

**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.

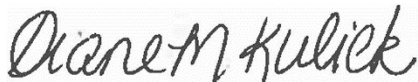
He said if properties were registered, we would know who the point of contact would be in case of issues such as blight and code violations. There would be exterior and interior inspections of the property as part of the initial registration period. Then, periodically the property would be inspected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

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
MINUTES – APRIL 16, 2019**

The meeting of the Towanda Borough Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, April 16, 2019, in the Council Room of the Towanda Municipal Building, 724 Main Street, Towanda, PA.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Volunteer Jim Lacek 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 Mrs. Groves and seconded by Jimmy Lacek to approve the minutes of the January 15, 2019, meeting. Motion passed.

**New Business: PUBLIC MEETING**

**A. Futures Community Support Services**, Ms. Barbara Austin, for Special Exception use for a Community Home for Adolescent Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities in R-2 Two-Family Residential District.

The board heard from Ms. Barbara Austin concerning the plans for the Futures home that is planned for 408 Second Street. The home will hold 3 individuals with intellectual disabilities that will encompass continuous 24-hour care (round the clock), 7 days a week.

There were questions and comments by the planning commission about Futures, and their plans for the home. It is a non-profit agency; therefore, the property would not be taxed. They are licensed through the Department of Public Welfare, and the range is 16 and under, but at times it could be up to 25 years (at their discretion). The clients could be male or female and are referred through Bradford County Human Services and funded through the State.

Mr. Derrick Bailey of 208 Bridge Street, stated that his property is “kiddie corner” to this property and they have no real problem with the usage of this property. He has only one request that the agency will install a privacy fence between their properties. He has 2 children who play in the back yard and he wants to make sure they are safe and secure from seeing anything inappropriate if it were to happen through the windows in the back of the group home.

Mr. Sluyter stated the commission can make recommendations that can be on the table for Zoning Hearing board to review. Mrs. Groves read letter E. of the §325-42, Specials Exceptions. “E. Adequate landscaping and screening is provided as required in § 325-27 and as otherwise provided herein.” This provides conditions for the planning board to forward this on to zoning.

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Also, Mrs. Groves inquired about parking for Future's staff. The belief is that there is sufficient parking. Mr. Sluyter stated that it is a permitted use for "special exception" and does not believe that there will be any conflict with this use of the home. However, he asked that Futures provide 1 spot per staff member. Mr. Doupe' asked Ms. Austin how many cars will be there at one time. Ms. Austin stated that maybe 3 cars at one time. Mr. Sluyter stated that Futures should provide 3 spots whether on the property, or reserve a spot from the borough on Second Street. Also, it was noted that the property may be able accommodate another parking spot off street. Ms. Austin stated that it may be a possibility.

Mrs. Groves made the motion that planning commission approve and provide to Zoning that which grants Special Exception contingent upon following Chapter 325. Zoning, Article V. Special Exceptions and Uses, § 325-42 Special Exceptions, and that they meet the requirements of letter E, that states the requirement of adequate landscaping and screening is provided as required in § 325-27, as their neighbors have said that is their only requirement. Mrs. Groves also stated as required in letter F, that states the requirement that adequate off-street parking and loading provided and ingress and egress is so designed as to cause minimum interference with traffic on abutting streets. Her motion was seconded by Mrs. Johnson. Motion passed.

**B. Roger & Michelle Hatch**, for Special Exception use of property for a Bed & Breakfast in the R-4 Special One-Family Residential District.

Mr. & Mrs. Hatch were present and Mr. Hatch asked for Special Exception for the use of 101 York Avenue to be a Bed & Breakfast. They recently bought and moved into this home. They moved here from Canton, Ohio and have family living here. They also owned a Bed & Breakfast home in Ohio and are very familiar with the workings of the business. They will have 3 rooms utilized for their business.

Parking was a concern for the board. Mr. Hatch stated that currently there are 4 spots to the side of the house and they would have 5 cars parked at one time if all the rooms are rented. There are options for a 5th spot by the alley way in the back of the property. Mrs. Groves stated that backing onto Route 6 is illegal and they should have the option to make the front into a "K" turn. She said she drove around the house to try to figure parking and feels that parking in front may be next to impossible. Her concern is liability for the Borough if an accident were to happen when someone backs out of the property. She lives on York Avenue and she has to do a "K" turn on her own drive way. She feels more comfortable if parking was in the back of the property.

