

**FOREST HILLS BOROUGH  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27, 2016  
7:30 P.M.**

Norm Keller called the Planning Commission's April 27, 2016 regular meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

Roll Call:                   Norm Keller, Chairman - present  
                                  Paul Kimicata - present  
                                  Lisa Michel - absent  
                                  Scott MaGaw - present  
                                  Marilyn Gelzhiser - present  
                                  Steve Greenberg - present  
                                  Matthew Rendulic – present

**Quorum Present**

Also present:

Alyssa Golfieri, Assistant Borough Solicitor  
Dana Steadman, Kossman Development  
Ethan Berry, 324 Avenue F, Forest Hills

Motion by Scott MaGaw, seconded by Paul Kimicata, to approve the minutes of the Planning Commission's February 17, 2016 regular meeting. **Motion carried.**

**Self-Storage Facility/Public Building Zoning Ordinance Amendment.**

Borough Council authorized the transmittal of an ordinance establishing "self-storage facilities" as a conditional use in the Borough's S-2 Special District and "public buildings" as a conditional use in the Borough's R-2 Low Density Residential District to the Planning Commission for review and comment.

Alyssa Golfieri gave a summary of the proposed ordinance, noting that the proposed ordinance would amend the zoning ordinance to exempt Borough buildings from zoning regulations, allow public buildings as a conditional use in R-2 Low Density Residential District and self-storage facilities as a conditional use in the S-2 Special District. Ms. Golfieri clarified that that a self-storage facility is the use as a whole, whereas self-storage units, as defined by the proposed ordinance amendment, are the individual storage units located in a self-storage facility.

Planning Commission Discussion:

- Norm Keller asked whether the current 1 air miles restriction on self-storage facilities applies only to self-storage facilities located within the Borough's limits or whether the restriction applies to self-storage facilities located outside of the Borough as well.
- The Planning Commission discussed the 1 air miles restriction, noting there is a self-storage facility currently located outside of the Borough's limits on Brighton Road

that could eliminate the possibility of self-storage facilities being located within the Borough if the 1 air mile restriction is enforced.

- Matthew Rendulic questioned how the Borough would measure the 1 air mile – from the property line or from the self-storage facility building?
- The Planning Commission discussed the need to: (1) clarify in the proposed ordinance that the 1 air mile restriction applies only to self-storage facilities located within the Borough’s limits; (2) clarify in the proposed ordinance that the 1 air mile restriction should be measured from the property line, not from the self-storage facility building(s); and (3) reduce the 1 air mile restriction.
- Steve Greenberg questioned whether the self-storage facility on Brighton Road is at full capacity in order to determine the potential demand for such facilities in the Borough.
- Scott MaGaw questioned the exemption of Borough buildings from compliance with various Zoning Ordinance regulations, noting that the Borough can’t have it both ways.
- With respect to the establishment of public buildings in the Borough’s R-2 Low Density Residential District, Marilyn Gelzhiser noted that the Borough’s Comprehensive Plan does not account for public buildings in that District. Ms. Gelzhiser further questioned whether the Borough wants to allow public buildings in the R-2 District.

#### Public Comment:

- While no application seeking approval of a self-storage facility in the Borough has been submitted for review at this time, Dana Steadman, AIA, Kossman Development representative, explained that Kossman Development has an interest in converting an existing, partially vacant building located on Ardmore Boulevard in the Borough’s S-2 Special District into a self-storage facility.
- Mr. Steadman explained that the portion of the existing building targeted for conversion into a self-storage facility has been vacant since Westinghouse moved out approximately 20 years ago.
- Ethan Berry, Forest Hills resident, 324 Avenue F, expressed concern over the portion of the proposed ordinance establishing public buildings as a conditional use in the Borough’s R-2 Low Density Residential District. Mr. Berry noted that Greensburg Pike is not the only access to the newly proposed Borough Building, which means the establishment of public buildings in the R-2 District will result in increased traffic on other residential streets where people already speed. Mr. Berry further noted that public buildings do not belong in a residential neighborhood. Mr. Berry fears that establishment of public buildings in residential districts will triple the daytime use of the residential area.

Since the proposed ordinance includes three (3) specific items (Borough building exemption, establishment of public buildings as a condition use in the Borough’s R-2 District, and establishment of self-storage facilities as conditional use in S-2 District), the Planning Commission decided to address each component of the proposed ordinance separately for purposes of its recommendation to Council:

1. Motion by Scott MaGaw, seconded by Paul Kimicata, to recommend denial (i.e., removal) of the portion of the proposed ordinance amendment exempting Borough buildings from compliance with zoning regulations. **Motion carried.**
2. Motion by Scott MaGaw to recommend approval of the portion of the proposed ordinance amendment establishing public buildings as a conditional use in the Borough's R-2 Low Density Residential District. **Motion failed.**
3. Motion by Paul Kimicata, seconded by Steve Greenberg, to recommend denial (i.e., removal) of the portion of the proposed ordinance amendment establishing public buildings as a conditional use in the Borough's R-2 Low Density Residential District. **Motion carried.**
4. Motion by Matthew Rendulic, seconded by Paul Kimicata, to recommend approval of the portion of the proposed ordinance amendment establishing self-storage facilities as a conditional use in the Borough's S-2 Special District, subject to the following conditions: (1) the 1 air mile restriction is reduced to a ½ air mile; (2) the proposed ordinance is revised to clarify that this distance restriction shall be measured from the property line; and (3) the proposed ordinance is revised to clarify that this distance restriction only applies to self-storage facilities located within the Borough's limits. **Motion carried.**

### **Non-Agenda Items**

No public comment on non-agenda items.

Planning Commission suggests Council consults the Borough's Comprehensive Plan when considering changes to the Zoning Ordinance, as the Comprehensive Plan represents the collective vision of the community about how the Borough should be developed. As noted above, the Planning Commission believes that the establishment of public buildings as a conditional use in the Borough's R-2 District is in conflict with the Comprehensive Plan.

The Planning Commission notes that the Comprehensive Plan is outdated. As required by the MPC, the Comprehensive Plan must be updated every 10 years. The current Comprehensive Plan is 13 years old.

Welcome, Matthew Rendulic; the newest member to the Planning Commission.

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for May 18, 2016 at 7:30 PM.

Motion by Scott MaGaw, seconded by Marilyn Gelzhiser, to adjourn the April 27, 2016 Planning Commission meeting. **Motion carried.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Meeting minutes by Marilyn Gelzhiser.