

**BOROUGH OF GREEN TREE  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
DECEMBER 15, 2021**

**CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Green Tree Planning Commission met on Wednesday, December 15, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. in the Sycamore Room of the Green Tree Municipal Center, 10 West Manilla Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15220.

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:**

James Turocy, Chair  
Firas Abdelahad  
Cheryl Bakin  
Al Erwin  
Robert McWilliams  
Christine Short  
Jessica Swiech

**Also Present:**

Todd Carter, Code Enforcement Officer  
Deborah N. Gawryla, Stenographer  
Kim Beck, Stenographer

**HEARING OF THE CITIZENS**

There was no one present who wished to be heard.

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – Mr. Turocy**

Mr. Turocy welcomed Ms. Short and Ms. Swiech to the Planning Commission and thanked them for volunteering their time. He stated that it is a lot of work but is interesting and enjoyable.

Mr. Turocy noted that the Planning Commission Annual Report would be available for review at the January 2022 meeting.

Mr. Turocy stated that he was recently informed that he would not be required to step down from Planning Commission upon being elected to council. He said that he had not yet made a decision regarding whether he would be staying on Planning Commission but felt as though he needed to step down as chairman. Mr. Turocy said that he hoped to have his decision finalized before the next scheduled meeting on January 12, 2022.

**ESTABLISHMENT OF PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING DATES/TIMES FOR 2022**

Ms. Bakin made a motion, seconded by Mr. Erwin, to set the 2022 Planning Commission meeting schedule on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month from January through October 2022 at 7:00 pm. The meetings on the second Wednesday of the month will be workshop meetings and the meetings on the fourth Wednesday of the month will be business meetings. There will only be one meeting each in November and December (because of the holidays) and will be a combined workshop/business meeting. November 2022's meeting will be held on November 16 (third Wednesday of the month) and December 2022's meeting will be held on December 14 (second Wednesday of the month).

Motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**October 27, 2021**

**Motion:**

Mr. Abdelahad made a motion, seconded by Ms. Short, to approve the October 27, 2021 minutes with the following correction:

p. 2- Change "...and had no problems with them except for the recommendation to add a definition and requirements for high-rise apartments. He distributed a draft for high-rise apartments for review." to "...**and**

*agreed with them. With respect to the recommendation to add a definition and requirements for high-rise apartments, Mr. Turocy distributed a draft for review.”*

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**November 10, 2021**

**Motion:**

**Mr. Erwin made a motion, seconded by Ms. Short, to approve the November 10, 2021 minutes as presented.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**November 17, 2021**

**Motion:**

**Mr. Erwin made a motion, seconded by Mr. McWilliams, to approve the November 17, 2021 minutes as presented.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**ADVISORY DISCUSSION – REVIEW OF SITE PLAN FOR INSTALLATION OF A HANDICAPPED RAMP AT 367 MANSFIELD AVENUE**

Mr. Turocy asked if a representative from 367 Mansfield was planning to attend the meeting. Mr. Carter stated that upon inspection of the property, it was determined that there was a sanitary sewer in front of his building, so a handicapped ramp would not be able to be built. He also determined that since the property was less than 3,000 square feet, a handicapped ramp would not be required if there was handicapped access at the basement level.

Ms. Bakin asked why the property owner was asking for a ramp to be built. Mr. Carter stated that the property owner was applying for the handicapped ramp to meet code, which Mr. Carter determined was not necessary.

Ms. Bakin asked how the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) would affect the building code. Mr. Carter stated that the borough enforced the Uniform Construction Code, which was separate from the ADA regulations. Ms. Bakin suggested that the borough try to work with the property owner if they were interested in trying to make the building ADA compliant.

Ms. Bakin asked if it were possible for the property owner to build the handicapped ramp in a different direction, so it would not be over the sanitary sewer. Mr. Carter said that it might be possible to build the ramp around the side of the building, but the property had a drastic slope from the front to back. It would most likely be necessary to build up the foundation to build the ramp around the side of the building.

