the reader's attention with an ancillary method to learn more. Commissioner Whiting suggested having an app include translation options to meet the needs of the community.
 - Commissioner Whiting commended the Commission for their work and suggested appointing members that represent diversity.
 - Commissioner Prousi reminded to advertise the open member positions on the Township's website and encouraged the public to apply.
 - Commissioner Whiting requested that announcements be available in several languages. Mr. Candland will follow up.

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- Margie Peters, Library Director, commented that the Library's oral history is available on cassette tapes and are now being digitized online.

XIII. **Redevelopment** - Nothing to report.

XIV. **Visitor Comments** - Nothing to report.

XV. **Commissioner Comments:**

- Commissioner Prousi announced that the next online Historical Association Speaker presentation about "Crooked Billet" will be held via Zoom on May 25, 2021, at 7 p.m.
- Commissioner Whiting commented that he was one of the first African American teachers to be on staff at the Crooked Billet Elementary School.
- Mr. Candland provided an update on the new flag poles:
 1. A location was identified in front of the Township building;
 2. McCloskey & Faber is developing a site plan with appropriate landscaping;
 3. A 30-foot pole and two 25-foot poles were ordered;
 4. Completion is anticipated in June 2021.
- Commissioner Whiting reminded everyone to wear masks.

XVI. **Adjournment** - There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Kathleen Kristire.