

# SPECIAL EXCEPTION REQUEST AT 11 North Main Street

June 9, 2026

SPECIAL EXCEPTION REQUEST AT THE PROPERTY of 11 North Main Street, Towanda PA 18848. This property is located in the R-1 Residential District. Towanda Borough Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, June 9, 2026 7 p.m. in the council room of the Towanda Municipal Building, 724 Main Street, Towanda PA.

The meeting was called to order by Shane Mize at 7:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Chair Shane Mize, Vice Chair Kevin Doupe, Mark Christini, Kelly Shay, Erin Groves, Roger Hatch, William Kovalcin, Carol Westafer

**Absent Members:** Scott Hauser

**Others:** Leigh Vargason Borough Secretary, Fred Smith Solicitor, Barry Thrush Code Officer

**Visitors:** Dixie Cabucci, Thomas Bradford Mr. & Mrs. Joe McGee

## **Overview**

The meeting discussed a special exception request for a sports memorabilia and card shop at 111 North Main Street. The applicant, Joe McGee, was advised by the solicitor that the business could operate as a home occupation, subject to conditions like no more than 25% of the basement used and no stock kept on-site. Alternatively, a special exception for "retail sales for guests only" was considered, requiring appointments and no external evidence of business activity. The applicant agreed to operate by appointment only. The motion to approve the special exception passed unanimously, with the condition that the applicant must comply with the zoning regulations.

## **Outline**

Special Reception Request for 111 North Main Street

- Shane calls the meeting to order and rolls the call.
- Barry introduces the public hearing for 111 North Main Street.
- Barry explains the application for a special exception request for a sports memorabilia and card shop.

## **Explanation of the Process by Solicitor Fred Smith**

- Fred Smith explains the purpose of the meeting and the role of the planning commission.
- Fred clarifies that the planning commission's recommendation is advisory and can be overruled by the zoning hearing board.
- Fred outlines the criteria for home occupation as an accessory use, including
- Fred discusses the alternative of a special exception for retail sales for guests only, emphasizing no external evidence of gainful activity.

## **Discussion on Home Occupation Criteria**

- Fred details the conditions for home occupation, including no more than one person employed and no stock in trade kept.

# SPECIAL EXCEPTION REQUEST AT 11 North Main Street

June 9, 2026

- Fred explains the limitations on floor area and the prohibition of sales on the premises.
- Fred provides an example of a baker operating a home occupation to illustrate the criteria.
- Fred highlights the need for modifications to the application to comply with the •

## **Mr McGee's Testimony and Concerns**

- Mr. McGee explains his background in sports memorabilia and his interest in starting a small business.
- Mr. McGee mentions his plan to operate the business on weekends only and his desire to do it properly.
- Mr. McGee acknowledges the need to comply with the regulations and seeks guidance on how to proceed.

## **Clarification and Amendments**

- Fred provides Mr. Leigh with a copy of the criteria for home occupations and suggests modifications to the application.
- Fred explains the need to modify the application to comply with the conditions, including no stock in trade kept and no sales on the premises.
- Fred discusses the possibility of retail sales for guests only as a special exception.
- Mr. McGee expresses willingness to operate by appointment only to meet the criteria.

## **Debate and Decision**

- Members of the planning commission discuss the pros and cons of the proposed business.
- Concerns are raised about the potential impact on the neighborhood, including traffic and noise.
- Members express admiration for Mr. McGee's transparency and honesty in seeking proper approval.

## **Final Vote and Conclusion**

- The Motion made by K. Doupe 2<sup>nd</sup> by R. Hatch to approval roll call vote.
- Roll Call Voting 8 Yes, 0 no, Motion carries.
- Solicitor Fred Smith will write a report to be sent to the Zoning Hearing Board.
- Members express their support and wish Mr. McGee good luck in his future business endeavor.

**Meeting adjourned @ 7:50 Pm**

Respectfully submitted,

Leigh Ann Lattimer