

**Borough of Kutztown
Planning Commission
Minutes of August 12, 2024**

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission was held on Monday, August 12, 2024, in the Kutztown Borough Municipal Building Multi-Purpose Room.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Ms. Pat Snyder, Vice Chairperson. Members present were Mr. Steve Fenstermacher, Mr. Joel Seidel, Ms. Denise Bosler, Mr. Randy Marsteller, and Ms. Amy Hubler. Also present were Ms. Shelley Grim and Mr. Josh Young, both from the Community Development Office (CDO), and Mr. Gabriel Khalife (Borough Manager). Residents in attendance for observation were Mr. Todd Greiss Jr. and Mr. Luke Fegely.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS - No comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioners reviewed the minutes from the Planning Commission meeting on July 8, 2024. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Ms. Bosler & seconded by Mr. Marsteller. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

REPORTS

The Commissioners discussed the CDO report from Shelley Grim (see her email dated 9 Aug 2024). Topics included zoning application approvals for:

- 60 Bieber Alley (change of use from pet supply to axe throwing – although the application was withdrawn pending insurance approval)
- 164 W. Main (change of use from Takki Ramen Restaurant to chicken & Gyro Restaurant)
- 474 W. Main (change of use from doctor's office to smoothie café)
- 427 W. Main (change of use from dentist's office to photo studio)

There were no code violations to report for the month.

ACTION ITEMS - none

OLD BUSINESS/UPDATES

Short Term Rentals (STR) Ordinance

- Following the 22 July KPC Workshop, Mr. Weller forwarded our recommendations for an STR ordinance to Keith Mooney, Esq. (Borough Solicitor).
- We are awaiting his review and response.

Follow-up on Trash Receptacles for Main Street – by Ms. Bosler

- Ms. Bosler attended the Public Works Meeting on 6 August, chaired by Brian Bailey (Director of Public Works for the Borough of Kutztown).
- The concept of additional trash receptacles on Main Street was well received.
- The next step is for Ms. Bosler to work with Mr. Bailey AND local businesses to determine the quantity and locations for the new receptacles.
- The group preferred anchored receptacles with caps.

Update on Bieber Property – by Ms. Snyder

- The Bieber property is on the “upset sale” list for September due to delinquent taxes.
- Ms. Snyder also noted that ANY property that has been “certified” as blighted may be acquired by the municipality for public use using the process outlined in PA Eminent Domain Code. Using the process of the Berks County Blighted Property Review Committee, if the owner does not address the blight in a timely manner, the property is certified to the Berks County Redevelopment Authority (BCRA) for acquisition by friendly sale or using the power of eminent domain. (Info from Ken Pick – Director of BCRA)

Updates from Hailstone/KPC meetings – by Ms. Snyder

- Ms. Snyder attended the meeting held on 17 July 2024.
- The group is looking to reapply for “Main Street” designation for funding opportunities.
- Looking to develop a resource packet for new business owners.
- Barb Vogelgesang (Executive Director of KCP) will reach out to the KU SBDC (Small Business Development Center) for marketing support.
- The group asked the CDO to provide a list of Zoning Hearing Board denied “uses” to identify trends for potential assistance for new business opportunities.

Updates on Northeastern Berks Joint Comprehensive Plan – by Ms. Snyder

- Pre-meeting was held on 25 July. Meeting consisted primarily of Introductions.
- Meetings planned for the fourth Wednesday of each month.
- Next Meeting scheduled for 28 Aug.
- Training session titled “Building the Boroughs” scheduled for 3 Oct at Penn State Berks.

NEW BUSINESS**Northern Berks Joint Comprehensive Plan**

- The Borough received the “Multi-municipal Comprehensive Plan Cooperation Agreement” for review and signature.
- Mr. Khalife will ensure it is added to the Borough Counsel meeting agenda.

Agenda for Workshop scheduled for 26 Aug 2024 –

- The workshop will be cancelled unless we receive feedback on the Short-Term Rentals (STR) Ordinance from the Borough Solicitor.

OFF AGENDA - none

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Mr. Seidel and seconded by Ms. Hubler to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen M. Fenstermacher
Secretary