



PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Monday, March 18, 2024 at 7:00pm | Borough Council Chambers

Members Present: Charles Strauss, Chair; Nicholas Redman, Vice-Chair; Sarah Kipp, Secretary Martin Jolin; John Rice; Jenny Dumont, Alternate.

Staff Members: John Whitmore, Planning Director; Chad Clabaugh, Borough Engineer; Adam Boyer, Planning Commission Solicitor.

Members of the Public: Sue Cipperly, 314 N. Stratton; Patti Lawson, 515 Carlisle Street; Heidi Gillis, Adams County Library; Mary Sue Cline, Adams County Library; Julie Ramsey, Adams County Library; Susan Whaley, Adams County Library; Sharon Monahan, 114 West Broadway; TJ Patel, President Inn & Suites; Brandon Stone, 358 Park Street; Charles Gable, Borough Manager.

Convene Meeting: Planning Commission Chair Charles Strauss called to order the Monday, March 18, 2024 meeting of the Gettysburg Borough Planning Commission at 7:05 p.m.

Review and Approve Agenda: Ms. Kipp made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Rice provided a second, and the motion carried 5-0.

Review and Approve Minutes: Mr. Rice made a motion to approve the minutes for the January 16, 2024 meeting, with a minor naming correction. Ms. Kipp provided a second, and the motion carried 5-0.

Public Comment Restricted to Items on the Planning Commission Meeting Agenda: None.

Old Business

SLD-230001 - 0 Hanover Street: Mr. Whitmore indicated that no updates have been submitted for the 0 Hanover Street Plan to date and that an extension request had been received to extend review until June 30, 2024. Mr. Rice made a motion to accept the request for extension until June 30, 2024. Mr. Jolin provided a second and the motion carried 5-0.

SLD-230003 – Library Subdivision at Lutheran Seminary: Mr. Whitmore reference a new business item on the agenda related to the land use that is causing the developer to seek additional delay in review of the subdivision and land development plan for the library. Mr. Rice made a motion to table the item, seconded by Mr. Jolin. The motion carried 5-0.

SLD-230004 – 340 Baltimore Street Welcome Center: Mr. Whitmore told the commission that federal funding had been approved in the most recent federal budget appropriations legislation. With the availability of funding, municipal staff anticipates completion of the Subdivision and Land Development plan documents and provided an update on an approval method which will require Zoning Hearing Board action in conjunction with conditional approval of any Subdivision and Land Development plan. The Borough of Gettysburg, as the applicant, had requested an

extension of the plan review until July 1, 2024. Mr. Redman made a motion to accept the request for extension until July 1, 2024. Mr. Rice provided a second and the motion carried 5-0.

New Business

ZTA-240001 – Library Land Uses: Mr. Whitmore provided the request and related staff report for the zoning text amendment to enable library as a permitted land use in the INS-1, Institutional District.

Mr. Redman indicated that he was not in favor of amending or rewriting land uses in the zoning ordinance given the current rezoning effort process. Mr. Jolin noted that there is no timeline for the completion of the rezoning process permitting this land use in the Institutional zoning district.

Ms. Kipp inquired about the built environment of the various INS-1, zoned properties, noting that the spaces aren't generally public uses and are designed in a way to emphasize the land in relation to the structure. Ms. Kipp was also concerned with moving library functions outside of the core of the borough and decline in access that may affect children in the borough.

Heidi Gillis Executive Director of the Adams County Library provided information to the Planning Commission regarding the general request and development plans associated with the library in general. One of the issues expressed with any move, was the need for additional automobile parking, accessible design features, and contemporary spaces not available in the core downtown area.

Borough Engineer Chad Clabaugh described the conditions associated with lands in the INS-1 District. Nick Redman asked the Planning Commission Solicitor, Adam Boyer, if the recommendation should include a definition of Library given the ambiguity and use in the Cultural Center land use definition. The solicitor indicated that the land use change would permit Cultural Centers in the INS-1, Institutional District.

After additional discussion between commission members and other Library Board of Trustee members in attendance, Charles Strauss asked for a motion on the matter, with Martin Jolin recommending that the Planning Commission provide a favorable recommendation based on the following findings:

1. Staff's recommendation to that effect,
2. The Institutional District presently contains uses of a similar character to libraries,
3. Cumberland Township's adjoining zoning district permitting libraries,
4. The likelihood that libraries will be a permitted use in the areas currently comprising the Institutional District following the comprehensive rezoning, and
5. The importance of ensuring patron accessibility via adequate and additional parking.

