

**HILLTOWN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SPECIAL MEETING TO CONDUCT 2007 PLANNING COMMISSION
VACANCY INTERVIEWS
Monday, January 29, 2007
6:00PM**

The advertised special meeting of the Hilltown Township Board of Supervisors to conduct interviews for 2007 Planning Commission vacancies was called to order by Chairman Richard J. Manfredi at 6:02PM and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Also present: John B. McIlhinney, Vice-Chairman
 Barbara A. Salvadore – Supervisor
 Kenneth B. Bennington – Township Manager
 Lynda S. Seimes – Township Secretary

A. 2007 PLANNING COMMISSION CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS: Chairman Manfredi advised that there are three seats available on the Planning Commission – 2 seats at 4-year terms ending December 31, 2010 and 1 seat with term ending December 31, 2008. In order for the Board to speak candidly with each individual, Chairman Manfredi asked that each candidate remain in the lobby until they are called to interview, after which time they are invited to stay in the meeting room for the remaining candidate interviews. The applicants were permitted to make a 2-minute statement, prior to addressing questions from each Supervisor, and then would be permitted to make a 1-minute closing statement.

Candidate Interviews:

1. Mr. John Clauser – Mr. John Clauser of Minsi Trail stated that he has had a long-term interest in planning and hopes to become more involved in the community. He has a strong background in finance, working for a \$5 billion dollar worldwide research and development company. He cited his ability to work with a broad scope of individuals, while adhering to strict guidelines and recurrent training aspects of his employment. Mr. Clauser feels that if the Planning Commission and other boards work together, cohesively as a team, the Township could create a community to be proud of, which would be a role model for other communities.

Supervisor McIlhinney asked what Mr. Clauser envisions as the interaction between the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission. Mr. Clauser believes that the Planning Commission should be educated on the various Ordinances in order to provide sound opinions and recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. The Planning Commission is charged with understanding the regulations that have been put in place via the Zoning and Subdivision/Land Development Ordinances, to be able to provide the Supervisors with an informed opinion and recommendation, while also applying common sense.

Supervisor Salvadore asked what Mr. Clauser personally would like to accomplish as a member of the Planning Commission. Mr. Clauser replied that his goal would be developing a more cohesive team of Planning Commission members who could work together positively, while taking the comments and wishes of the Township residents into consideration throughout the planning process. He would hope that the Planning Commission would provide good guidance to the Supervisors and the residents alike.

Supervisor Salvadore asked what Mr. Clauser envisions the Planning Commission as a whole accomplishing. From his attendance at PC meetings, it appears to Mr. Clauser that subdivision and land development proposals can take quite a bit of time to go through the planning process. He would encourage finding ways to make the review and planning process better and easier to facilitate a more timely procedure.

Supervisor McIlhinney commented that the Planning Commission's task in dealing with review of Ordinances affects the lives and property of individual residents, and asked Mr. Clauser's overall view of what he might do to protect the rights of the individual property owner. Mr. Clauser feels it is important to understand that the Pennsylvania Constitution states that a landowner has a right to develop their property.

Chairman Manfredi asked Mr. Clauser what he believes is the role of a Planning Commission member. Mr. Clauser replied that it is the Planning Commission's job to listen, analyze, review, educate, use common sense, and provide thoughtful guidance, which would be helpful to both the public and the Board of Supervisors

When faced with a dilemma before the Planning Commission, Chairman Manfredi asked where Mr. Clauser would draw the line between his personal views versus that of the Municipalities Planning Code and/or Township Ordinance requirements. Mr. Clauser stated that the Municipalities Planning Code, which Pennsylvania adopted in 1968, is what the Township must follow, along with any local Ordinances, which would obviously come before any personal opinions or views of an individual PC member.

Supervisor Salvadore asked if Mr. Clauser has attended many PC meetings. Mr. Clauser replied that he has attended several meetings. She asked what one change Mr. Clauser feels might benefit the effectiveness of the Planning Commission. Mr. Clauser believes that recurrent training and education is necessary, as well as a concerted effort for more open communication and a team effort.

