

**ROCKLAND TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION**

**MEETING MINUTES  
October 25, 2016**

The monthly meeting of the Rockland Township Planning Commission was held on October 25, 2016 beginning at 7:30PM. The following members of the Planning Commission were present: Richard Mazich, Herb Meadway, Nathan Roush, Nancy Ogden and Bill McFadden. Also in attendance were: Township Solicitor, Alfred W. Crump, Jr., Township Supervisor Nathan Ohlinger, Matthew Mack-Ludgate Engineering and Jaclyn Hollenbach-Ludgate Engineering.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30PM by Chairman, Richard Mazich.

The minutes of the August 30, 2016 Planning Commission meeting were reviewed. On a motion by Bill McFadden, seconded by Nathan Roush, the minutes of the August 30, 2016 Planning Commission meeting were approved as presented. There was no public comment. Motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Richard J. & Carol A. Blair Subdivision – Five Points Road** – The time extension for review of the Richard J. & Carol A. Blair Subdivision plan is in effect until December 20, 2016. There are no items for inclusion on this month's meeting agenda, per John Aston, Aston Surveyors/Engineers, Inc.

The Rockland Township Zoning Hearing Board held a public hearing on August 10, 2016 and rendered a decision on the variance application for Andy George, 52 Cider Mill Road, to install a 1,200 sq. ft. detached garage (pole building). The applicant's request for a variance was denied (from both the size restrictions of the building and the minimum yard setbacks). A copy of the written decision is available at the Rockland Township Municipal Building.

The Rockland Township Zoning Hearing Board held a public hearing on August 17, 2016 and rendered a decision on the variance application for Troy Bower, 50 Highland Drive, to install a 1,200 sq. ft. detached garage (pole building). The applicant's request for a variance was denied (from both the size restrictions of the building and the minimum yard setbacks). A copy of the written decision is available at the Rockland Township Municipal Building.

The Rockland Township Zoning Hearing Board held a public hearing on September 21, 2016 and rendered a decision on the variance application for Owen McPeake, 75 Orchard Road, to use a detached summer kitchen on the property to host the practice of oriental medicine (by applicant). The applicant's request for a variance was granted with conditions. A copy of the written decision is available at the Rockland Township Municipal Building.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Zoning Ordinance Review/Amendment Project** – Mr. Matthew Mack and Ms. Jaclyn Hollenbach from Ludgate Engineering were present to meet Township officials and "kick-off" the Zoning Ordinance Review/Amendment project. The Township Solicitor mentioned that one of the main purposes for the zoning review is to review the Township's Zoning Ordinance for consistency with the recently adopted Eastern Berks Joint Comprehensive Plan (involving Rockland Township and District Township, the Borough of Topton, and the Brandywine Heights School District). Our Joint Comp Plan outlines a community vision that will allow for modest planned growth and development, while protecting the region's natural resources, farmland and community character. In addition, the Rockland Township Board of Supervisors have recently adopted a vision statement as follows: "Rockland Township, a rural pro-agricultural community". Therefore, Township officials would foresee a final Zoning Ordinance

document which would aim to protect the region's natural resources and to protect the region's rural areas that have a mixture of prime agricultural soils, wooded areas, wetlands, farms, open spaces, wildlife habitat corridors, and pristine water resources. Supervisor Nathan Ohlinger suggested a preface be included in the Zoning Ordinance disclosing the fact that Rockland Township is a rural, agricultural community. Mr. Mack and Ms. Hollenbach provided a list of more common zoning-related "issues" which recently needed to be addressed in other Townships, for discussion and informational purposes. Township officials provided general input on sections in the Zoning Ordinance which should be considered for revision. Ludgate Engineering also suggested Township officials consider not including specific design criteria in the Zoning Ordinance, so these details can be worked out amongst the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors and would not automatically be referred to the Zoning Hearing Board. At the conclusion of the discussion, the Planning Commission members, Township officials and Ludgate Engineering agreed to review Article I (Title and Short Title) and Article II (Definitions) of the Township Zoning Ordinance prior to next month's meeting and prepare to discuss both Articles I and II at next month's Planning Commission meeting to be held on Tuesday, November 29, 2016 at 7:30PM.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 on a motion by Bill McFadden, seconded by Nancy Ogden. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Krall  
Secretary