

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – JUNE 16, 2020

The meeting of the Towanda Borough Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, June 16, 2020, in the Council Room of the Towanda Municipal Building, 724 Main Street, Towanda, PA.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jim Lacek at 7:05 PM.

Members Present: Jim Lacek-Chairman; Karen Johnson-Vice-Chairman; Mark Christini; Kevin Doupe'; Jimmy Lacek

Members Absent: Erin Groves & Diane Siegmund

Others: None present

Visitors: None present

Minutes:

A motion was made by Mark Christini and seconded by Jimmy Lacek to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2020 meeting. Motion passed.

New Business: Potential Code Revisions to Towanda Borough Code.

- A. Discussion of a possible Vacant Property Registration Ordinance with examples included in the meeting packet (Per Borough Council's motion for Planning to pursue this at the June 1st Council Meeting).

Manager Lane was present and provided a list of homes in Towanda Borough that are in vacant, foreclosure and/or abandoned status.

Mr. Doupe' offered his comments of originally wanting to have this type of ordinance for Business- es. However, consensus is that we need to do the same for residential properties.

Mr. (Jimmy) Lacek stated that the Borough of Hanover (York County), PA, vacant property ordinance is very well thought out and it is a borough in Pennsylvania. He feels that this ordinance seems to hit on everything that he could think of. Discussion was that we would not want to offer any waivers/warnings to the vacant property owner.

Manager Lane stated that if people are in violation and ignore notices, then the borough can put a lien on the property which includes lawyer fees. However, it would be a fee first, and he stated that code avoidance, where someone pays a fee over and over is very serious as a person could go to jail, and the Magistrate does not wish to put people in jail. He also stated that they are looking at digression authority. He noted too that we do not have a legal right to make money off fines, as the fees cover costs associated with registering, processing and monitoring the vacant building site.

Mr. Christini stated that he likes the definition of "vacant property" in the Sidney, Ohio; ordinance better than the Hanover, PA definition. Mr. (Jim)Lacek directed the Planning Commission to read over the Hanover, PA and the Sidney, OH; and perhaps any other ordinances they may come across on registering vacant property, until next meeting on July 21st to discuss this agenda item again.

Other New Business: None reported.

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Old Business:

- A. Update Regional Comprehensive Plan – Regional Comprehensive Plan 2007 links:

This will have to wait until after the CENSUS is complete, Manager Lane to apply for DCED grant money.

[Central Bradford Comprehensive Plan Executive Summary](#)

[Central Bradford Region Comprehensive Plan](#)

[Central Bradford Region Comprehensive Plan Appendix](#)

- B. Update SCI Master Plan – As stated last month, the plan is to incorporate the YMCA with the trail project that is in the planning process.

This money is on hold for now – includes the “Trail” project.

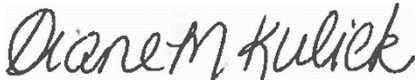
- C. Pocket Park on Park Street (see attached) – Everyone was asked to think about ideas to utilize this space.

Gazebo idea on hold due to financial for now.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn was made by Kevin Doupe’ and seconded by Karen Johnson to adjourn at 8:15 PM.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 21st at 7 PM.



Recording Secretary
Planning Commission