Chairman Manfredi asked if Mr. Clauser believes the Planning Commission, as it stands right now, is a cohesive team. Mr. Clauser felt it was difficult to ascertain whether the current Planning Commission is cohesive or not since he is not privy to their actions "behind the scenes." It does appear, however, that the Planning Commission works as a team throughout the review process.

Mr. Clauser reiterated his interest in being appointed to the Planning Commission and believes his background and skills would be beneficial to the community.

2. Mr. Kirk Hansen – Mr. Kirk Hansen of Rt. 113 is a 32-year resident of Hilltown Township, and as a retired pilot, has the time and interest in serving on the Planning Commission. He believes that he could provide a unique perspective to the Commission, since he has been both the owner of a new home in a housing development, and for the past 20 years has been the owner of an operating farm.

Supervisor Salvadore asked Mr. Hansen what past experiences or accomplishments he possesses that might benefit the Planning Commission and the community as a whole. Mr. Hansen has extensive management background in both the military and civil service, where he served as a supervisor of a group of approximately 35 employees

Supervisor McIlhinney asked how Mr. Hansen views the interaction between the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Hansen views the Planning Commission as working for the Board of Supervisors as a recommending body. The PC is a group of 7 very diverse individuals who may each view certain things differently, while still complying with very strict requirements of the MPC and the Township's Zoning and Subdivision/Land Development Ordinances.

Chairman Manfredi asked how Mr. Hansen would see his role as a Planning Commission member. Mr. Hansen replied that the Planning Commission's function is to make decisions and recommendations to the Supervisors, while following Ordinance guidelines, and to accomplish reviews in a timely manner without being mired down in the process.

Supervisor Salvadore asked if Mr. Hansen has attended many PC meetings. Mr. Hansen replied that he has attended the majority of PC meetings within the last 1½ years. Having attended those meetings, Supervisor Salvadore asked Mr. Hansen to prioritize the Commission's work for the next six months. Mr. Hansen commented that the PC is overwhelmed with the amount of developments proposed in Hilltown Township, and stated that the subdivision/land development process is a priority at this time, as well as the review of the proposed Ordinance amendments.

From the perspective of an active farmer and landowner, Supervisor McIlhinney asked what Mr. Hansen sees in the Planning Commission process or in the proposed Ordinances, that would be a benefit to farmers and other large landowners. In order to deal with complaints, Mr. Hansen noted that educating the general public as to basic farm

operations, such as moving farm equipment on roadways, moving animals in fields, early morning noise and odors from farm animals, etc., can be difficult but should be accomplished. He believes that farming and communities go hand-in-hand.

Supervisor Salvadore asked what Mr. Hansen would be willing to do to be an effective member of the Planning Commission. Mr. Hansen feels that his priority would be to familiarize himself with the Zoning and Subdivision/Land Development Ordinance and the proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance. Further, he would be interested in familiarizing himself with all areas of the township itself, including the industrial and commercial areas, as well as the residential areas of Hilltown Township.

Chairman Manfredi asked what Mr. Hansen believes he would bring to the table as a Planning Commission member. Mr. Hansen replied that he has the time to serve on the Planning Commission, is able to objectively look at all different aspects of the issues that come before the PC, and noted that he can make intelligent recommendations and decisions when presented with the facts.

3. Mr. Jeff Lapp – As current chairperson of the Open Space Committee, Mr. Lapp has committed his time and effort toward doing the best he can for the Township. In the process of serving on the Open Space Committee, Mr. Lapp feels that there is a progression of events that occur to affect the Township and how it might look in the future, with the major factor being the Planning Commission. He believes that the Planning Commission provides for an opportunity to discuss with the applicants at the point of inception, not only how to meet Township requirements, but how to modify them with a minimal impact on the municipality with respect to infrastructure costs and on the existing residents of the Township. Due to his employment with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Mr. Lapp's main concern is with impact to the environment. He has dealt with planning issues in a five state region from areas outside Washington, DC, where extreme development pressures are prevalent, to extremely rural areas where no sewage facilities currently exist. Mr. Lapp has extensive knowledge of regulations, from the Federal, State, and Local perspective, and how those regulations are implemented.

