

**TOWN OF CHESTER  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
April 2, 2018  
Minutes**

**Commission Members Present:** Naomi Johnson, Tim Roper, Barre Pinske, Claudio Veliz and Cheryl Joy Lipton.

**Staff Present:** Michael Normyle, Zoning Administrator, Cathy Hasbrouck, Recording Secretary.

**Citizens Present:** None

**Agenda Item 1, Review minutes from March 19, 2018 meeting**

Tim Roper noted a correction in the first paragraph on page 2. The word “the” needed to be removed from the 4<sup>th</sup> line. Claudio Veliz discussed a verb – subject agreement in the last sentence of the first paragraph under agenda item 3. The Recording secretary decided to change the noun “goals” to “goal” and the verb “merit” to “merits”. Michael Normyle asked about the use of the expression Southern Gateway in the third paragraph on page 2. The term was listed with names of actual zoning districts but is not a zoning district itself. It was determined that the list was a quote from the Town Plan and was valid. It was established that the Commission members did not all have the same version of the Town Plan and the Recording Secretary will address that issue. Cheryl Joy Lipton moved to accept the minutes from the March 19, 2018 meeting. Tim Roper seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the minutes were accepted with changes.

**Agenda Item 2, Citizen Comments**

There being no citizen present, there were no citizen comments.

**Agenda Item 3, Re-Organizational session**

Naomi Johnson explained that the Selectboard has finalized the members of the Commission for the coming year and the Commission needed to elect a chair and a clerk. Tim Roper re-nominated Naomi Johnson to be the chair. Claudio Veliz seconded the motion. Barre Pinske expressed regret that Naomi’s energies had to be split between acting as chair in running the meeting and using her extensive expertise as an engineer to aid the discussion of technical issues which are frequently part of the Commission’s job. It was resolved that the Commission members would pay more attention to helping the chair manage the meeting and to ask for her input on technical matters. A vote was taken and Naomi Johnson was re-elected chair.

Naomi described the clerk's function as taking notes if the Recording Secretary is not present. Claudio Veliz nominated Cheryl Joy Lipton to be clerk. Tim Roper seconded the motion. A vote was taken and Cheryl Joy was elected clerk.

**Agenda Item 4, Discuss Town Plan Goals in the initial draft Zoning Audit and develop list of requested examples for Place Sense**

The Commission considered the Zoning Audit document presented by Brandy Saxton of Place Sense at the March 5, 2018 meeting. Naomi Johnson asked the Commission to look at the goals listed in the first column, labeled Town Plan, and see if they want to change or delete any of the goals listed or add new goals, in order to make Brandy's work more focused and productive. The Commission had gone through the first 2 pages at the last meeting, covering four of the twenty-six blocks of goals listed in the document.

After some discussion the review began starting with block 5 on page 3 as follows:

Block 5, addressing smart growth and strip development was accepted as written. A need to see the smart growth principles statute was expressed.

Block 6, pertaining to agricultural and forest lands, was agreed to.

Block 7, which addressed historical preservation, was agreed to with the addition of cellar holes and stone walls and historic sites to the list of historically significant structures to be preserved.

Block 8 addressed how applications for new businesses would be handled. The Commission decided to strike the first goal and truncate the second goal at the word "businesses". The Commission wants to expand the list of businesses the town intends to encourage to include light industry, fabrication and others outside those supporting tourism.

Blocks 9, 10, and 11 (home occupations and home businesses, fire safety for housing developments and utility line impact were accepted after some discussion for each.

Block 12, communication tower regulations, brought up the issue of whether the town should actually be regulating wireless communication towers in such detail. It was agreed that these goals and regulations could be consolidated in the future, and the Commission did want Brandy Saxton to continue her analysis of the topic.

Block 13, concerning education and child care, was readily agreed to.

Block 14, the transportation system items was agreed to. It was noted that bikeways and a bus system were not emphasized as much as was wanted.

Block 15 access management on Route 103 south of the town center, was accepted, with the inclusion of bike paths and expanding it to more of town than the Route 103 South. Block 5 mentions areas along routes 10, 11 and 103. The Commission resolved to expand this in the UDB's.

Block 16, which addressed miner resource extraction, was accepted. The Commission was uncomfortable with the wording, which seemed to encourage extraction instead of encouraging following guidelines for extraction which reduce adverse effects. The

Commission requested an example of town plans and bylaws from other towns with effective guidelines and regulation.

Block 17, several items concerning surface water, wetlands and river corridors, was accepted. Claudio Veliz said that the state has extensive regulations on all these topics. It was noted that the town could be more stringent than the state. Tim Roper suggested that invasive species could be regulated. Commission members favored this.

Blocks 18 and 19, hazardous material transport and aquifer protection, were accepted with no discussion.

Block 20 addressed wildlife diversity and protection. The Commission agreed to the goals. Cheryl Joy Lipton had listened to a webinar on this topic. She said this is where overlays for conservation district and habitat connectivity are needed. Claudio Veliz asked if she had examples of bylaw wording. Cheryl said she knew where she could get some.

Block 21, which addressed glare and light pollution was discussed. Claudio Veliz said the bylaws should be in compliance with the International Dark Skies Association standards. The Commission decided to keep the goals and strengthen them.

Block 22, preservation of scenic views and ridgelines, was agreed to. The Commission felt the bylaws should be strengthened. Cheryl Joy Lipton cited Santa Fe and Taos New Mexico as examples of restrictions that worked to prevent development on hill tops. Barre Pinske objected to what he saw as excessive control of people's aspirations and their right to build where they saw fit.

Block 23 covered development on slopes and storm water drainage. The Commission agreed to the goals. It decided to discuss the concepts of storm water drainage and flood control regulation in the future.

Block 24 which addresses some of the state goals for energy conservation, was accepted.

Block 25 addressed solar power facilities. It was changed in light of the state initiatives on energy use. The first item was rejected entirely. The second was terminated at the end of the first sentence. The Commission wants to revisit the issue of ground mounted solar and screening.

Block 26 covered accessory dwelling units. The Commission questioned why only certain groups of people were listed as possible residents of accessory dwelling units and proposed to delete that list. Otherwise the goals were acceptable.

Tim Roper requested an example of bylaws where a conditional use permit is not required for a new business mentioned in Block 4. He also would like examples of regulation of home business as discussed in Block 9.

Barre Pinske expressed concern about dividing large older homes into apartments. He felt that it could encourage tenants who could not contribute to the town's economy.

#### **Agenda Item 5, Set date for the next meeting**

The date for the next meeting will be April 16, 2018.

Barre Pinske moved to adjourn the meeting. Claudio Veliz seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the meeting was adjourned.