

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
MINUTES – JANUARY 15, 2019**

The meeting of the Towanda Borough Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, January 15, 2019, in the Council Room of the Towanda Municipal Building, 724 Main Street, Towanda, PA.

The meeting was called to order and roll call done by Vice-Chairman Karen Johnson at 7:00 PM.

**Members Present:** Karen Johnson – Vice-Chairman, Kevin Doupe, Erin Groves, Jim Lacek, Jimmy Lacek & Diane Siegmund

**Members Absent:** Mark Christini, Keith Long

**Others:** None

**Visitors:** None

**Minutes:** Motion was made by James Lacek and seconded by Jimmy Lacek to approve the minutes of the September 18, 2018, meeting. Motion passed.

**New Business** –

Mr. Larry Kacyon has resigned from the board after volunteering for 25+ years. The Commission thanks him for his time volunteering and his contributions and knowledge that he has brought to this committee. He will be missed.

**Mrs. Groves stated that the committee will have to accept Mr. Kacyon’s resignation from the Planning Commission Board that was effective December 31, 2018.**

**A motion to “regretfully” accept Mr. Kacyon’s resignation was made by Mr. Jim Lacek and seconded by Mrs. Groves. Motion passed.**

Note: Borough Council is aware of Mr. Kacyon’s resignation, and they are seeking a replacement behind him.

**Re-Organization**

The Commission discussed a replacement pick for a Commission President behind Mr. Kacyon and decided to table it until the February 19th meeting. Vice-President Karen Johnson declined taking the position due to being so new to the board, however she presided at this meeting.

**Mrs. Groves made a motion to table the re-organization until the next meeting on February 19th, as long as we are all present for that meeting to address the “President” position again. This was seconded by Mr. Lacek. Motion passed.**

**New Business** – continued

Mr. Doupe stated that he noticed how many vacant store fronts there currently are in the borough. He counted 26 vacant business store fronts so he did a little research on vacancy registration. In addition, he brought a sample ordinance “Vacant Property Registration” that is in effect at Takoma Park, MD, population 17,000. In addition, he handed out an information letter

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from a town board member in Sidney, Ohio, population 800, explaining why he felt they needed a vacancy program there.

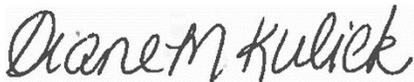
He said if properties were registered, we would know who the point of contact would be in case of issues such as blight and code violations. There would be exterior and interior inspections of the property as part of the initial registration period. Then, periodically the property would be inspected again.

Mrs. Groves stated that she feels some of the problem with the town may be enforcement of the current ordinances. She feels the borough is overwhelmed with the number of things on the books, we don't need any more codes.

As far as the local magistrate and the hearings for violators, it was stated that maybe we should be represented by our Solicitor, or maybe we should take it out of the magistrate's hands and put it in front of a hearing master, or someone else. There are no clear-cut strategies to make property/store-front owners realize that their properties are in non-compliance. A suggestion would be to audit the current codes in place now.

After more discussion it was decided to table until next meeting.

A motion was made by Jim Lacek and seconded by Ms. Johnson to adjourn at 8:10 PM.



Recording Secretary  
Planning Commission