Mr. Rice seconded the motion. A roll call vote was held with Strauss, Kipp, Jolin, and Rice voting in the affirmative and Redman voting in the negative. The motion passes 4-1.

Regional Comprehensive Plan Discussion: Mr. Whitmore provided the commission with materials related to the Central Adams Joint Comprehensive Plan approved in 2019. The materials provided all listed comprehensive plan goals and recommendations to complete those goals. It was recommended by the Chair that the County Planning Office be invited to a future planning commission meeting to discuss the plan and future updates.

2023 Annual Report: Mr. Whitmore provided reference to the 2023 Planning Commission Annual Report included with meeting materials. The report indicated a slight decline in total activity within the borough, with higher value construction occurring as compared to 2022. Mr. Whitmore indicated that the format of the document would be changing next year, with additional time comparisons available post-covid.

2023-2024 Rezoning – Light Fixtures and Glare: Mr. Whitmore provided the Planning Commission with an update regarding the most recent Rezoning Steering Committee Meeting and Sign Ordinance Work Group meeting. One item that has been brought up in both meetings is the need to regulate lighting and prevent glare and other unpleasant environmental affects from high intensity LED lighting. Chad Clabaugh explained that the ability to regulate lighting has changed to include the temperature of the light with higher kelvin lighting being a brighter almost blue light. Commission members expressed interest in reviewing potential ordinance in the future.

Announcements:

Next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 15, 2024, at 7:00 PM in Borough Council Chambers.

Public Comment: Brandon Stone, 358 Park Street provided detailed comments as provided on the following page of this document.

Memo: Dark Skies Zoning Framework

Hello and Good Evening,

My name is Brandon Stone and I live at 358 Park St. in Ward 3. I would like to discuss with the Planning Board the opportunity we have during this Zoning Refresh to include Dark Sky Lighting Concepts that focus on regulating outdoor lighting to mitigate light pollution and preserve natural darkness. These concepts create a new emphasis on urban development as it relates to the night sky while codifying the rules so the Public has a clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities. The approach I am advocating seeks to balance our need for nighttime illumination and the protection of the nocturnal environment while promoting sustainable practices that align with recent changes in technology.

I call on this board to create a new Dark Sky Overlay which would define lighting zones throughout the borough. These zones would range from a Dark Sky Preservation Zone (DSPZ0) which would have stringent regulations to preserve natural darkness and limit light pollution to a High Ambient Lighting Zone (ZN4) which would permit the most extreme uses of lighting. At the same time, develop a new Lighting Ordinance that will allow our community to manage light pollution and lower excessive light levels while defining Lighting Curfews, Lighting Trespass, Acceptable Fixture Types, Lighting Color Temperature Limits and Maximum Luminosity Levels such that the Public can be informed and responsible for its outdoor lighting choices.

The Dark Sky Zoning Concepts outlined here can be met using readily available, reasonably priced lighting equipment. However, many conventional lighting practices should no longer be permitted and our goal should be to balance the need for outdoor lighting with the preservation of natural darkness. Right now we have an opportunity to address these issues with the Zoning Code Update Project and by fostering responsible practices and educating the community, these changes create a more harmonious relationship between urbanization and the celestial beauty of the night sky.

Thank you,
Brandon Stone

Goals:

- 1. Preserve Natural Darkness:** Ensure that areas designated under this zoning concept maintain a minimal level of artificial light, allowing the night sky to be visible and protecting natural darkness.
- 2. Minimize Light Pollution:** Implement measures to reduce light pollution, including controlling the intensity, direction, and color of outdoor lighting.
- 3. Promote Energy Efficiency:** Encourage the use of energy-efficient lighting technologies and practices to minimize energy consumption and reduce the overall environmental impact.
- 4. Enhance Safety and Security:** Strike a balance between preserving natural darkness and providing adequate lighting for safety and security without excessive illumination.
- 5. Educate and Raise Awareness:** Conduct educational programs to inform the public, developers, and businesses about the benefits of dark sky preservation and the importance of responsible outdoor lighting.

TJ Patel, the owner of President Inn & Suites refuted Mr. Stone's position and was in favor of increased lighting as a means of creating a safer and thus more inviting environment. Particularly, Mr. Patel indicated increase in crime and lower tourism flows.

Charles Gable, Gettysburg Borough Manager indicated a personal preference against surface parking lots and explained that non-profits who construct that type of infrastructure are going to inevitably have increased stormwater management fees.

Adjournment: Mr. Jolin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 pm. Mr. Redman provided a second, and the motion carried 5-0.