

**FREEDOM TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
March 07, 2018  
7:00 P.M.**

**PLANNING COMMISSIONERS**

Wayne Belt, Chairperson  
Paul Sharrer, Vice-Chairperson  
Kim Beckett, Secretary  
John Sica, Assistant Secretary

**TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS - PRESENT**

Zachary Gulden, Township Secretary

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC - PRESENT**

Paul Kellett and Ed & Mary Buchheit

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Belt called the Planning Commission's Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**ANNUAL BOARD REORGANIZATION**

Mr. Sica made a **MOTION** to nominate Wayne Belt as Chairperson, Paul Sharrer as Vice-Chairperson and Kim Beckett as Secretary. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Vice-Chair Sharrer. The motion carried unanimously (4-0).

**APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 06, 2017 MINUTES**

Chair Belt called for the approval of the Minutes of the December 06, 2017 Planning Commission's Meeting. Mr. Sica made a **MOTION** to approve the Minutes of the December 06, 2017 meeting. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Secretary Beckett. The motion carried unanimously (4-0).

**OLD BUSINESS**

None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**The Board of Supervisors is seeking the Planning Commission's recommendation on Zoning Ordinance Amendment 8-9-2000. Shall the changes made by the ordinance be amended, remain as-is, or be repealed?**

Chair Belt stated that the Planning Commission should adhere to the following goals: have a vision for the future; improve the quality of life for those living in Freedom Township; review proposals and identify potential problems; comment and advise Supervisors; make decisions; initiate action; and add value to the Township. Chair Belt said a Golf Community and a Planned Community Development would be inappropriate uses in Freedom Township for various reasons. He said that the Township does not have enough water to supply a high density development. No land use should be able to move forward without adequate water supplies. He stated that he believes the changes made from Zoning Ordinance Amendment 8-9-2000 should be repealed and replaced with Rural Conservation or similar use standards. Chair Belt said that the Township should consider changing the density requirements in the Mixed Use District. He said that the current ordinance would allow up to 1,100 homes to be built, and this would create a water shortage in the area. Chair Belt said that the current taxpayers of Freedom Township would have to pay more in taxes in order to ensure everyone had enough water.

Secretary Beckett stated that she was in agreement with the Chair.

Chair Belt stated that there was no need to discuss why past Boards agreed to the changes made by Zoning Amendment 8-9-2000. He said it is important to discuss the future, and that is why changes should be made.

Mr. Kellett stated that he agreed with most of the Chair's comments. There would be over 2,200 new residents in the Township if a Golf Community / Planned Community Development materialized within the Mixed Use District. There are approximately 860 people currently living in the Township. Mr. Kellett agreed that any problem within a new Golf Community, such as a lack of water, would become a problem for the entire Township. The Department of Environmental Protection's Municipal Water Plan states that development should plan for at least a 30 year drought. Mr. Kellett said that plans presented to the Board in the past did not take this into consideration. He suggested that the Township change the Zoning Ordinance now before another large development shows interest in creating another high density development.

Mr. Buchheit said that Freedom Township does not currently have adequate fire and police protection or other services to supply such a large high density development currently permitted in the Mixed Use District. He agreed that this type of use would result in higher taxes.

Vice-Chair Sharrer said that the Township needs to further examine the changes made from Zoning Ordinance Amendment 8-9-2000 and decide which route is best.

Mr. Kellett stated that Mr. Gulden believes that the Township should update the Comprehensive Plan before updating the Zoning Ordinance. He said the Supervisor's thought it was important for the Planning Commission to discuss the changes made from Zoning Ordinance Amendment

8-9-2000 before updating the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Gulden stated that there is a lot more to Zoning Ordinance Amendment 8-9-2000 than just the Golf Course Community. For example – Section 13 of the Amendment changed various properties from the Mixed Use District to the Residential Low Density District. Since the Mixed Use District has higher density standards than the Residential District, he question whether the Board would want to repeal Zoning Ordinance Amendment 8-9-2000 in its entirety. Chair Belt said that he still recommends repealing the changes made from this amendment. Vice-Chair Sharrar said it should be studied, and they should not make a decision at the current meeting. Mr. Kellett stated that he would recommend tabling this discussion tonight and asked the Board to do some more research before making a decision. He said that it was the intent of the Supervisors to start the discussion.

Mr. Gulden said it would not be wise to completely repeal the changes made in Zoning Ordinance Amendment 8-9-2000. He said that if the entire amendment was repealed, there would be no standard for density in the Mixed Use District. Mr. Gulden recommended the Board go through the changes made from the Amendment line-by-line and determine which changes should be made. He said the Board could decide to repeal changes made from Amendment 8-9-2000 and revert back to the original language of the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Kellett agreed that the Board would have to replace certain sections if they determined sections needed repealed.

Mr. Sica requested a joint session with the Board of Supervisors to discuss revising the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinance. He said that both are from the 1990's, and they need to think about revising these documents to attract businesses to the Township. Mr. Kellett said that the Boards can have a joint session to discuss these issues in the future.

Mr. Kellett asked Mr. Gulden to create recommendations based on tonight's discussion and present them at the next meeting. Vice-Chair Sharrer asked Mr. Gulden what he thought about updating the entire Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Gulden said he and the County agrees that the Board should adopt a new Comprehensive Plan first, then work on updating the entire Zoning Ordinance at one time – not piece-by-piece. He said the Comprehensive Plan should drive the discussion on how to craft the Zoning Ordinance. It saves time and money; however, he said he senses urgency on this particular Zoning section, so we can complete this small update first. Chair Belt said that they need to work on the changes made from Zoning Ordinance 8-9-2000 first, then they can work on the rest.

Chair Belt made a **MOTION** to table discussion until the April 4, 2018 meeting. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Mr. Sica. The motion carried unanimously (4-0).

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

None

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business Chair Belt made a **MOTION** to adjourn. The Motion was **SECONDED** by Mr. Sica. Chair Belt adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Zachary R. Gulden  
Township Secretary