

**TOWNSHIP OF O'HARA PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
NOVEMBER 20, 2023**

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The Planning Commission met on November 20, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. for its regular meeting. The meeting was brought to order and proceeded as outlined on the agenda.

Present: Edward Crates, Chair; Joseph Zgurzynski, Vice Chair; Charles Bleil, Secretary; Richard Citrin, Assistant Secretary; Giovanni Scolieri, At-Large; Joseph Kelly, At-Large

Staff: Charles W. Steinert, Jr., P.E., Township Engineer; Julie A. Jakubec, CPA, CGMA, Township Manager; Cathy Bubas, Manager's Secretary

(\*) denotes late arrival.

**SUMMARY OF AGENDA ITEMS:**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. APPROVAL OF EXCUSED ABSENCES**

**III. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Review of Marimar Landing Comparable Departure Concerning a Set-Back
- B. Conceptual Review – Meinert Property
- C. Discussion of Proposed Zoning Changes for RIDC Park

**IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. January 16, 2023

**V. UPDATE ON PRIOR ACTIONS**

- A. Proposed Amendment to the Township Zoning Ordinance – Regulating the Keeping of Chickens in Residential Zones

Planning Commission recommended moving the proposed ordinance to Council for review and adoption. As required by the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Code, the proposed ordinance was forwarded to Allegheny County for review and comments. Council conducted a Public Hearing on June 6, 2023 to receive public comments. The ordinance was adopted June 13, 2023.

B. Update by the Long Range Comprehensive Planning Committee

Plan preparation is half-way through the process. There are two phases in preparing such a plan. Phase I included meeting with the joint committee, developing a website and digital social media, and sending post cards and questionnaires for people to comment. At the end of Phase I, key items were articulated. Phase II involves reaching out to people with specific expertise for interviews to find solutions to the issues. It is anticipated the plan will be completed by January 2024.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS

VII. ADJOURNMENT

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Crates called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF EXCUSED ABSENCES

All members of the Planning Commission were in attendance.

III. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Crates noted meeting procedures.

A. Review of Marimar Landing Comparable Departure Concerning a Set-Back

Township Engineer Chuck Steinert noted the developer is requesting a comparable departure for side yard setbacks to install elevators in certain units.

Domenic Ricciuti of River Road Development Group, explained since the final application was approved in February 2021, there have been requests for elevators. To provide elevators, there is a need to adjust the amount of space. Only certain units that run along the railroad would have elevators. Instead of ten feet, there would be nine feet and four inches between the units with elevators. The other units would be 15' between units.

Vice Chair Zgurzynski questioned how far off grade the porches would be. Mr. Ricciuti explained the mounds have been changed due to an easement for PWSA (Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority). Mr. Steinert, Jr., P.E. noted they are restricted by the stormwater easement. The mounds prevent sliding one way or another without affecting density.

Motion by Vice Chair Zgurzynski to recommend Council approval of the proposed comparable departure was seconded by Mr. Kelly and carried unanimously.

B. Conceptual Review – Meinert Property

Michael Wetzel of Victor Wetzel and Denis Meinert were in attendance to present a conceptual plan.

Mr. Wetzel noted a six-lot subdivision is proposed with four of the lots located along Dorseyville Road, two lots back to back and two lots accessible by a spur from the existing shared driveway. Mr. Meinert clarified the property is one parcel divided into two different zoning districts.

Mr. Wetzel indicated the back of the parcel is zoned R-4. Due to the topography, the buildable area is limited. He hoped to submit applications for formal review by Planning Commission in December, as well as for the Zoning Hearing Board to request a variance for lot frontage.

Vice Chair Zgurzynski questioned if the common driveway would remain privately owned or turned over to the Township. Mr. Wetzel stated the common driveway is 65 feet wide and would remain private. Chairman Crates noted flag lots would be created. Vice Chair Zgurzynski noted the shared driveway will require a maintenance agreement between the owners. Manager

Jakubec clarified the access would be a private road since it would accommodate access to four properties. Two homes or less would be considered a shared driveway.

Chairman Crates noted conceptual reviews do not require action, and no action would be taken.

On lot stormwater management was proposed. A sanitary force main would be constructed for lots 5 and 6.

