

Town of South Bethany
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
September 16, 2016

Planning Commission Members Present: Dick Oliver, Jack Whitney, Joe Conway, and Dave Wilson
Absent Members: John Stefani, Sharon Polansky

Other Attendees: Kristen Brinsfield, Jim Griesi (137 Layton Dr.), Dee Burbage, Joe Hinks, Tim Shaw (Council Rep).

1. The meeting was called to order at 1000 by Chairman Dick Oliver.
2. A public hearing was held to consider the application of Kristen Brinsfield to partition their existing lots 58 and 59, one parcel, located at 141 Layton Drive into two separate lots to be known individually as Lot 58 and 59. The request was attended by information that the existing structures would be immediately removed. Dates of demolition were provided and attested by Joe Hinks. There were no existing waivers to the subject properties requiring resolution.

The Planning Commission unanimously voted to approve the application subject to the immediate removal of the existing structures.

3. Old Business

a. Chairman Oliver announced that the Comprehensive Plan submitted to the State on August 4, will be reviewed by the State on September 28. He and Mayor Voveris will attend. Copies of the last version of the Plan are posted on the Town website and were handed out to each Commission member.

b. Jack Whitney updated the members with the status of his work on a SOW for a Town lighting study.

4. New Business

a. New hearing process: Dick Oliver presented a suggestion that we adopt a new rule that would streamline the Hearing process in the case of simple, uncontested property divisions or combinations. Discussion ensued with a general consensus that few properties remain to be addressed and that it would be more efficient for the petitioning parties and Commission. An action was identified to assure that there were no Town Charter, County or State regulations that would affect this initiative. The concept was to have the Town Code Officer recommend approval and Commission approve.

b. Meeting attendance: Given that the Commission now has an annual meeting plan, the Chair felt that members should be able to attend routinely. The members agreed and concluded that should a member miss 2 meetings within the year, that this would be cause to request resignation of that member.

c. Sea Level Rise: In its new role in overseeing SLR, members discussed the note and photos sent to them by Joe Conway after Tropical Storm Hermine passed by on September 3. Members agreed that the note and depiction of the flooding in the York Road area were essentially the early indicators of the effects of SLR and nuisance flooding and that we should press for funding the next phase SLR study, as soon as possible. Members were concerned that Council did not relate to the need to fund the study in the near

term because SLR is viewed by some as a long term 10-50 year issue and not a now problem. Tim Shaw advised that the Commission should review the existing SOW, document occurrences of “nuisance” flooding events, review the storm drain back flow preventer valve project, identify sea level heights that create nuisance flooding, and focus on near term efforts that should be identified for project funding. Jack Whitney counseled that our review and near term projects should be supportive of and consistent with a longer range plan so we don’t waste monies. To that end, Jack Whitney agreed to review the Phase II SLR and Nuisance Flooding Study SOW and produce a document that demonstrates the need to the Phase II study to be performed now. The members agreed. Joe Conway was tasked with accumulating past information, new information and data to present to the Commission to assure an agreed to position to bring to Council. The key issue regarding SLR is the funding of Phase 2 of the SLR vulnerability assessment for South Bethany which includes the effects of storm surge and nuisance flooding.

Dave Wilson reported that the SLR committee in December, 2014 recommended \$1500/yr be budgeted for the installation of check valves. To date two valves have been installed at 404 and 405 Bristol Dr. This year’s budget includes \$1500 for installation of more valves. It was suggested that Tim Shaw inform the Town Council that it is important that more check valves be installed this year in order to maintain a level load of funding for this task over the next 3-4 years. Members agreed to this course of action.

In summary, the key issue that was agreed to is that until we have a professionally developed plan, the town cannot request grant monies nor begin a future multi -year phased plan; know when it needs to start; how to budget; or integrate efforts for efficiency and effectiveness. Focus on near term flood mitigation was key to initiating a town strategy.

d. Sight Line Improvements at Intersections: Dick Oliver observed a potential safety issue with vegetation growth at the York Road and Bristol intersection. Members agreed that this is an issue, but not the purview of the Commission. Members agreed that Dick Oliver should bring to Code enforcement office to inspect and if necessary to draft appropriate language to address this issue throughout the town.

5. The next meeting is scheduled for November 14, 2016 at 1000.

6. The meeting was adjourned at 1145.

Submitted by Joseph Conway, 160 Henlopen Dr., Member