

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
JOINT MEETING
JUNE 1, 2017

The Board of Supervisors of Upper Merion Township met for a Joint Meeting on Thursday, June 1, in the Board Room, in the Township Building in King of Prussia. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m., followed by a pledge to the flag.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS:

An Executive Session was held prior to this meeting concerning litigation and personnel matters.

DISCUSSIONS:

ZONING HEARING BOARD

ROLL CALL:

Supervisors present were: Greg Waks, Bill Jenaway, and Carole Kenney. Also present were: Dave Kraynik, Township Manager; Sally Slook, Assistant Township Manager; Joe McGrory, Township Solicitor; Mark Zadroga, Zoning Officer; Mark DePillis, Chairman; Jonathan Garzillo, Vice-Chairman; Lynne Z. Gold-Bikin. Supervisor Greg Philips and Supervisor Erika Spott were absent.

Mr. Mark DePillis, Chairman, reviewed some of the Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB) activities for 2016. He stated the ZHB continues to see many signage requests, particularly along the US 202 corridor. Other applications include the usual five or six day care special exceptions and a number of residential and new commercial development requests. It was noted there is a good mix of denials and approvals and relatively few appeals on ZHB decisions.

Mr. DePillis said the ZHB would like to see a strengthening of the communication as it relates to the Board of Supervisors positions on some of the applications particularly in situations where there could be future changes in the zoning ordinance and also on negotiations to settle appeals, if possible. Mr. DePillis also mentioned from time to time they encounter definitional issues in the ordinance that need to be addressed during the comprehensive updating of the ordinance.

Mr. DePillis indicated they receive a lot of comments about the sign ordinance, particularly commercial signs along the US 202 corridor where more and more variances are being requested. As aspects of the ordinance have changed pushing commercial buildings closer to US 202 and more people want

signs on all four sides of the building.

Jonathan Garzillo, Vice Chairman, said the ZHB from their vantage point “on the front lines” have observed consistent requests for variances that have a very significant pattern. He said they would rather zone by code and not by variance.

Mr. Jenaway commented with the rotation of the buildings on the US 202 corridor with the front in the rear it results in some cases with an unattractive view for those entering the gateway to the township on US 202. He indicated the supervisors have had that dialog with developers to impress on them the importance of aesthetics of the rear view of their buildings on the US 202 corridor.

Mr. Joe McGrory, Township Solicitor, asked if the ZHB has a running list of these types of challenges. Mr. Mark Zadroga, Zoning Officer, responded he would provide a running list of requests to the supervisors.

Mr. DePillis provided an example of a two and a half story residential building which came up during a recent meeting. He pointed out there is no guidance on what a half a story means and is an example of the kind of situation that should be on the running list.

Mr. Garzillo commented on the importance of definition input.

Mr. Jenaway asked if the sign issue relates to size, lighting or something else. Mr. DePillis responded the sign issues relate to size and number.

Mr. McGrory commented each ordinance has its own personality which is why it needs to be reviewed from time to time as boards change.

A discussion followed about specific examples of various sign issues.

Mr. Garzillo commented with the changes along US 202 setbacks and signs are changing accordingly.

Mrs. Kenney reiterated Mr. McGrory’s request for a running list of zoning issues and challenges for the information of the Board of Supervisors as they continue to go through the zoning code.

Mr. McGrory commented you cannot possibly draft the zoning ordinance for every situation. He said when you see something you think needs a rezoning of zoning text change to keep in mind when looking at the entire township a particular variance may be okay in one location but not necessarily throughout the township.

Mr. Jenaway stated this concludes the 2017 Joint Meetings with the various citizen boards and authorities in Upper Merion Township.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved by Mr. Waks, seconded by Mrs. Kenney, all voting "Aye" to adjourn the joint meeting at 7:19 p.m. None opposed. Motion approved 3-0.

DAVID G. KRAYNIK
TOWNSHIP MANAGER

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Minutes Approved:
Minutes Entered: