



**Townsend Planning Commission
Minutes from
May 10, 2017
Townsend Town Hall, 141 Main Street**

7:00 pm – Planning Commission Meeting

I. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Gary Rittereiser.

II. Opening Ceremonies

Roll Call & Pledge of Allegiance

In attendance are Commissioners James Reyes, Gary Rittereiser, and Sheryl Rojas. Regina Albert, Troy Geiger, where not available to attend.

III. Planning Commission Minutes

Discussion and review of the minutes from the April 12, 2017. The minutes were approved.

IV. Discussion on attending the Town Fair 9/23/17 to get residents interested in the PC

Idea to share a table with the Town as our base, but to then walk around and approach residents to gather ideas of what they would like & don't want to come to their town. Also, we would try to gather email address to build a database to email meetings, topics of discussions or presentations to gather attendance. Suggestion by James Reyes to create a flyer to display in the Post Office. Announcing the Planning Commission and asking for ideas about our town. Suggested we establish a general mailbox for people to send ideas and/or a drop box to submit ideas. We maybe post an agenda. Start spreading the word that we are here and need your opinions.

Sheryl Rojas will follow-up with Councilwoman Lorrain Gorman regarding the Town Fair, Cathy Beaver for the branding or town seal regarding creating our flyer. I will also ask Dawson Green about a general email box for us and collect the Wi-Fi passwords from Cathy.

For the Town Fair, we can probably get a table around the gazebo area with some signage, have the DJ announce for residents to come give us their opinions. We can also get more town shirts and walk around with some official notepad/clipboards to gather people's contact information. Ask if there are Ipads or some type of electronic device we can use to collect this information.

Revisit with Regina Albert and Troy Geiger at the next meeting.

V. Review current Comprehensive Plan of other areas

Sheryl Rojas discussed what she found with the Camden area and traffic issues along Hwy 13 because of all the expansion. The area is battling with DelDot regarding the road improvements. This concerned me because of our corner at Main St/Hwy 71 and any additional commercial, such as the gas station that was informally presented to us at an earlier meeting, could put our town with the same issues. This was not a scheduled or official presentation.

James Reyes mentioned that Regina Albert had seen how another town was using mixed usage in their downtown areas with the older homes to preserve the homes with boutiques, coffee shops, etc., to keep the town quaint. There is commercial property down on Cannery that is still available. MOT Cheerleading was in the area but they are gone. We'd have to look at our maps to see what is available. Gary Rittreiser mentioned the area on the other side of Hwy 71 down Pine Tree Road. Discussed the map that there is an area that was discussed as commercial, but comments were made by Sheryl Rojas that most of that area is usually underwater. The other end of town (towards the Post Office) may be a location that can be developed. Question by Gary about the area around the crab shop but we're not sure and would need to look at the maps thoroughly.

James discussed that Troy reviewed Middletown and liked the history that was included in their plan but also stated that the area was growing so fast and the downtown area was losing businesses to the newer strip malls on 301. Regina reviewed Delaware City and was really excited about the mixed use that they used in their downtown area with the little restaurants. James reviewed Wilmington with lots of history and smaller areas, but it was too big to compare with our area. They're approving a lot of apartments and condos which is not something we can manage in our town. Sheryl Rojas said that we can learn a lot from what Middletown has lost in their downtown shops by charging too much rent for the buildings.

Questions arose about our boundaries and how far Middletown goes towards us. Additional review is needed on the maps due to additional developments along Wiggins Mill, a park area and another development around Caldwell Corner.

Gary Rittreiser reviewed Smyrna. He spoke with a Wilbur Abbott about a lot that we're currently discussing. He said that Mr. Abbott is willing to come speak with us and provided Gary with a resume. We also were provided a sample agenda that Smyrna used for their meetings.

James asked if we would be working with the IPA. The discussion revolved around that it depended if there were any hours left on the contract and then if there was money to contract them again for more assistance.

VI. Review check list from IPA for 10-year Comprehensive Plan Update

James Reyes said that Regina would be able to assist more with the checklist. We did have the checklist and upon review with the Comp Plan that most of the top portion that deals with positions of population, housing, expansion, etc. is data that would be gathered by Town Manager, Dawson Green. Gary asked if we can get the Town Manager available to attend a meeting. We all agree that it would be nice to have him available to attend a meeting as we start digging into the data collection and updates needed in the report. Sheryl Rojas said she would email Dawson Green to question what data updates he would provide us for our plan review. We also agree that we want to rewrite the history of Townsend.

VII. Work on draft of 10-year Comprehensive Plan Update

The group decided that we should review independently sections 2-1 through 2-1f for any updates and bring to the next meeting for discussion.

VIII. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn was made and a second approved the motion to adjourn.