

The SELECT COMMITTEE held their meeting this evening at the Township Administration Building, 8230 Old York Rd, Elkins PA. The following Select Committee members were present: David Cohen, Eric Leighton, Ameer Farrell, Brad Pransky and Henry Sekawungu. The Select Committee convened at 5:30 p.m., and continued with reviewing additional comments and considerations on the proposed Zoning Ordinance.

The Committee started off by discussing the Elkins Estate recent rezoning as the M4 Zoning District, while the adjacent property which is the Taylor Institute is MU3. The Committee determined that since there was no other property zoned M4, and there was no proposal to have any M4 zoning or similar designations in the new ordinance, that in order to have a logical sequence, it may be ideal to rename it MU3, especially if it mirrors the MU3 ordinance, or come up with a logical sequencing for the Elkins Estate/Dominican retreat.

A question was raised about the preservation ordinance which needs to be revisited either as part of this process or later on. The resolution was that it be removed altogether, since it has not achieved the goal of preserving wetlands and historic buildings. Additionally, most of the issues that necessitate having an overlay Ordinance have been addressed in the proposed Historic Resources Local Landmark Ordinance. However it was recommended that the preservation overlay be repealed only after the Local Landmark Ordinance was adopted.

A discussion followed regarding the completion of this process and it was agreed that the Select Committee would make changes and come up with a new ordinance to present to the Commissioners rather than give them the proposed changes.

Currently the mixed use and commercial uses are beginning to look alike and may need some tuning.

Mr. Nixon updated the Select Committee on the Zoning Ordinance updates in Abington Township and the suggestion raised at the last meeting, that the two Ordinances mirror each other along the boundary. A discussion followed on the diversity of uses along the boundary, specifically along the western boundary that did not quite mirror each other.

Abington Township along the western boundary was determined to be mainly industrial while the Cheltenham Township side was a mix of uses that included the train station tracks, an antique shop, Primex, a Pizza store, Glenside Lumber; with the train tracks dividing the two Townships. Similar uses were limited to the Mt. Carmel side were the Select Committee could consider mirroring what is Abington Township. The Select Committee opted to have the area from Tyson Avenue going west, Zoned as mixed use.

Mr. Pransky stated that industrial uses are not what they used to be as these types of uses have evolved over time, but that it would be ideal to preserve some land for something

similar to the Industrial Zoning. The Committee also floated the idea of having Commercial Retail Office added to the Light Industrial District, in so doing, allowing for the uses similar to Abington along the Township boundary to the west.

A discussion followed about the proposed Local Landmark Ordinance, and the comments that had been submitted by the Planning Commission as part of their recommendation. Since this would be part of the Zoning Ordinance, Ms. Farrell took another look at it and came up with the following highlights:

- The definition for demolition is much broader than intended. Could be changed to allow for more flexibility.
- There are too many requirements for scaled drawings which does not make sense. For example, on page 4, if the intent is to get a COA for an entire demolition or relocation, then the bulk of the ordinance is not necessary. Most of the ordinance can be eliminated if it is just dealing with partial demolition versus substantial demolition.
- Eliminate d, e and f on page 4 of the proposed Ordinance which is part of the review procedure.
- Ensure that the responsibility is on the applicant to justify why they are trying to demolish a property.
- Provide clear delineation so that the larger properties are preserved.
- Mr. Cohen suggested a need to differentiation between standard rehabilitation and substantial rehabilitation. This could be based on a percentage basis, say 50%, which would constitute substantial rehabilitation, and need for additional review and approval.
- Mr. Leighton suggested a need for clarification of Section 175.9 as to what was considered in-kind.

The Select Committee asked for a listing of the properties proposed as local landmarks, so that they could review them, and based on that, make a determination as to which properties were actually historically significant and which were not. Mr. Pransky stated that Cheltenham was an old Township that had old stuff. There was a need to distinguish between historic properties and properties that may have had someone significant that lived there.

It was the general consensus of the Select Committee that, demolition by neglect of historic properties should not be grounds for a Certificate of Appropriateness.

The meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.



Bryan T. Havar
Township Manager

As per Henry Sekawungu