



**Township of Northampton
55 Township Road
Richboro, PA 18954**

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING OF
NOVEMBER 15, 2016
MINUTES**

Members Present

Gail Foley
Edward Ingle
Steve Saddlemire
Andrew Gannon
David Esposito
Dr. Arthur Friedman

Excused

Evan Stone

Others Present

Mary Stover, PE, Township Engineer
Craig Bryson, RLA, Township Planner
Mike Solomon, Director of Planning and Zoning
Larry Weinstein, BOS Liaison

Ms. Foley called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance. There was also a moment of silence for those in our armed forces.

Minutes

A motion (Ingle/Gannon) was made to approve the minutes from the September 13, 2016 meeting.

Approved - 6-0 (Stone absent)

Consideration of Ordinance Amendment - Medical Marijuana

Mr. Solomon provided an overview of an ordinance amendment allowing for medical marijuana dispensaries and grower/processors in the I-1 – Industrial District subject to numerous conditions.

After review, it was determined that this is the most appropriate location for their placement. Specifically, this ordinance has been prepared as a result of the recently approved Medical Marijuana Act at the State level.

In addition to determining location in the I-1 District, he stated that the ordinance also establishes criteria such as requiring these facilities to have Department of Health approval, requiring a minimum lot area of 2 acres, hours of operation, security, and setbacks from residential zones, schools, daycare centers, parks, and places of worship. It also establishes parking criteria for the use.

Mr. Solomon noted that this ordinance has been reviewed by the Township Solicitor to insure that it is in compliance with the state regulations. Since this matter will be considered by the Board of Supervisors tomorrow evening, the Planning Commission is required to make a recommendation on the ordinance.

In response to Dr. Friedman, terms of the Medical Marijuana Act were discussed and clarified.

Mr. Solomon stated in follow-up to Mr. Saddlemire that the ordinance focuses on location of this use within the industrial park.

Requirements from the State legislation were discussed and Mr. Solomon also highlighted all of the ordinance criteria in response to Mr. Ingle.

The location of the industrial park within the Township was also clarified as the only location for this use off of Jacksonville Road.

Mr. Weinstein also read the definition of Healthcare Medical Marijuana Act from the State legislation.

There being no comment from the public, the Planning Commission made the following motion:

I move to recommend approval of an ordinance amendment to the Northampton Township Zoning Ordinance, specifically Chapter 27, for the purpose of amending sections related to the Planned Industrial/Office District (I-1) related to the Medical Marijuana Act.

**Approved - 6-0
Motion – Ingle Second - Gannon
(Stone absent)**

Consideration of Ordinance Amendment - Transient Dwellings

Mr. Solomon provided an overview of an ordinance amendment addressing transient dwellings, which have become prevalent as of late throughout Bucks County. Specifically, this ordinance is intended to limit them to the Industrial District of the Township. By doing so, this insures that the integrity of the residential zoning districts are maintained throughout Northampton Township, which are for single-family dwellings.

Mr. Solomon stated that as an added safeguard, the ordinance permits the use by special exception, which enables the Township Zoning Hearing Board to consider each application.

Since this matter will be considered by the Board of Supervisors tomorrow evening, the Planning Commission is required to make a recommendation on the ordinance.

In response to Mr. Saddlemire, Mr. Solomon stated that there are currently no regulations in effect. Mr. Ingle also inquired about how a group home is defined and the nature of the use was discussed.

In response to Dr. Friedman, Mr. Solomon stated that the definition of family is per the Fair Housing Act. He added that the use is only permitted by special exception

before the Zoning Hearing Board thereby serving as an additional safeguard for the Township.

There being no comment from the public, the Planning Commission made the following motion:

I move to recommend approval of an ordinance amending the Northampton Township Zoning Ordinance, specifically Chapter 27, for the purpose of adding and amending definitions, amending uses in the I-1 Zoning District, and identifying regulations related to transient dwellings.

**Approved - 6-0
Motion – Friedman Second - Ingle
(Stone absent)**

Other Business

The Planning Commission met in work session prior to the meeting to discuss the Design Guidelines prepared by the Bucks County Planning Commission. They will be discussed at future meetings.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted:

Michael T. Solomon
Director of Planning and Zoning