



JENKINTOWN PLANNING COMMISSION
August 13th, 2019
6:30pm-8:30pm
700 Summit Avenue, Jenkintown Pennsylvania

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Attendance

Members Present: Gabriel Lerman – Chairperson, Phil Zimmerman – Secretary, Jon McCandlish, Lucinda Bartley, Alison Danilak

Members Absent: Joe Hentz, Glen Morris

Others Present: George Locke – Borough Manager, Diane Rice and Mitch Pagano – National E Solutions, Cory Kegeerise - Community Preservation Coordinator, State Historic Preservation Office, Marley Bice – Montgomery County Planner, Deborra Sines-Pancoe – Borough Council President, Patrick, Adrienne Redd – Environmental Advisory Committee

Reports

Planning Commission meeting minutes from July were approved.

Presentations

EV Charging Stations – National E Solutions

Diane Rice and Mitch Pagano were in attendance from National E Solutions to present to the Planning Commission (PC) current opportunities for State and Federal funding to implement electric vehicle (EV) charging stations throughout the community. In addition, they described the key features of a recommended EV charging station system: both hardware and associated software.

George Locke explained that implementation of EV charging stations had been included as a primary goal of the Borough's Comprehensive Plan. Plans to implement the stations had already be discussed by the Borough's Environmental Advisory Committee and Council was now looking to the PC for additional comment and recommendations for station locations.

The PC inquired about how potential users would pay for the service. Ms. Rice explained that users could participate through a phone app, but also could simply use a credit card.

The PC asked about station cabling requirements. Ms. Rice confirmed that each unit would require a dedicated 240 amp circuit, and that to achieve efficiency in connecting to existing infrastructure stations should be located adjacent to buildings with compatible service. Mr. Locke listed possible station locations: the library parking lot, town square, adjacent to Borough Hall or along West Ave by the Jenkintown/Wyncote train station. He reiterated that the Borough was relying on the PC to make final recommendations for station locations.

The PC suggested that dedicated EV or low emissions vehicle parking be associated with the charging station locations to incentivize increased use of these types of vehicles. Mr. Locke confirmed that the Borough Council would consider this strategy along with the implementation of the stations.

The PC inquired about the maintenance and replacement of the charging stations. Ms. Rice conveyed that an insurance program would be available that would cover any necessary maintenance or replacement of the hardware. She also confirmed that once purchased, the charging stations themselves would be owned by the Borough, although the software would be licensed and would incur to the Borough an annual fee.

Mr. Locke asked that someone from the PC volunteer to study the Borough's proposal for implementation of the charging stations and to help to identify locations for the stations themselves as a basis for a final PC recommendation. Ms. Bartley agreed to lead this effort.

Borough Historic Preservation – Cory Kegerise, Community Preservation Coordinator, State Historic Preservation Office

Cory Kegerise, Community Preservation Coordinator from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) and Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office (PSHPO) made a presentation to the PC of the avenues through which communities similar to Jenkintown have implement preservation practices as well as summarizing his experience in assisting communities in beginning and managing historic preservation initiatives. He reviewed with the PC the Historic District Act as well as protections found within the Municipalities Planning Code, highlighting the benefits of using each of these instruments for creating protections for the Borough's historic fabric. Mr. Kegerise also presented the PSHPO initiated Certified Local Government (CLG) program, describing the benefits of participation in the program as well as the path for a community to become CLG certified.

Mr. McCandlish briefly summarized for Mr. Kegerise the background related to the PC's efforts in updating the Borough's Inventory of Historic Structures, as well as subsequent discussions related to updating the approach to historic preservation generally within the Borough. He inquired whether the current approach of an inventory would be appropriate compared to other similar municipalities or if there might be an advantage to the formation of a Historic District within the Borough. In response, Mr. Kegerise asked the PC what its interests were related to preservation. He asked the PC to consider different scales of preservation, types of structures that would want to be included and the extents of the Borough to which a preservation strategy might apply.

The PC clarified that one of its specific goals would be to protect historically valuable structures from complete demolition, either by omission from a list of historic structures or through ineffective language within current Borough code.

Mr. Kegerise asked the PC to specifically define for him the physical extents of the area to be protected within the Borough. The PC clarified that they would expect this zone to include the commercial core; along Old York Rd. extending generally from the southern gateway to the northern gateway.

Members of the PC discussed with Mr. Kegerise the benefits and disadvantages of including residential properties in a historically protected area. Ms. Bartley stated that there could be benefits to the inclusion of residential properties in balancing increased density while Ms. Danilak offered that only commercial properties should be included in order to attain the PC's initial historic preservation goals. Mr. McCandlish also reiterated that he believed that any historic protections shouldn't be burdensome to the residents of the Borough, and that residential properties shouldn't be included.

Mr. Kegerise offered that criteria and processes could be included in any revised or newly implemented strategies that could facilitate the addition of residential properties, or the general expansion of any historic district, to the area initially defined. He reiterated the importance of flexibility within any proposal.

Mr. Kegerise briefly discussed the Mainstreets Program with the PC. In addition, the benefits of implementing a Borough marketing manager or business retention program were discussed.

The PC asked Mr. Kegerise specifically how certification and participation within the CLG program would work. Mr. Kegerise explained that he would assist the Borough in meeting the preliminary criteria for certification, partly through the re-defining of zoning ordinance language and the creation of a historic district. He further explained that after certification was initially granted, the designation would be administered by the National Parks Service and that certification qualifications would be re-evaluated every 4 years.

Mr. Kegerise and Mrs. Bice discussed with the PC the financial benefits to participating in the CLG program, including access to grant funding that would facilitate research related to the historical district and general Borough historic preservation programs.

The PC discussed with Mrs. Bice and Mr. Kegerise whether the Jenkintown Design Review Board could also serve as the Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB), or if the obligations of the two entities

would be in conflict and separate groups would need to be maintained. Mr. Kegerise advised that although the two groups could share members, the creation of two discrete boards independent of one another would likely be necessary.

The PC inquired what next steps in the process would be. Mr. Kegerise stated that the process should begin with drafting of ordinance language and the definition of a specific historic district within the Borough. This would then be reviewed by the PHMC to ensure that the qualities of the defined district meet the requirements of the ordinance. Mr. Kegerise mentioned the availability of a "Menu" approach through the use of templates that have been recently developed by the PHMC to help communities draft ordinance language and create/define historic district design guidelines.

Mr. Kegerise cited several communities like Jenkintown that have pursued efforts comparable to those discussed related to historic preservation strategies: Chalfont, Kennett Square, North Wales, State College, Pheonixville and Lansdowne.

Ms. Sines-Pancoe asked how to discuss the formation of a historic district in Jenkintown with property owners who might be affected. She and the PC expressed concern based on recent experience that there would be significant opposition to this as a perceived restriction. Mr. McCandlish stated that the Borough's message needs to be that the creation of a historic district would be a benefit to properties within the limits and would likely translate into increased property values/commercial rental rates.

Mr. Kegerise advised the PC to be prepared to discuss in detail the guidelines and criteria related to the historic district, creating an open and honest discussion between property owners and the Borough. He further stated that the steps necessary to meet ordinance requirements should be very easy defined and accessible to property owners. The Borough should facilitate a process that is clear and supportive to applicants for building modifications within the historic district.

Ongoing Business

Leedom St./Greenwood Ave.: Public Art Review

Mr. Locke shared with the PC the final design for a mural to be located on an exterior wall of a building located at the intersection of Leedom and Greenwood. The PC expressed some dismay that the final design differed from the proposed design slightly, but was generally positive about the project.