#### C. Discussion of Proposed Zoning Changes for RIDC Park

Manager Jakubec stated staff has been working with RIDC and the RIDC Business Alliance to develop a master plan. It was noted RIDC has a lot of deed restrictions and 50% of the property owners would need to approve any changes. Proposed changes to zoning in RIDC include allowing post-secondary education as a conditional use so the Township would not lose part of the tax base with a nonprofit. A bank/financial institution would become a permitted principle use, and a sundry shop would be an accessory use offering “Grab and Go” foods, food items that are heated without a commercial kitchen, fruit, non-alcoholic beverages, and personal products, since there is nowhere to get food in the Park.

Chairman Crates asked if RIDC would be become an overlay district.

The Manager noted various jobs that would be available in RIDC due to the proposed zoning changes.

It was noted the RIDC Park used to be full, but many businesses have relocated, such as Giant Eagle.

Manager Jakubec stated a deal is in the works with Coen, a convenience store and gas station chain, which would include 16 fuel pumps at four islands, where Periwinkles was. Conditional use approval would be needed for the fuel pumps, car charging stations and the convenience store. No large signs would be allowed. Mr. Steinert, Jr., P.E. added that the convenience store/gas station would have to be 600-feet from a highway on or off ramp. Vice Chair Zgurzynski noted the use would create more traffic. Manager Jakubec stated a traffic study would be required. She also noted Ametek, also in the SM Suburban Manufacturing District, located on the other side of Freeport Road, is part of RIDC, and she could envision a possible convenience store with gas pumps there as well.

Vice Chair Zgurzynski noted convenience stores with gas pumps typically operate 24/7. The Manager indicated that would be up to RIDC. She added Coen has the support of the Business Alliance and RIDC.

Mr. Kelly indicated the changes would be beneficial to RIDC and the Township.

Motion by Mr. Citrin to recommend to Council that the proposed zoning ordinance changes be approved was seconded by Mr. Bleil and carried unanimously.

#### IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

##### A. January 16, 2023

Motion by Mr. Bleil to approve the subject minutes as presented was seconded by Mr. Scolieri and carried unanimously.

#### V. UPDATE ON PRIOR ACTIONS

##### A. Proposed Amendment to the Township Zoning Ordinance – Regulating the Keeping of Chickens in Residential Zones

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Manager Jakubec noted three permits for chickens were issued, although Mr. Komora, Special Projects Coordinator/Code Enforcement Officer, did have to chase a few residents that did not have permits or contained their chickens.

Mr. Citrin inquired about the Curbside on the Run along Powers Run Road. The Manager recalled parents waiting with their children for the school bus were not parking far enough from the stop sign, creating parking issues for the café patrons. ‘No Parking’ signs were installed and the Police continue to monitor the situation.

Chairman Crates noted a big, exposed tin whistle pipe exposed near the café. Mr. Steinert, Jr., P.E. stated the owners did not know the pipe was there. The pipe belongs to the State.

##### B. Update by the Long Range Comprehensive Planning Committee

Plan preparation is half-way through the process. There are two phases in preparing such a plan. Phase I included meeting with the joint committee, developing a website and digital social media, and sending post cards and questionnaires for people to comment. At the end of Phase I, key items were articulated. Phase II involves reaching out to people with specific expertise for interviews to find solutions to the issues. It is anticipated the plan will be completed by January 2024.

Manager Jakubec stated the committee continues to work through the Chapters. She estimated the Plan would be completed by May 2024.

#### VI. OTHER BUSINESS

Manager Jakubec referred to the proposed Year 2024 budget, noting no tax increases are proposed at this point.

The Manager stated two new residents were elected to Council.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Kelly to adjourn the meeting was seconded by Vice Chair Zgurzynski and carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Attachment: Attendance Sheet

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Charles F. Bleil", written over a horizontal line.

Charles F. Bleil, Secretary

SIGN-IN SHEET

DATE 11-20-2023

TOWNSHIP OF O'HARA

Planning Commission  
Meeting

Name

Address or Organization

Michael Wetzal

Vicki Wetzal

DENIS MEINERT

357 DUNSTYVILLE

Domenic Riccuti

River Road Development Group