

MINUTES

AMBLER BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION

May 29, 2007

The May Meeting of the Ambler Borough Planning Commission was held on May 29, 2007 at 7:30 P.M. in Borough Council Chambers located at 122 E. Butler Avenue, Ambler. Vice Chairman LaGreca presided.

Roll Call. Present: Mr. LaGreca, Mr. Mulroy, Mr. Benigno, Mrs. Baigis, Mr. Amento, Ms. Andrews and Mr. Narcowich, County Planner. Mr. Ware was on vacation and Mr. Dougherty was excused.

Ms. Andrews moved the April 24, 2007 Minutes be approved with two corrections: OLD BUSINESS #5 – Change moving to storage POD's, and NEW BUSINESS #2 – N. not W. Main Street. Seconded, carried.

OLD BUSINESS

1. The Planning Commission discussed Mr. Bresnan's Memo of April 13, 2007 on additional criteria to home professional office section in Residential Districts. We also reviewed County Planner's letter of December 1, 2006 and the Draft Ordinance. We made some changes to the Draft ordinance. Mr. Narcowich will bring a revised Ordinance to the June Meeting with agreed upon changes.
2. We reviewed the revised lighting standards to the Land Development Subdivision Ordinance. Concern was expressed about a requirement that all non-conforming existing lighting fixtures would have to be removed after 24 months upon enactment of the Ordinance. Some members felt this is an Ex Post Facto Law which is prohibited by law. We will bring this back to the June Meeting.
3. The Commission reviewed some Ordinances that regulate POD's in other municipalities. It was decided that simple is best. We will look at a revised draft in June.

NEW BUSINESS

1. The Commission discussed changing zoning on certain properties that abut the Central Business District to better reflect how the properties are used and to restore the zoning to these properties that existed before 1977. A period of discussion followed. We will further discuss this at the June Meeting.

2. The Planning Commission discussed adding clear language to the Industrial Zoning District prohibited use. Mr. Amento moved that I District be amended by adding to the existing list No Crushing of Stone or any Material by a Mechanical Process. Seconded, carried. (6-Ayes, 0-Nays, 1-Absent)

3. A long period of discussion followed on certain comments made at the May 21, 2007 Council Meeting and contained in several local papers. Several members took great offense to the remark. They pointed out that we had spent over 20 months discussing the Sign Ordinance revisions which included several major changes to the Ordinance. It was also pointed out that the Ordinance submitted to Borough Council did vary as relates to the two gateway signs. We took input from over 20-plus residents and businesses at these meetings on various topics. We did not “rubber stamp” anything. Mr. Amento moved and it was agreed to, the following amended motion to send a letter to Ambler Borough Council that said the Ambler Borough Planning Commission was not worn down by Borough Council or anyone and that we affirm the Sign Ordinance as was passed and approved at the Planning Commission meeting of January 30, 2007. Seconded, carried. (5-Ayes, 1-Nay, 1-Absent) Voting Aye: Mr. LaGreca, Mr. Mulroy, Mr. Benigno, Mr. Amento, Ms. Andrews. Voting Nay: Mrs. Baigis. Absent: Mr. Ware.

Mrs. Baigis raised the question as to Mr. LaGreca having a conflict on the Sign Ordinance because in the past he has done some professional work for the Ambler Savings Bank. Members of the Commission pointed out that months ago Mr. LaGreca volunteered this information to the whole Commission. Mr. Ware stated he did not see it as a conflict. At this time Mrs. Baigis did not take the matter to the Borough Solicitor and at this very late date it seems wrong to bring this up if she had had a concern.

Ms. Andrews moved the meeting be adjourned. Seconded, carried.

Very truly yours,

George W. Benigno
Secretary