

New Hope Borough Planning Commission
Monday, October 4, 2021
Meeting Minutes

The New Hope Borough Planning Commission (NHBPC) met on October 4, 2021, in the public meeting room. In attendance and voting were Chairman Keith Voss and members Peter Meyer, Lou Bellafronte, Nick Gialias, Lawrence Greenberg and Jason Apuzzio. Also in attendance was Borough Engineer, Michele Fountain, Matthew Winters of the Bucks County Planning Commission (BCPC) and George DiPersio of CKS Engineers, Inc.

Call to Order: Mr. Voss called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Apuzzio moved to approve the minutes of August 2, 2021. Mr. Meyer seconded, and the motion passed 3-0 (Voss, Meyer, Apuzzio).

Mr. Bellafronte moved to approve the minutes of the workshop meeting of September 23, 2021. Mr. Greenberg seconded, and the motion passed 4-0 (Voss, Apuzzio, Bellafronte, and Greenberg).

RB District 1 Ordinance Discussion:

Discussion continued on the RB 1 zoning district which includes smaller lot sizes, decreased dimensional requirements and lots that are closer to the central core of the Borough. The revisions proposed by the BCPC include the build-to line, building size and building height. These requirements were in the proposed Conservation Management Overlay District. It was stated that having these requirements in the new RB 1 District Ordinance would eliminate the need for an overlay district.

Mr. Meyer recommended adding, “at densities typical of the central core of the Borough” to the “Purpose” section of the ordinance.

There was considerable discussion on the minimum lot area for two-family dwellings, averaging the impervious coverage and building coverage of neighboring lots and whether the side yard setback should be 5 ft. or 6 ft. The BCPC is to ask the New Hope Fire Marshal for his recommendation. Mr. DiPersio stated that the International Building Code (IBC) and the International Residential Code (IRC) use 5 ft. as a major threshold.

The NHBPC recommended “per unit” be revised to “per dwelling” and the minimum lot size be what the actual minimum lot sizes are, rather than an arbitrary area. The BCPC is to give the NHBPC a list of lot areas broken down into smaller lot sizes than what was included last month for review. Mr. Winters also stated that the BCPC could give a breakdown of building coverage and impervious coverage per lot.

The NHBPC recommended Interpretive centers be revised to a use permitted as a conditional use. They further recommended the use section of the ordinance be modified to include “a building of historic significance” in the definition and allow lot area and dimensional criteria as stated in the ordinance but include “or as permitted by Borough Council”.

Other recommendations included adding “or edge of cartway” to the build-to line and adding “maximum of 35 feet” to the building height.

The NHBPC recommended the Borough have a stand-alone storm water management ordinance and a statement be added that would require storm water BMPS for any development that requests a variance for impervious coverage.

Adjournment: Mr. Meyer made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 PM. Mr. Gialias seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.