Supervisor McIlhinney asked Mr. Lapp for clarification of his statement about "meeting requirements of the Township and modifying them." Mr. Lapp believes that there is a general slant for most subdivision/land development projects to simply meet the minimum requirements of the Ordinance, which in his opinion does not necessarily mean the full utility of what the site has to offer, as well as the full range of options available under the Township's own regulations. Mr. Lapp feels that one of his attributes is being able to "work within the box" which is the framework of the existing regulations, but doing it in such a fashion that the maximum benefit for the Township is realized. Supervisor McIlhinney commented that Mr. Lapp has referred several times to

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“benefiting the Township,” but has remained silent on “benefiting the landowner or the developer of projects.” Mr. Lapp asked if by “landowner” Supervisor McIlhinney meant the existing landowner or the proposed landowner, because he believes that those benefits can be very different. He explained that many times when projects are proposed, the developer offers the existing landowner a certain amount of money conditioned upon receiving the maximum build-out of the site. However, if the developer is denied that maximum build-out, it is Mr. Lapp’s belief that it is the existing landowner who suffers. If a development project maximizes the parcel itself, but with minimal affects on the Township, he thinks that landowners should be able to get their just return for their land, though it should not be on the backs of the existing residents.

Supervisor Salvadore asked Mr. Lapp’s perception of the purpose of the Planning Commission. Mr. Lapp replied that the Planning Commission’s purpose is to review proposals as they are submitted, with an eye toward existing requirements for the development of those parcels, and dealing with some of the modifications that may or may not be necessary, and then agree upon a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

Supervisor Salvadore asked what specific skills Mr. Lapp could bring to the table as a member of the PC. Mr. Lapp feels that his experience through EPA in Pennsylvania and the mid-Atlantic region would be helpful, as would his education and background with respect to the environment and watershed efforts.

Chairman Manfredi recognized Mr. Lapp’s experience with the EPA, and asked if he would see himself, as a member of the PC, doing anything that either wasn’t allowed by the MPC or by Township Ordinances. If that scenario unfolded, Mr. Lapp does not feel that the time to do that is on a project specific basis. He believes that if there are issues that need to be addressed or modified within the current Ordinances, it would be a separate matter for the Planning Commission to bring before the Board of Supervisors.

In closing, Mr. Lapp stated that his years of being a member of the Open Space Committee has strengtbened his belief that everyone can give back to the community in which they live. He feels that his experiences and abilities could help to move the PC forward.

4. Ms. Lori McCauley – As a resident of Hilltown since 1972, Ms. McCauley thinks of herself as a native. She is the mother of 4, with the oldest currently in his third year at Princeton University and the youngest being prepared to enter first grade. Ms. McCauley operates a daycare in her home, works part-time at an Alzheimer’s residence in Dublin, volunteers at Children Youth and Services in Doylestown as an adult mentor, and is also enrolled as a part-time evening student at Holy Family University in order to obtain a second Masters Degree in nursing. Ms.

McCauley has a BA in Community Development and Urban Planning from Rutgers University, and feels that she has a great deal to offer with her organizational skills, knowledge, and her interest in planning.

Ms. McCauley attends classes on Monday evenings until mid-April, and she does understand that it is a conflict with the PC meeting dates. However, she spoke with her professor, who is very understanding and willing to work with her.

Supervisor Salvadore asked what Ms. McCauley's perception is of the purpose of the PC. Ms. McCauley replied that the Planning Commission should assist residents through the subdivision/land development process, while adhering to Ordinance requirements.

With the amount of development that has taken place in Hilltown, Supervisor McIlhinney asked what Ms. McCauley believes she would have changed. Ms. McCauley commented that along with the increased development, she believes that more consideration should be given to schools and keeping the size of the schools appropriate to the number of residents who are moving into the Township. She also would give more consideration to the roads and how they are constructed and maintained to handle the increased traffic.

Chairman Manfredi asked what Ms. McCauley believes is the role of an individual Planning Commission member, given the fact that there is a Municipalities Planning Code, which is what the Township must set their regulations by. Ms. McCauley does not believe that everything is written in stone, and commented that each individual member must look at what is best for the community as a whole.

In closing, Ms. McCauley thanked the Board of Supervisors for the opportunity to interview for this position.

