

SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

July 11, 2022

Minutes

Attendance: Dan Fest, Lesley Marino, TJ Francisco, Gretchen Rice, Keith Deussing, John Deandrea (Associate Member), Adrian Max (Associate Member), Eric Cohen (Associate Member), Kevin Morrissey (Supervisor Liaison), Maureen Carlton, (Township Solicitor), Jean Weiss (Planning Commission Administrator)

Absent: Peter Brussock, Amishi Castelli

I. **Call to Order**

At 7:05 p.m., the Solebury Township Planning Commission meeting was called to order.

II. **Approval of Minutes – June 13 2022**

The approval of the June 13, 2022 minutes was tabled until August 8, 2022 meeting.

III. **Alternative Energy Ordinance/Sustainability Initiative**

TJ Francisco stated he had provided the Planning Commission with the Sustainability Initiative Executive Summary, that will be sent to the Board of Supervisors for consideration. As part of this submission it is also being recommended that all permit fees pertaining to sustainable initiatives (i.e. geothermal, solar, windmill etc.) be eliminated.

Upon a Motion made by TJ Francisco, seconded by Gretchen Rice the Solebury Township Planning Commission agreed to present the Sustainability Initiative Executive Summary dated July 1, 2022 to the Board of Supervisors for consideration.

TJ Francisco stated he felt by recommending the elimination of fees for sustainable projects it would be a nice incentive to property owners.

Andrian Max asked are just asking for the elimination of the fees, but not the permit process.

Gretchen Rice asked what fees are we asking to be eliminated, as there are a lot of fees required for certain projects. We need to be very specific which fees are involved, especially if there are escrows.

Lesley Marano agreed that at a minimal, if a tax abatement is not possible then we should at least eliminate the township permit fees.

Maureen Carlton asked if this consideration was just for new installing or for placement as well.

TJ Francisco confirmed that it would be for new construction and replacement. I do agree that any fees associated with grading should not be included with this request.

TJ Francisco asked if anyone had any comments or questions regarding the Energy Transition Plan compiled from members of the Environmental Advisory Council (EAC). I think they have done a phenomenal job putting this document together. I did mention to members of the EAC that they should put more emphases on some of the alternative technologies available to us, not just solar. I feel the data could be broadcasted more in the document to quantify what we are trying to do, and encourage so of the major stakeholders in the Township to convert.

Lesley Marano asked when this Energy Transition Plan is finalized, will this be made available to the public and published somewhere.

TJ Francisco stated yes it will.

IV. Burning Ordinance

Maureen Carlton commented if the Township allows for the collection of leaves, then we allow burning. Not collection, no leaf burning.

Lesley Marano asked, to be clear that is the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protections (DEP) current rule.

Maureen Carlton replied yes that is the, and we do not mandate composting but we allow burning so what we get back to is the DEP would rather encouraging composting because that has less of an environmental impact. Solebury is required to prohibit burning of recyclable or compost materials, Solebury could lose grants if it does not act in compliance with the ordinance.

TJ Francisco stated with larger properties requiring them find other means of getting rid of their yard waste could be quite expensive, so allowing them to burn responsible would be a good thing.

Gretchen Rice asked what about the smaller properties.

TJ Francisco stated there should be some consideration for properties that abut each other that are considerably smaller.

Maureen Carlton stated there is a section in the new ordinance that does cover that.

Adrian Max asked if there could be a no fee burn permit put into place.

Gretchen Rice commented that she was not in favor of a burning permit, however residents need to be educated on the proper way of burning.

Lesley Marino suggested as part of the recommendation to the Board of Supervisors the Planning Commission should suggest education for open burning to all residents. There should also be a setback from property lines.

TJ Francisco suggested adding a setback table to the ordinance.

VI. Zoning Ordinance Amendment Short-Term Lodging

Maureen Carlton explained that the amendment to the ordinance primarily had to do with changing primary residence to principal residence, which was a recommendation from the Bucks County Planning Commission.

Upon a Motion made by TJ Francisco, seconded by Gretchen Rice the Solebury Township Planning Commission recommended the amendment to the Short-Term Lodging Ordinance dated 6/1/2022.

VII. Adjournment

Upon a Motion by Gretchen Rice, seconded by TJ Francisco, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Weiss
Planning Commission Administrator, Solebury Township