Mr. Erwin asked if having a handicap accessible entrance at the back of the building rather than the front would be acceptable for making the building compliant. Mr. Carter stated that as long as the building was a business use group, having handicapped parking spaces in the parking lot at the lower level of the building would be compliant with the Uniform Construction Code. Because the building is less than 3,000 square feet, the property owner would not be required to provide accessibility to the second and third floors. Discussion continued regarding ADA accessibility requirements.

Mr. Carter noted that even with a handicapped ramp, there would be no accessibility to the third floor without an elevator. He stated that he would suggest the possibility of installing an elevator to the property owner.

Mr. McWilliams asked if building a ramp to the side of the property would affect the parking lot. Mr. Carter stated that putting a ramp on the side of the building could affect some of the parking spaces, but that he wasn't certain of that.

#### **DISCUSSION: GREEN TREE ZONING CODE**

Mr. Turocy noted that he had received an email from the borough manager regarding the status of the proposed zoning use table. He read an email from the solicitor that was sent to Ms. Miller:

*I didn't see the use table or other zoning ordinance amendments that I had previously discussed with the Planning Commission on the agenda. I wasn't sure if that had been tabled so they can work on the comprehensive plan, but I want to make sure that gets revisited, because those errors should definitely be addressed sooner than later. Maybe I attend a January or February meeting of the Planning Commission to discuss with any new members. Let me know your thoughts.*

Mr. Turocy stated that Planning Commission had addressed the high-rise apartments and other zoning ordinance amendments, but perhaps the solicitor had not yet seen the minutes since they were just approved. Mr. Turocy suggested that he send an email to the solicitor to let her know that the concerns were addressed at the October 27 meeting, but that she was welcome to attend a meeting in January or February to discuss any additional concerns that were not addressed at the meeting. There was a discussion regarding the current stance of the high-rise apartment ordinance. Ms. Bakin asked Ms. Gawryla if she could get a draft of the ordinance prepared for the Planning Commission to re-review. Ms. Gawryla stated that she would have it ready for the January 12 meeting.

#### **REVIEW OF PORTABLE STORAGE CONTAINER ORDINANCE**

Mr. Turocy received an email from council regarding the Portable Storage Container Ordinance, which he read to the Planning Commission:

*Just a suggestion, rather than fix the fees within the ordinance, I would suggest referencing a separate fee schedule that council can adopt by resolution. It would make the fee schedule more flexible and easier to modify, if needed, over time.*

Mr. Turocy suggested that the ordinance be changed to reflect council's recommendation regarding the fee schedule. Rather than a specific dollar amount being referenced in the ordinance, "in accordance with the borough fee schedule" could be written. The permit costs for dumpsters and pods could be placed on the borough's current permit fee schedule, so council would be able to change these prices by resolution in the future.

The definition of Dumper in Section 1 should be revised to read:

**"DUMPSTER** – A portable container, temporary dumpster, for the storage of bulky waste, construction debris, refuse and like materials, or other storage device, generally delivered or picked up by truck, tractor or other such vehicle and used for the purpose of storing debris of any variety."

Mr. Turocy noted that throughout the ordinance there were references to both "borough code enforcement officer" and "building code official." When asked, Mr. Carter clarified that these were two different positions, and should be referenced as such in the ordinance.

Planning Commission agreed to make the following revisions:

**Section 2.**

p. 1 – (A)(2) For clarity, change “...subject to renewal” to “subject to renewal **by the Code Enforcement Officer**”.

p. 2 - (A)(8) “A permit fee of \$50...” should be changed to read “A permit fee **as set forth in the Borough Fee Schedule...**”

p. 2 - (B) “When the Code Enforcement Officer concludes that there is no physical location on the property owner to place a Large Dumpster on a Borough street adjacent to the lot...” should be corrected to read “**If** the Code Enforcement Officer concludes that there is no physical location on the **lot** to place a Large Dumpster, ...”. “on a Borough street adjacent to the lot” can be removed due to redundancy.

