

A regular meeting of the **PLANNING COMMISSION** for February 2022 was held tonight via web-conference, Chairman Thomas Cross presiding. Members present were Kia Baker, Thom Cross, Carl Freedman, Mike Hayes, Rhonda Isser, Jesse Smith (alternate) and Bill Winneberger. Staff present via web-conference were Henry Sekawungu, Director of Planning and Zoning; Robert Habgood, Assistant to the Director of Planning and Zoning; Julia Detwiler, Planner I; Eric Jarrell, Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) and Anne Nygrand, MCPC.

Mr. Cross called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. A quorum was present.

1. Mr. Cross motioned to recommend approval of the January 24, 2022 minutes. Ms. Baker seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
2. Ordinance Amending 295 Entitled “Zoning”, Section 295-1804 Entitled “Board of Historical Architectural Review (BHAR)” and Section 295-1805 Entitled “Public Works Committee of the Board of Commissioners”

Mr. Sekawungu advised that the amendment to the BHAR Ordinance was for the purpose of cleaning up discrepancies between the Township Code and the Zoning Ordinance and require Certificates of Appropriateness to get recommendations from the Building & Zoning Committee instead of the Public Works Committee, per the Code. Mr. Sekawungu stated that MCPC reviewed the proposed Ordinance and didn't raised any concerns with the proposed amendments.

Mr. Winneberger motioned to recommend approval of the proposed Ordinance. Mr. Freedman seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Review of Zoning Hearing Board Agenda for March 14, 2022.

- A. Appeal #22-3693, Bethel Deliverance International Church for 2929 Cheltenham Avenue.

Mr. Habgood provided background on the proposed installation of three (3) parallel wall signs of 675 square feet in place of the allowed one (1) parallel wall sign of 100 square feet maximum.

Mr. Gary Perkiss, Esquire, was present for the applicant and provided additional background on the proposed signs. He advised that the proposed signs were manufactured by the contractor prior to advising the Church that a permit would be required, and upon review by the Township it was determined that Zoning Relief would need to be obtained for the proposed noncompliant signs.

Mr. Perkiss advised that the signs would be placed on three walls of their Sanctuary Building, with a 300sf sign facing Cheltenham Avenue; a 125sf sign on the east wall; and a 250sf third sign on the west wall.

Mr. Chet Taylor from Bethel Deliverance International Church was present and provided further background on the history of the proposed signs which have already been fabricated and paid for.

Discussion ensued with respect to the following:

- Signs would be flat and not projecting
- Signs would have a red background
- Signs would be back lit.
- The size of the building, which may require a larger sign to be clearly seen.
- Sight distance and speed of traffic on Cheltenham Avenue.
- Removal of the existing freestanding sign
- Whether the sign facing Cheltenham Avenue is in the best location to be viewed by traffic coming out of the cross street.

Mr. Sekawungu inquired about the two existing floodlights on the wall facing Cheltenham Avenue and potential conflicts with the proposed backlit sign and light pollution. Mr. Taylor advised that the lights are a safety factor to help light up the sidewalk on that side of the building and that that the wall signs would be turned off by 11:00 PM.

Discussion followed about a consideration to relocate the flood lights above the proposed signage to ensure no interference with the illumination from the new sign.

Mr. Jarrell MCPC advised that he had no additional comments.

Mr. Smith made a motion to recommend approval with conditions that the placement of the sign facing Cheltenham Avenue be reviewed to provide the best visibility, that the signs be turned off at 11:00 PM and that the existing freestanding sign be removed. Ms. Isser seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

4. Old Business - None

5. New Business

- A. Mr. Habgood advised as to the result of recent ZHB Decisions with the Arcadia Appeal being withdrawn and the other Appeals still pending.
- B. Mr. Sekawungu introduced the new Township Planner, Julia Detwiler, while Eric Jarrell, Section Chief at MCPC, introduced the new County Planner Anne Nygrand who was newly assigned to the Township.
- C. Ms. Isser advised that she would have an answer from Aqua shortly regarding when the DEP mandate on sewer would be fully lifted.

6. Adjournment- Mr. Cross motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m., seconded by Mr. Hayes.



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Robert Zienkowski  
Township Manager

Submitted by Robert J. Habgood