

PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 19, 2024

A Regular meeting of the Towanda Borough Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, March 19, 2024, in the Council Room of the Towanda Municipal Building, 724 Main Street, Towanda, PA.

The meeting was called to order by Planning Commission Chairman Shane Mize at 7:01 PM.

Members Present: Chairman Shane Mize, Co-Chairman Kevin Doupe, Mark Christini, Brianna Fischetti, William Kovalcin, Roger Hatch, & Scott Hauser

Members Absent: Erin Groves, Diane Siegmund

Citizens to be Heard or Guests:

Minutes:

A motion was made by Mr. Doupe' and seconded by Mr. Mize to approve the Regular meeting minutes for January 16, 2024. Motion passed.

New Business:

New Planning Commission Board member Brianna Fishchetti introduced herself and talked about her interests and excitement to be on the commission. In turn, everyone on the board introduced themselves to her.

Old Business:

Mrs. Kulick displayed the 3 Parks plans that Stiffler-McGraw did for us, as they are the accepted consultant firm on these projects.

The Vacant Store Front Ordinance was discussed but we have found out that two of the vacant stores were vacant (according to the ordinance). However, both property owners went to the district magistrate recently and he dismissed the tickets for both properties because the property owners said that they are not vacant, as they go in there at least once a month. Mr. Christini said that we may have to tighten up the definition of "vacant." There was some discussion, and Mr. Christini stated that he has seven samples of "vacant" to possibly review. He thought some of the ordinances said that you had to have an existing license-recognized business from the state of Pennsylvania, and our current ordinance doesn't say that. The commission agreed we need a better definition for the VSFOrdinance, and we will review these at the next meeting.

As far as the Arts part of the ordinance, Manager Hotaling has lined up people for an Arts Committee to help decorate these storefronts.

FUTURE Business:

A. Update Regional Comprehensive Plan – Regional Comprehensive Plan that was last adopted in 2008.

Central Bradford Comprehensive Plan Executive Summary
Central Bradford Region Comprehensive Plan
Central Bradford Region Comprehensive Plan Appendix

We discussed the grant funding and contributions that may be needed for the next Regional Comprehensive Plan that will include the municipalities of North Towanda, Towanda Borough, and Towanda Township. Their approval and contribution will be around 5 or 6 thousand each. Once that is approved by each, Manager Hotaling will get the RFP advertised.

- B. DCED Grant Approved – Point committee for bundled projects.
1. Tommy Fairchild Memorial Park (formerly Riverfront Park)
 2. YMCA (SCI) Complex Master Plan (including the Memorial Park playground).
 3. Third Ward Park.
 4. The TRAIL project with the possibility of connecting all Towanda Borough Parks and municipal grounds with the trail.
- C. Downtown Revitalization – Mr. Christini stated that there have been several projects funded throughout the years such as the Merrill Parkway, the senior apartments, and the parking garage. We are continuing this by concentrating on the Parks Master Plan. We received \$3.2 million from the state (Governor Rendell) years ago after a major fire in the 200 block of town. It was what was left over from a new stadium bill for Philly and Pittsburg, who received around 200 million. This money covered Towanda Terrace and the Parking Garage. It was a political handout that we were able to get. Also, Sylvania (factory) received grant money for equipment and they paid it back to the Borough. Grant money for the Merrill Parkway at around 16 million was received over 20 years ago. He stated that it takes time to get these projects to completion.

Misc:

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Doupe at 7:38 PM.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 16, 2024, at 7 PM.



Recording Secretary, Planning Commission