p. 3 - (B)(9) Subsections (9) and (10) are duplicates; (B)(9) should be removed.

p. 3 - (B) Subsections “(B)(10), (11), (12), (13), (14), (15), (16)” need to be corrected to “(B)(9), (10), (11), (12), (13), (14), (15)”, due to (B)(9) being removed.

p. 3 - (B)(15) “A Permit Fee of \$100...” should be changed to read “A Permit Fee **in accordance with the Borough Fee Schedule...**”.

p. 4 - (C)(3) In the first sentence, the word “needed” is unnecessary. “In the event the needed Large Dumpster under this section is to be placed upon a Borough street all requirements listed in Sections B and its subsections 1 through 16 as set forth ...” should be changed to read “In the event the Large Dumpster under this section is to be placed upon a Borough street, all requirements listed in Sections B and its subsections 1 through **15** as set forth...”

p. 4 - (D) Change “Council reserves the right to amend by resolution all fees set forth herein.” to “Council reserves the right to amend by resolution all fees **referenced** herein.”

**Placement and Location of Portable Storage Containers**

p. 4 - (A)(1) The words “along with the necessary Building Permit Application” can be removed, as a building permit application is not always necessary.

p. 4 - (A)(2) “...The Borough Code Enforcement Officer may grant the Permit for a period not to exceed 30 days for the current permit of the dumpster, subject to renewal.” should be corrected to read “...The Borough Code Enforcement Officer may grant the permit for a period not to exceed 30 days, subject to renewal **by the Code Enforcement Officer.**”

p. 5 - (A)(3) This subsection should be deleted, as it is not applicable to Portable Storage Containers.

p. 5 - (A) Subsections (4), (5), (6), (7), (8) need to be corrected to (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), due to (A)(3) being removed.

Ms. Bakin suggested that Subsection (A)(4) be removed due to the fact that PODS (Portable on Demand Storage) units are enclosed boxes. Mr. Turocy stated that they shouldn’t necessarily presume that the box would always be enclosed, as that is something that could change in the future. It was agreed that the subsection be changed to read “No portable Storage Container shall be filled beyond its top edge.” The sentence “Portable Storage Container shall be emptied as soon as practical when full.” should be removed, as it is not applicable to the usage.

p. 5 - (A)(8) “A Permit Fee of \$50...” should be changed to read “A Permit Fee **in accordance with the Borough Fee Schedule...**”

p. 5 - (D) Section (D) can be removed in its entirety, as it is already referenced in subsection (A)(7).

Ms. Bakin stated that residents should be encouraged to use a Portable Storage Container in the event of an emergency, such as a fire, in which a portable storage container would possibly be necessary for an extended period of time. Mr. Turocy noted that this topic was referenced in (C), but for a period not to exceed 30 days. It was agreed that the last sentence in (C) be changed to read "...one Portable Storage Container may be placed on the lot for a period not to exceed 30 days, ***subject to the renewal by the Code Enforcement Officer.***"

Ms. Bakin asked if a resident would be able to have both a large dumpster and a portable storage container on their property at the same time. Mr. Turocy stated that it wasn't specifically prohibited in the ordinance, so a resident should be allowed to utilize both units on their property at once, if necessary. Ms. Bakin asked if that were something the borough would want to allow. Discussion continued involving whether this should be allowed. It was agreed that residents should be allowed to have both on their property.

**ELECTION OF PLANNING COMMISSION OFFICERS FOR 2022**

Planning Commission discussed who would be interested in becoming officers in 2022.