Julie Larnard of 102 York Avenue (across the street) stated she is in favor of the home becoming a Bed & Breakfast and welcomed the Hatch's.

Mrs. Deneen Lantz lives next door to the Victorian and used to own it. She has some concerns about keeping the history and structure of the home the same. She asked if the 3 rooms have bathrooms. Mr. Hatch stated that the rooms are on the 2nd floor, and 2 have bathrooms attached and 1 is a shared bathroom in the hallway.

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Mr. Sluyter is in agreement with parking concerns on the property. It was his recommendation on the parking that they have room to put the 3 off to the right where the gravel is and they have the screening with the trees that are in the pictures. They should do a minimum of 20x20 in the front yard so they get the 4th spot across the front and also the 5th spot. This way they can back up and turn into that extra spot to pull back out on York Avenue. Also, it was noted that in R4 parking has to be hidden. Mrs. Hatch said they may have parking in the Carriage House and will take a look at it too.

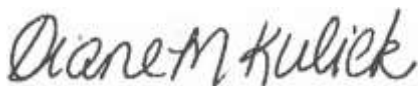
Mr. Lacek said to watch the shrubbery and maybe prune it back because of pedestrian traffic in front of the home. Mrs. Hatch stated that they wanted to look at other options in place of the current ones in front of the house. As far as signage, the Hatch's are looking at ideas and the zoning ordinances guidelines.

At this time Mrs. Groves made the motion that the planning commission pass on to the Zoning Hearing Board their approval which grants Special Exception contingent upon following Chapter 325. Zoning, Article V. Special Exceptions and Uses, § 325-42 Special Exceptions, and that they meet the requirements of letter E, that states the requirement of adequate landscaping and screening is provided as required in § 325-27, as their neighbors have said that is their only requirement. Letter F, states the requirement that adequate off-street parking and loading provided and ingress and egress is so designed as to cause minimum interference with traffic on abutting streets. In addition, Mrs. Groves stated that the Hatch's provide adequate parking following the Code Enforcement (Mr. Sluyter) officer's recommendations to make the 20X20 turnaround to make parking and pulling out safe. Her motion was seconded by Mr. Doupe'. Motion passed.

At this time Mr. Doupe' asked the committee to revisit the vacant store front topic (while Mr. Sluyter is present tonight) and the possibility of having a registration fee. As far as Mr. Sluyter is concerned storefront appearances and complaints are addressed by him. Creating a vacancy registration will be something the borough council would make the decision on. He said they currently send property maintenance citations out and the magistrate decides on the fine and terms of payment. Mr. Sluyter stated that the borough's adopted international property maintenance code covers 95% of the issues. The vacancy fee may be a time-consuming item for him.

After more discussion the vacancy fee was tabled for now and will be discussed again.

A motion was made by Jim Lacek and seconded by Mrs. Groves to adjourn at 8:15 PM.



Recording Secretary  
Planning Commission

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
MINUTES – MAY 21, 2019**

The meeting of the Towanda Borough Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, May 21, 2019, in the Council Room of the Towanda Municipal Building, 724 Main Street, Towanda, PA.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Volunteer Jim Lacek at 7:00 PM.

**Members Present:** Jim Lacek-Chairman (appointed at this meeting), Mark Christini, Kevin Doupe, Erin Groves, Jimmy Lacek & Diane Siegmund

**Members Absent:** Karen Johnson-Vice-Chairman, Keith Long

**Others:**  
None

**Visitors:**  
None

**Minutes:**

Motion was made by Jimmy Lacek and seconded by Mrs. Groves to approve as corrected the minutes of the April 16, 2019 meeting. Motion passed.

**New Business:**

Appointment of a new Chairman:


A motion to appoint Jim Lacek as the new Planning Commission Chairman was made by Mrs. Groves and seconded by Jimmy Lacek. Motion passed.

Also, Mr. Christini will ask Borough Council to pursue seeking a citizen to volunteer their time to serve on the Planning Commission Board behind Larry Kacyon, who resigned at the end of 2018.

**Old Business:**

**Adjournment:**

Motion was made by Ms. Siegmund and seconded by Mr. Christini to adjourn at 7:20 PM. Motion passed.



Recording Secretary  
Planning Commission

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
PUBLIC MEETING  
MINUTES – JULY 16, 2019**

The meeting of the Towanda Borough Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, July 16, 2019, in the Council Room of the Towanda Municipal Building, 724 Main Street, Towanda, PA.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jim Lacey at 7:00 PM.

