

**EAST NORRITON TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15, 2014**

*A meeting of the East Norriton Township Planning Commission was held at the East Norriton Township Building, 2501 Stanbridge Street in East Norriton, Pennsylvania on Wednesday, January 15, 2014. Keith Tornetta called the reorganization meeting to order at 7:02p.m.. Attending were Planning Commission members Keith Tornetta, George Kennedy, Jeffrey Moller, Robert Schottmiller, Kevin McDevitt, Kandy Heckman, John Kolb and Harold Smith. Zoning Officer, Bryan Bortnichak was also in attendance.*

**Reorganization:**

Keith Tornetta made a motion to nominate Robert Schottmiller as Chairman. The motion was seconded by Kevin McDevitt and passed 8-0.

Keith Tornetta made a motion to nominate Kevin McDevitt as Vice-Chairman. The motion was seconded by Kandy Heckman and passed 8-0.

*Chairman Schottmiller called to order the regular meeting of the Planning Commission at 7:05p.m.*

**1. Approve Minutes of the November 20, 2013 Planning Commission Meeting:**

Chairman Schottmiller called for a motion to approve the minutes of the Planning Commission's November 20, 2013 meeting. Keith Tornetta made a motion to approve the minutes of the Planning Commission's November 20, 2013 meeting. George Kennedy seconded the motion and the motion passed 8-0.

**2. Review Proposed Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment Regulating Wireless Communication Facilities:**

Mr. Bortnichak reviewed a proposed ordinance that will be the subject of a Public Hearing by the Board of Supervisors on February 25, 2014. The proposed ordinance would regulate tower based and non tower based wireless communication facilities such as cell towers and antennas both in the municipal right of way and on private property.

Mr. Bortnichak reviewed five existing properties in East Norriton Township on which tower based facilities are located including several 199' tall lattice towers at 2311 Old Arch Road, four 267' tall lattice towers at 554 Foundry Road, a 180' tall lattice tower at 554 Foundry Road, a 180' tall monopole tower at the Norriton Fire Engine Company's substation at 656 West Germantown Pike and a 120' tall lattice tower at the Norriton Fire Engine Company's main station at 2830 Swede Road.

The proposed ordinance would limit all future tower based facilities to a maximum height of 150' and would establish design standards for such towers that are consistent with the requirements in the current edition of the building code. The ordinance would prohibit interference with public safety communications and facility owners would be required to remove equipment from a tower within six months if the equipment is no longer in active use.

Tower based facilities would be permitted in the Institutional, Industrial, Light Industrial and Heavy Industrial zoning districts, subject to a limitation that they must be located 500' from a residential use. The proposed ordinance encourages co-location by requiring an applicant for a new tower to demonstrate why co-location on an existing tower within a two mile radius of the proposed location is not feasible.

Among other requirements for tower based facilities on private property, the proposed ordinance establishes requirements for screening and fencing of ground equipment, notification of surrounding property owners and financial security in the form of a \$100,000 bond.

The proposed ordinance also regulates non-tower based wireless communication facilities outside the right-of-way, such as those attached to buildings or mounted on rooftops, and non-tower based wireless communication facilities in the right of way such as those that may be installed to provide extended cellular coverage in areas with poor cellular coverage.

Mr. Bortnichak noted that this section of the proposed ordinance would be beneficial to certain residential areas of the Township where utilities are installed underground. Wireless carriers or other entities seeking to install non-tower based wireless communication facilities within the right-of-way can operate under the requirements of the Public Utilities Commission just as PECO, Verizon and Comcast do and that absent any regulation, the Township cannot control equipment installation in our own right-of-way. This proposed ordinance would allow the Township to control, to some degree, such installations.

Non-tower based wireless communication facilities outside the right of way would have a maximum height of 150' and could extend no more than 15' above the roof of existing buildings. Residential satellite dishes would be exempt from the requirements of the proposed ordinance.

Non-tower based wireless communication facilities within the right of way would have to be attached to existing utility or light poles. Importantly, no new utility poles could be installed. Such facilities would be limited to a maximum of six feet in height, would have to be installed 18" behind the curb and any ground equipment would have to be placed underground. The proposed ordinance would require that non-tower based wireless communication facilities within the right of way be removed within 60 days if they are no longer in use and the Township may require annual compensation for use of the right of way.

Jeffrey Moller expressed a concern about the proposed ordinance being on the forefront of new technology and commented that the Township may be opening itself up to liability. Mr. Bortnichak noted that at least one other Township in Bucks County Pennsylvania had adopted a similar ordinance and that the proposed ordinance was prepared by the Township Solicitor's office by individuals who are familiar with the wireless and telecommunications industry standards.

Kevin McDevitt suggested that language be added to the proposed ordinance requiring that facility owners submit a letter to the Township on an annual basis indicating that their facilities are still active so that the Township could require the removal of the facilities if they are no longer in use.

Chairman Schottmiller suggested that the notification distance requirement be better defined as to whether the prescribed distance is from the wireless facility itself or from the property line boundary of the land on which the facility is being installed.

Mr. McDevitt made a motion to recommend approval of the proposed ordinance to the Board of Supervisors with a further recommendation that comments made by Mr. Moller, Mr. McDevitt and Mr. Schottmiller be addressed in a future zoning amendment. The motion was seconded by Kandy Heckman and passed 8-0.

3. **Other Business:**

Planning Commission members reviewed the construction and land development update provided by Mr. Bortnichak.

4. **Adjournment:**

Keith Tornetta made a motion to adjourn. The motion was second by Kandy Heckman and passed 8-0.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Chairman Robert Schottmiller  
East Norriton Township Planning Commission

  
Bryan Bortnichak  
Zoning Officer