**Motion:**

**Mr. Turocy made a motion, seconded by Mr. Abdelahad, to appoint Ms. Cheryl Bakin as Chairman of Planning Commission in 2022.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**Motion:**

**Ms. Short made a motion, seconded by Mr. Abdelahad, to appoint Mr. Al Erwin as Vice-Chairman of Planning Commission in 2022.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**Motion:**

**Mr. Turocy made a motion, seconded by Ms. Short, to appoint Mr. Firas Abdelahad as Secretary of Planning Commission in 2022.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

**CONTINUED REVIEW OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Ms. Bakin suggested that Planning Commission divide into smaller committees to meet with different groups and organizations in the borough. Mr. Turocy stated that he believed that was how it was supposed to be done for the last comprehensive plan. Ms. Bakin said that they had a difficult time reaching out to young people in the schools for the last comprehensive plan, and anticipates it being difficult again this year. She suggested that Planning Commission work around the schools' schedules, rather than trying to get members from the schools to attend Planning Commission meetings. There was a discussion involving which schools should be contacted regarding the comprehensive plan, including Aiken Elementary, Keystone Oaks High School, Guardian Angel Academy, and Bishop Canevin High School.

Mr. Turocy suggested that Planning Commission reach out to any school board members that are residents of Green Tree. He also suggested speaking with the superintendent of Keystone Oaks School District, Dr. William Stropkaj. He noted that Dr. Stropkaj had been open to meeting with officials from the borough in the past, so he might be agreeable to meeting with Planning Commission to give his thoughts on the relationship between the borough and the school district. Mr. Turocy also suggested reaching out to Keystone Oaks High School to see if there was a student interested in becoming a junior member of

Council to speak with Planning Commission to get more young people involved with the comprehensive plan.

Ms. Bakin asked if a letter of introduction would be necessary to send out when asking to speak with members of the school districts and churches. Mr. Turocy stated that a letter of introduction could be drafted with the borough letterhead on it.

Ms. Bakin asked if the local daycare should be included with the discussion involving school districts and children in the borough. A discussion occurred regarding which daycares were in the borough, including Unity Preschool, Crafton Children's Corner in Parkway Center, and Tender Care Learning Center in Foster Plaza. Mr. Turocy asked what information could be garnered from the local daycares. Ms. Bakin stated that the daycares could provide information regarding parking, their ingress and egress, and whether they had access to green space for the children to play. Discussion continued regarding the information that could be provided by daycares.

Ms. Bakin stated that another important group of people to reach out to were the major landlords and real estate brokers who did business in Green Tree. She suggested that two members of Planning Commission contact some of the local landlords and real estate brokers and try to have a half hour to an hour conversation with each of them to ask what potential clients are saying about Green Tree, and what Green Tree might be lacking in terms of bringing in new residents and businesses.

Ms., Bakin asked if there was "main street money" available to the borough that could be used to clean up some of the properties on Greentree Road. Mr. Turocy stated that it was a question that could be directed to the borough manager but said that he wasn't sure how that program worked with property owners. Ms. Bakin said that in Bridgeville, the property owner would need to commit to, she believed, 50% of the cost of the project, and then the borough could use funds from the program to contribute to the remaining balance of the project. The money was designated for façade improvements, awnings, new windows, and other projects to enhance the exterior of the building. She noted that she was aware of this being available several years ago but wasn't sure if the program was currently still available. Mr. Turocy agreed to contact Ms. Miller to ask if main street money was available to the borough.

Ms. Bakin asked if Mr. Erwin would work with her to contact real estate brokers and landlords in January, which Mr. Erwin agreed to.

Ms. Short and Ms. Swiech volunteered to contact the school districts that were discussed earlier.

There was a discussion between Planning Commission members regarding the current churches in Green Tree. Mr. McWilliams and Mr. Abdelahad agreed that they would reach out to Unity, St. Margaret's, Mt. Pisgah, the Church of the Latter-Day Saints, and New Apostolic Church.

Ms. Bakin noted that this would be a good starting point for the comprehensive plan and hoped to have some information from these groups for the January 26 meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion:**

**Mr. Abdelahad made a motion, seconded by Ms. Swiech, to adjourn the meeting.**

**Motion carried unanimously.**

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James J. Turocy, Chairman

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Al Erwin, Secretary