

BOROUGH OF AVALON PLANNING/ZONING BOARD

Minutes of Work Session/Regular Meeting of August 8, 2017

Members Present:

Sharon Cooper
Michael Coskey
James Fleischmann
Neil Hensel
Thomas McCullough
John Morrison
Michele Petrucci
Brian Reynolds
Beth Tipping
Sam Wierman

Members Absent:

Sam Beddia
James Deever
David Knoche

Chairman Hensel called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance. After a roll call of members, Chairman Hensel recited the Open Public Meetings Act Statement.

The Board first considered the minutes of the July 11, 2017 meeting. A motion was made to approve the minutes as submitted by Dr. Reynolds, seconded by Mrs. Tipping, with all eligible members voting in the affirmative. There were no resolutions for memorialization.

Chairman Hensel then led the Board in a discussion regarding the investigation into amendments to Chapters 26, 27 and the Zoning Districts. Mr. Coskey reported that Chairman Hensel and he were looking at all of the Borough's Zoning Districts to determine whether any modifications should be made. He stated that the B-2 District may no longer be necessary; however, before proposing elimination of same, he would like to speak to the commercial property owners in that District to hear their concerns.

Sharon Cooper stated that her committee has been working with James Waldron regarding the contents of Chapters 26 and 27. They are reviewing the definition sections to ensure that they are consistent, and they are considering whether sign regulations

belong in both Chapters 26 and 27. She stated that their intent is to streamline the ordinances where appropriate. She further questioned whether the sign ordinance is being enforced and whether that should be in another section of the ordinance, which the police can enforce.

The Board conducted a lengthy discussion regarding the enforcement of all portions of Chapters 26 and 27. Chairman Hensel noted that enforcement has become a hot button issue within the Borough and that Mayor Pagliughi is focusing the administration's attention on this issue. It was noted that a checklist was being developed to ensure that both the zoning and construction offices viewed all elements of new construction or reconstruction prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. It is also noted that a code enforcement hotline/website had been created to allow citizens to report potential code violations.

Mr. Wierman advised that Mr. Knoche and he are reviewing the Borough's pool ordinance. He advised that they are looking at regulations from other municipalities regarding pools, and they believe that Avalon's current ordinance is quite comprehensive. As to the issue of potted plants in lieu of planted buffers, he stated that they believe that they may be satisfactory so long as the remainder of the property meets its green space and impervious coverage requirements.

Chairman Hensel noted that the buffering around pools is being examined carefully at this time; however, concerns have arisen regarding access to these pools by handicapped persons. Chairman Hensel advised that he has asked Dr. Reynolds to review this matter.

Dr. Reynolds stated that he has been looking at the issue of artificial turf and its use within the Borough. The key question is whether individual types of artificial turf are pervious or not. There is also a concern regarding maintenance and eventual replacement of same. Chairman Hensel asked Dr. Reynolds to obtain input on this topic from the Environmental Commission.

Beth Tipping stated that she continues to investigate changes to the B-1 Zone and has been in communication with members of the Avalon business community. She believes that their input may assist the Board in modifying the Zoning Ordinance to the benefit of the business owners.

The matter was opened to the public, at which time Martha Wright of 7th Street spoke on several issues. She stated that she understands the need to provide access to pools for handicapped persons, but that the Borough needs to ensure that this type of deviation from the Zoning Ordinance does not continue in perpetuity after the handicapped person no longer resides at the property. She stated that the potted plant buffer does not resolve the fact that the goal of the buffer is to provide a visual barrier. If the plants are taken inside in the winter time, the barrier disappears. On the issue of artificial turf, she noted that pesticides are still put down to ensure that weeds do not compromise the artificial surface. Chairman Hensel asked Mr. Maffei to create a draft of an artificial turf ordinance for the Board to consider.

Finally, Ms. Wright stated that the issue of light pollution should still be addressed by the Borough. Down lighting should be the norm. Chairman Hensel requested that Mr. McCullough and Mr. Maffei review this topic and report back to the Board.

A motion was made to adjourn at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/Dean R. Marcolongo

Dean R. Marcolongo, Esquire