5. Mr. Jackson Teed – Mr. Jackson Teed of Mill Road has been a resident of Hilltown for 22 years. He has been involved in some phase of construction for the past 20 years, with companies such as Alan Meyers, Haines and Kibblehouse, L and J Contractors, Henderson, etc., as well his own landscaping business, and is very familiar with reading drawings and blueprints. Mr. Teed believes that the Township needs a new tax base besides trash companies. He would also like to see the Township be firmer with builders, citing neighboring municipalities who have received donations of firehouses, ambulance squad buildings, schools, etc.

Supervisor McIlhinney asked what Mr. Teed feels is the scope of the interaction between the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Teed stated that the Planning Commission should make suggestions for changes to the design of a proposed subdivision or land development. He further believes that the Planning Commission

should be well-versed in Ordinance requirements and standards, and if the PC can support recommendations to make changes to the Ordinance, Mr. Teed feels the Supervisors should rely on their opinions.

Supervisor Salvadore asked what skills Mr. Teed could bring to the Planning Commission to help the group meet their purpose. Mr. Teed replied that while working for both Alan Myers and Haines and Kibblehouse, he mainly dealt with PennDot, and is very familiar with their roadway specifications. Further, he is well versed in soil work and erosion/sedimentation control. Mr. Teed believes that a developer will try to do the least amount of work required for the least amount of effort and cost, and noted that the Planning Commission has the responsibility to insure that developers meet and even exceed Township requirements.

Mr. Teed is confident that his varied skills and practical work experience, along with his many years as a Township resident would be an asset to the Planning Commission.

6. Mrs. Marilyn Teed – Mrs. Marilyn Teed cited the newly-opened Promenade Shops at Saucon Valley, which resembles an old village concept with cobblestone streets, angled parking in front of the shops themselves, and old world charm. She feels that it is an interesting concept that should be considered here in Hilltown Township, perhaps on a smaller scale, within one of the villages, rather than “cookie-cutter” housing developments. Mrs. Teed firmly believes that the Township should encourage other alternatives to housing developments by looking to the future.

Supervisor Salvadore asked what past experiences and accomplishments Mrs. Teed feels would benefit both the Planning Commission and the community as a whole. Except for this past summer, Mrs. Teed noted that she had attended every Planning Commission meeting for the past 4 or 5 years, and is very familiar with the Zoning Ordinance. She believes that she could bring a different attitude to the Planning Commission, which in years past, in Mrs. Teed’s opinion, had been anti-development. Mrs. Teed commented that an encouraging attitude could go a long way toward a more diverse community. She has made many friends with farmers over the years, and believes that she knows what they need and desire in order to continue farming in Hilltown Township.

Since Mrs. Teed has attended many meetings over the years, Supervisor McIlhinney asked if there is any one thing she would want to change. Mrs. Teed believes that the first thing she would suggest changing would be to reverse the requirement for a 75 ft. rear setback back to a 50 ft. rear setback. She feels that the Township should have very good reasons for revising or changing any Zoning Ordinance requirements, instead of the “willy-nilly” manner in which amendments appear to be made.

Mrs. Teed has applied for appointment to various Township boards and commissions many, many times over the years, yet has always been overlooked. She hopes that the Board would appoint her to a Planning Commission vacancy so that she can serve the community.

B. PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Mr. Joe Marino of Redwing Road referred to the minutes that are up for approval later this evening. In the future, he would like Chairman Manfredi to make any individual who wishes to make public comment to address the Board as a whole, and remain free from personal attack. At a recent meeting, one resident personally attacked a member of the Board, and Mr. Marino fully expected the chairman to rule that individual out of order, however that did not occur.

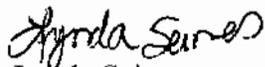
C. SUPERVISOR'S COMMENTS: None.

D. PRESS CONFERENCE: No members of the press were in attendance at this time.

E. ADJOURNMENT: Chairman Manfredi announced that the Board would enter into Executive Session to discuss litigation and legal matters with the Township Solicitor.

Upon motion by Supervisor Salvadore, seconded by Supervisor McIlhinney, and carried unanimously, the Special Meeting of the Hilltown Township Board of Supervisors to interview candidates for Planning Commission vacancies was adjourned at 7:02PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Lynda Seimes
Township Secretary

(*These minutes were transcribed from notes and tape recordings, and should not be considered official unless voted upon by the Board of Supervisors at a public meeting).