



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

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING OF
NOVEMBER 13, 2018
MINUTES**

Members Present

Edward Ingle
Dr. Arthur Friedman
Patrick McGuigan
Mark Shapiro

Excused

Michelle Druding
Andrew Gannon
Steve Saddlemire

Others Present

Craig Bryson, PLA, Township Planner
Mike Solomon, Director of Planning and Zoning

Mr. Ingle 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 and the recent wildfires.

Minutes

A motion (Friedman/McGuigan) was made to approve the minutes from the October 9, 2018 meeting.

Approved - 4-0 (Druding, Gannon, Saddlemire absent)

Consideration of Zoning Ordinance Amendment - Message Center Signs

Mr. Ingle provided an overview of the proposed ordinance amendment as follows:

- Message center signs are permitted as part of the allowable type and size of signage permitted by the ordinance. The calculation of such signage must be incorporated as part of the overall sign calculation, not in addition to it. All identified area and height requirements of the ordinance shall apply.
- A message center sign shall not exceed 50% of the sign area for any one sign, or 25 square feet, whichever is less.
- A maximum of one (1) message center sign is permitted per property.
- Signs may be illuminated from 5 AM to 11 PM, or a half hour past the close of business of the facility being identified or advertised, whichever is later.
- Message center signs shall be limited to freestanding and ground signs. The use of wall-mounted or projecting message center signs is prohibited.
- No portion of the sign may flash, pulsate, scroll, twirl, twinkle, oscillate, rotate, blink, change color, or in any way imitate movement. Each complete message must fit on one screen and utilize the same color.
- The content of a message center sign must transition by changing instantly (e.g. no fade-out or fade-in) and may not change more than once per hour.
- The use of any digital display images is prohibited. This includes animation, pictures, video, and similar technology.

- Signs shall have automatic dimmer software or solar sensors to control brightness for nighttime viewing and variations in daytime ambient light. Signs may not exceed 5,000 nits during daylight hours (between sunrise and sunset) and 250 nits for all other times. The manufacturer shall provide a certification confirming these controls. Signs may not produce glare, the effect of which constitutes a traffic hazard or is otherwise detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare. The Township reserves the right to require the sign intensity to be reduced if deemed to be too bright after installation. The Township also reserves the right to require the use of a different message color if it determined that it is detrimental to the public health, safety, and welfare.
- Glare control shall be achieved primarily through the use of such means as cutoff fixtures, shields, and baffles, and appropriate application of wattage, aiming angle, and fixture placement.
- At all times, signs must comply with any operating standards or regulations adopted by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation or any other governmental entity with appropriate jurisdiction.
- The owner of every message center sign shall coordinate with local authorities if requested to display, when appropriate, emergency information important to the traveling public.

Mr. Ingle noted that the proposed ordinance brings the Township along with technology related to signage. He added that the Bucks County Planning Commission supports the ordinance.

Dr. Friedman noted that the ordinance is restrictive with respect to only allowing one change per hour. Mr. Ingle concurred, but noted that the ordinance can be modified in the future to be less restrictive.

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

I move to recommend approval of an ordinance amending the Northampton Township Zoning Ordinance, specifically Chapter 27, for the purpose of amending sections related to message center sign requirements for commercial, recreational, and institutional districts.

**Approved - 4-0
Motion - Shapiro Second - Friedman
(Druding, Gannon, and Saddlemire absent)**

Other Business

Under other business, Dr. Friedman noted that he will be giving a presentation on vaccines at the library. Mr. Ingle noted that there will be no December meeting and wished everyone Happy Holidays!

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted:

Michael T. Solomon
Director of Planning and Zoning