**Members Present:**

Jim Lacey – Chairman ✓	Jimmy Lacey ✓
Karen Johnson – Vice-Chairman ✓	Keith Long ✓
Kevin Doupe ✓	Diane Siegmund ✓
Erin Groves ✓	OPEN

**Members Absent:**

Mark Christini

**Others:**

None

**Visitors:**

Kim & Kevin Doupe', Dorothy & Jeff Wilcox, Chris Griffiths and Cassidy Estelle

**Minutes:**

No motion made to approved the minutes of the May 21, 2019 minutes.  
This will be done at the next regular planning commission meeting.

**New Business:**

- A. Kim & Kevin Doupe', 10 Elliott Street request for use of their residence / property at 10 Elliott Street, in the R-1 District for Special Exception and Use for a Home Occupation – “Hair Salon” located within the residence.

Chairman Lacey read two letters from citizens concerning the request of Kim & Kevin Doupe' to have a Home Occupation – Hair Salon in their home. One letter was for and one letter was against having the Hair Salon.

Mr. Doupe' talked to the board about the history of his wife being a hairdresser, the appointment process in relation to parking on the street and keeping business in town. He explained in more detail the business layout, and the number of customers that would be there at one time which ties in with the timing of parking and handicap parking arrangement.

Mr. Doupe' also had pictures of the street in front of his home with parking measurements, construction design plans by EK Architectural Design & Drafting, and pictures of his home entrances, salon location and the bathroom that would be used by the hair salon.

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
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The Commission also heard from Chris Griffith of 200 Thomas Street, who also has a hair salon and she gave her full support for Mrs. Doupe' in opening a hair salon. They often work together with each other if needed.

After discussion and questions, Mrs. Groves made a motion for the planning commission to approve the Doupe's request and pass this on to the Zoning Hearing Board applicable to Chapter 325. Zoning, Article V. Special Exceptions and Uses, §325-45. Home Occupations. Her motion was seconded by Jimmy Lacek with the rest of the board approving.

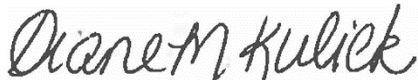
The only area of concern is parking which will be addressed more at the Zoning Hearing Board meeting on August 8, 2019.

**Old Business:**

Still looking for a replacement behind Larry Kacyon on the Planning Commission.

**Adjournment:**

Motion was made by Jimmy Lacek and seconded by Karen Johnson to adjourn at 7:45 PM.  
Motion passed.



Recording Secretary  
Planning Commission



**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
MINUTES – DECEMBER 17, 2019**

The meeting of the Towanda Borough Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, December 17, 2019, 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 7:00 PM.

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

**Members Absent:** Mark Christini

**Others:**

Manager Lane was present during the meeting to discuss with the Planning Commission the process of amending/updating the 2007 Central Bradford Region Comprehensive Plan.

**Visitors:**

**None**

**Minutes:**

Motion was made by Karen Johnson and seconded by Diane Siegmund to approve the minutes of the May 21, 2019 meeting. Motion passed.

Motion was made by Keith Long and seconded by Ms. Johnson to approve the minutes of the July 16, 2019 meeting. Motion passed.

Note: In 2019 there were no meetings held in February, March, June, August, September, October & November.

**New Business: Planning Commission Work items**

- A. Update Regional Comprehensive Plan – This was last done in 2007, and working on Regional Comprehensive Plan 2007 links:

[Central Bradford Comprehensive Plan Executive Summary](#)

[Central Bradford Region Comprehensive Plan](#)

[Central Bradford Region Comprehensive Plan Appendix](#)

Manager Lane stated we are required by the state of PA to either amend or readopt it once every 10 years. In addition, he stated with the gas industry now in place, we will need to include it. He will be applying for DCED grant money for funding, and the planning process will involve the work of a Planning Consultant, our Towanda Borough Planning Commission, North Towanda Township, and Towanda Township officials, and private citizens and/or local leaders. He also stated that grant applications can take 8 to 9 months.

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- B. Update SCI Master Plan – Manager Lane stated the plan is to tie the YMCA with the trail project that is in the planning process. It was part of a Master Plan that was drawn up in the 1980's
- C. Pocket Park on Park Street (see attached) – This would possibly become a common area for people to congregate that would have a good atmosphere.

**Old Business:**

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

**Adjournment:**

Motion was made by Erin Groves and seconded by Karen Johnson to adjourn at 8:30 PM.  
Motion passed.



Recording Secretary  
Planning Commission