

# APPROVED

---

## **FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES September 5, 2019**

**Call to Order:** Chairman Hoffman called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Present were Planning Commission (PC) members John Gontarz, Mark Harris, Chuck Phillips and Brent Van Lith. Dr. Mark Harris left the meeting at approximately 8:07. Also in attendance on behalf of the Township were Township Engineer Pete Eisenbrown, Township Mgr. Joan McVaugh, Assistant Township Mgr. Jeff Eastburn and Secretary Sharon Norris. Board of Supervisors' Chairman John Auerbach was also in attendance.

**Public Comment:** There was no public comment.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

- a. *July 11, 2019:* Mr. Phillips moved, seconded by Mr. Van Lith to approve the July 11, 2019 PC minutes as submitted. Motion passed 5-0.

### **Planning & Zoning:**

- a. *Green Energy Ordinance (formerly known as the Solar Ordinance):* The Township Zoning Officer, Jeff Vogels, drafted this ordinance which has been reviewed by the Board at their last two meetings. Mr. Vogels is on an extended vacation and Township Engineer Pete Eisenbrown will be working with the PC on reviewing/revising this document. Chairman of the Board, John Auerbach, provided a summary of the evolution and current status of the ordinance, highlighting the Board's initial concern regarding the impervious nature of solar cells and how to handle stormwater management in the ordinance. There is nothing in the Township's Stormwater Ordinance that covers solar arrays. He advised the PC of a document prepared by the DEP in the form of "Frequently Asked Questions" regarding stormwater management related to solar applications, which Mr. Vogels used in drafting this ordinance. Mr. Auerbach indicated that there is no immediate rush for the PC to produce a final draft. Chairman Hoffman confirmed that the ordinance will apply to all alternate sources of energy such as wind, geothermal, manure digester, etc. It was the PC's opinion that geothermal wells do not need to be a part of this ordinance, however they agreed to check with Mr. Vogels regarding his reasons for including it. They reviewed Sections A, B, & C of the draft. Section A covers residential applications, Section B is for non-residential applications and Section C covers large commercial uses. The criteria for each of the sections was reviewed and discussed and several questions were developed for which Engineer Pete Eisenbrown and Township Mgr. Joan McVaugh will research and provide information to be discussed further at the next PC meeting, including what the Fire Cos. require as far as placement of solar panels in rooftop applications. There was some question among the PC members whether sections A & B should be combined in terms of limitations and restrictions. Smaller solar panel applications covering less than 1,000 sq. ft. are exempt from stormwater management regulations. A development plan for an existing 35 panel, 12.6 kW residential application in the Township will be included in the information provided to the PC for their next meeting. Dr. Hoffman did not commit to the 1,000 sq. ft. limitation. The Township is concerned mostly with the large commercial, ground-mounted applications requiring large 10+ acre parcels. This size application would require strict construction provisions in order that the land could be converted back to farmland when the solar panel application is decommissioned. For all applications, the Township's concerns would not involve the efficiency of the application, but would be more

## APPROVED

---

about how/where a ground-mounted application is installed and how the surrounding neighbors would be affected.

**Public Comment:** No public comment.

**Adjourn:** Dr. Hoffman 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Gontarz  
Planning Commission Secretary

PC Mtg. 09.5.19.v.1.er