

**RICE TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
RICE TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING
3000 CHUCH ROAD
MOUNTAIN TOP, PA 18707**

**MINUTES
April 27, 2016**

The regular monthly meeting of the Rice Township Planning Commission was held on Wednesday, April 27, 2016.

ROLL CALL:
Tom Romanyshyn - Present
Ann Kijek - Present
Kevin Rogan - Present
Ray Fedor - Present
Bob Smith - Present

Also in attendance were: Attorney Sweigart for Solicitor Dean, Secretary Alicia Stier, Attorney Yanik, Joe Durkin, Dave Coleman, an associate from Baer & Evans, Jack Varaly, Dennis Kijek, and Don & Joyce Rowles.

Chairman, Ray Fedor, calls meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

MOTION TO ACCEPT MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (March 23, 2016):
Motion by Kevin Rogan; seconded by Tom Romanyshyn. All in favor.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Coleman Sewage Module

Mr. Coleman was present with Attorney Yanik (for Attorney Marsh) and Joe Durkin. Mr. Durkin summarized that Mr. Coleman would like to connect his lots to the Aqua PA system in Laurel Lakes. In order to move forward, PUC approval is needed. A letter of support is needed from the property owner/developer, Luzerne County Planning Commission, and the municipality. The Rice Township Planning Commission passed a Motion recommending a letter be sent by the Board of Supervisors, provided that there is no mandatory connection required by affected property owners. Aqua PA wrote a letter, stating that they don't require mandatory connection.

Further movement on the project (road cut permits, highway occupancy permits, etc) can only happen if the letter is issued.

Mr. Durkin stated that, since Aqua PA answered the question regarding mandatory connection, Mr. Coleman is asking for another recommendation be made from the Planning Commission to the Board of Supervisors in support of the letter to the PUC.

Chairman Fedor asked if residents along the line have been notified of the plan. Mr. Durkin stated

that there is no notification process yet because there is no procedure. The PUC has a notification procedure that must be followed.

Kevin Rogan asked how far along Van Avenue this plan will go. Mr. Coleman stated that it will go into the entrance of Laurel Lakes. Mr. Durkin stated that it's roughly 500 feet: 500 feet into Aspen Drive, approximately 1000 feet along Van Avenue, and about 1000 feet to Mr. Coleman's lot (outside of the PennDOT Right of Way). Mr. Durkin confirmed that this project is located in Rice Township.

MOTION by Kevin Rogan, second by Tom Romanyshyn, to give a positive recommendation for the Board of Supervisors to release a letter of support to the PUC for Mr. Coleman's project.

All in favor.

2. Harvilla Reverse Subdivision

A representative from Baer & Evans spoke for Mr. Harvilla. He described his client's wishes to remove the lot lines and combine Parcels 13E and 13F into 1 lot. Engineer Pasonick discussed the zoning requirements for a property located in an R-1, stating that the lot size requirements would still not be met.

Dennis Kijek asked if the property owner would be able to build a home on the lot, should the Reverse Subdivision be approved. The representative for Mr. Harvilla stated that a project like that can eventually be looked at, his client would like to concentrate on the reverse subdivision process. Mr. Harvilla understands that he will need to apply for a variance if he wishes to build on the non-conforming lot.

Chairman Fedor stated that Solicitor Dean discussed the process of building on the property with a manufactured home still on the lot. A stipulation will need to be made during the variance process, giving the property owner a set amount of time to remove the manufactured home.

Attorney Sweigart advised that the Planning Commission is to accept the plans for review.

Ann Kijek asked about delineations on reverse subdivisions. Engineer Pasonick explained that the process of delineation would apply only if there were more than one zoning district involved. Tom Romanyshyn asked about wetland delineation. Engineer Pasonick stated that there were no wetlands reported on the plans submitted.

MOTION by Tom Romanyshyn, second by Bob Smith, to accept the Harvilla Reverse Subdivision for review.

All in favor.

3. Jack Varaly--Community Survey

Mr. Varaly stated that we have received about 30 responses to the Community Survey. The survey was opened on April 10th and will be available for at least 30 days. He stated that the previous Community Survey yielded around 400 responses.

Kevin Rogan asked if the survey collection period could be extended. Chairman Fedor suggested talking to neighbors to get more participation. Mr. Varaly stated that the results may be skewed, if all responses were from employees and officials of the Township. Mr. Rowles stated that residents should be urged at the next Board of Supervisors meeting to fill out a survey, as he is expecting a big turn-out similar to April's Board meeting. He stated that the residents of Laurel Lakes are disgusted and many will be in attendance.

Tom Romanyshyn asked how the public knows about the survey; Secretary Stier stated that it was publicized in the Times Leader, Citizens Voice and Mountaintop Eagle. She plans on having it publicized again since we're midway through the survey.

4. Jack Varaly--Sign Ordinance Revisions

Mr. Varaly discussed the originally proposed amendment to the section of the Rice Township Zoning Ordinance pertaining to signs. A Supreme Court decision ruled that political signs and religious signs may not be regulated differently from other signs. The new proposed amendment will reclassify event signs as temporary signs.

Kevin Rogan asked what would happen if a candidate puts up an oversized sign. Jack Varaly stated that the sign size would have to be approved by the Zoning Officer in the permitting process. Candidates would be cited for erecting signs of different dimensions, or even cited for not getting a permit at all.

Ann Kijek asked about oversized signs in a truck. Jack Varaly stated that they cannot be regulated from a Zoning perspective because they are not located on a parcel.

MOTION by Kevin Rogan, second by Tom Romanyshyn, to add the writing of and adoption of the proposed sign Ordinance to next month's agenda.
All in favor.

Jack Varaly said that he'd be available to answer any questions next month, if anyone believes the Ordinance needs further revision.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Ann Kijek asked if there are any seminars available through the Township. Secretary Stier stated that she has not seen anything come in as of yet.

ADJOURNMENT:

The next meeting of the Planning Commission is Wednesday, May 25th, at 7:00 p.m.

MOTION by Bob Smith, second by Kevin Rogan, to adjourn at 7:37 p.m.
All in favor.