

**WEST VINCENT TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION**

August 18, 2022 7:00PM

Attendance: Ted Otteni, Art Miller, Jesse Miller, Julie Foster, Barbara Dunn Mueller, Ed Latshaw, Township Engineer, Kathy Shillenn, Planning Commission Secretary; absent – George Martin, Chelsea Bellay

Also Attending: Ed Theurkauf, Theurkauf Assocs.

Mr. Otteni called the meeting to order at 7:05PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MOTION and second have been to approve the minutes of July 21, 2022. *Motion carries unanimously.*

PRESENTATION: None.

OLD BUSINESS:

West Vincent Township Forest Protection Ordinance Update – Mr. Theurkauf discussed the Forest Protection Ordinance. The bulk of this ordinance is in Zoning under the Forest Protection Standards. This was a Vision Partnership Project. The intent was to look at the standards and produce better standards for woodland protections. This ordinance is refined but has mostly new standards pertaining to timber harvesting. There are revised standards for conservation areas, riparian buffers and greenways, revised definitions of lot and tract area for critical areas of forest and woodlands in critical habitat areas. There was also a revision of the specimen tree definition that would cause a tree to be listed as a specimen tree. There are also enhanced trail provisions and tree protection standards for land developments. The ordinance committee was a small group which included Sara Shick, John Granger, Kate Clark from the County, Vic Laubach.

Mr. Theurkauf proceeded to discuss all the definitions that have been revised or added.

Ms. Foster asked if a Planning Commission member could be present at the next meeting. Mr. Art Miller asked how the township's present ordinance is illegal. Mr. Theurkauf used that example that the township ordinance prohibits clearcutting; the state preempts that. Mr. Jesse Miller asked how many timber harvesting requests have been made in the last few years. Mr. Theurkauf does not know, except for a couple he heard about. Mr. Otteni asked what the definition is for harvesting trees. Ms. Foster asked for an explanation of riparian buffers and specimen trees. Specimen trees are native trees of a certain size. Ms. Shick stated that the township also maintains a heritage tree list.

Donna Delany, resident asked if there is a definition of critical areas. Mr. Theurkauf stated that the definition is based on the PA National Heritage Sites.

Mr. Theurkauf stated that it would be helpful if the Planning Commission could make a recommendation on the Forest Protection Ordinance next month.

Stormwater Ordinance Discussion – Ed Latshaw, Township Engineer discussed the fact that two things have occurred that are causing amendments to be made to that ordinance. 1) the County has Act 167, which is their County-wide Stormwater Program. The County has updated their model stormwater ordinance and the County is requiring all municipalities to implement those amendments and adopt their updated Stormwater Ordinance by September, but realistically it will more likely be the end of the year. 2) The Stormwater Ordinance has goals, purposes and objectives which Mr. Latshaw has been tasked with producing more stringent standards.

Mr. Latshaw briefly discussed the purpose of the stormwater ordinance. A discussion of the presentation followed.

Mr. Otteni commented that this is County, State and EPA driven. The County is tasked to make sure that the municipalities are implementing EPA requirements. Mr. Otteni questioned the statement made about the township making corrective measures. Does this imply that the township would have the right to enter private property to take corrective action? Mr. Latshaw stated that existing problems should be identified up front, the township cannot enter private property.

Ms. Foster asked about the number of smaller projects that are excluded from stormwater calculations. Ms. Foster also asked about capturing stormwater runoff from roofs for grey water purposes. Is this something that would fit in the stormwater ordinance or the building code. Mr. Otteni commented that this would fall under the building code.

Donna Delany, resident commented that when the ordinances are updated that they be updated to the highest degree.

Mr. Latshaw suggested that at the next Planning Commission meeting, the Commission should be prepared to review and comment on the draft stormwater ordinance.

NEW BUSINESS:

Acknowledge Receipt of Zoning Hearing Board Application – Jim Trolier, 16 Hunt Hill Road

- Receipt acknowledged.

Business from the Floor

Ken Miller, Vice-Chair of Sustainability Committee asked the Planning Commission if they would be open to working with the Sustainability Committee to create an Ordinance for

Renewable Energy. Mr. Otteni commented that the Planning Commission would be open to working with the Sustainability Commission to develop an ordinance.

Ms. Foster commented about discussing the investigation into the Green Building Code. Ms. Foster also asked about the Planning Commission looking into A+ housing, which is considered affordable housing.

The investigation into Green Building Codes will be added to the Planning Commission agenda for next month.

There being nothing further to discuss, a **MOTION** and a second were made to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathy Shillenn
Planning Commission Secretary