

**EAST NORRITON TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MAY 21, 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, May 21, 2014. Chairman Robert Schottmiller called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m. Attending were Planning Commission members Keith Tornetta, Robert Schottmiller, Kandy Heckman, John Kolb, and Judy Belkowski. Zoning Officer, Bryan Bortnichak was also in attendance.

1. Approve Minutes of the April 16, 2014 Planning Commission Meeting:

Chairman Schottmiller called for a motion to approve the minutes of the Planning Commission's April 16, 2014 meeting. Ms. Heckman made a motion to approve the minutes of the Planning Commission's April 16, 2014 meeting. Mrs. Belkowski seconded the motion and the motion passed 5-0.

2. Review Zoning Hearing Board Case 2014-6, 325 West Germantown Pike, Advanced RX:

Neither the applicant nor a representative of the applicant were in attendance to present the zoning appeal to the Planning Commission.

3. Review Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment:

Mr. Bortnichak presented a proposed text amendment that would put in place requirements for group homes in East Norriton Township. Mr. Bortnichak reviewed the regulatory history on group homes in East Norriton Township and the present locations of group homes in the Township.

The amendment would apply only to new group homes and it would require that an applicant for a group home appeal to the Zoning Hearing Board for a special exception. The applicant would have to install a fire sprinkler and fire alarm system in the home. The applicant would also have to provide a dimensioned floor plan to demonstrate that the home will not be overcrowded. The applicant would have to provide a written statement describing how the facility will have adequately trained staff supervision of the disabled residents. The applicant would have to provide a minimum of four off street parking spaces and demonstrate that no outpatient services would be offered. The applicant would also have to demonstrate that one supervisory employee would be on site at all times to assist the residents, that employees will have adequate training and that the appearance of the home will be maintained similar to other homes in the neighborhood.

Mr. Tornetta asked if handicap ramps would be required. Mr. Bortnichak explained that ramps could be installed at the discretion of the group home operator but that they would not be required by code. In response to a question from Mr. Schottmiller, Mr. Bortnichak explained that fire escapes would not be required.

Ms. Heckman noted that some of the provisions may be hard to enforce, particularly the requirement for a similar appearance to other homes.

Mr. Tornetta suggested that the fire marshal perform annual inspections of group homes and asked about the authority to perform inspections. Mr. Bortnichak advised that the applicant's obligation to maintain compliance with the Zoning Hearing Board's order granting a special exception would provide some authority to perform inspections of a group home.

Mr. Kolb suggested that a requirement be put in place to require licensing by the appropriate state agency.

Mrs. Belkowski asked about stormwater management for the increase in parking that would be required by the amendment. Mr. Bortnichak advised that an existing ordinance would regulate the management of stormwater that would result from an increase in parking.

Ms. Heckman questioned the disposal of medical waste that is generated at these facilities. Mr. Bortnichak advised that waste generated at single family dwellings is regulated as municipal waste and despite the fact that some of the waste generated at a group home may contain medical waste, it is not required to be disposed of in a manner different from waste generated from other houses in the Township.

Mr. Tornetta questioned the inclusion of all residential zoning districts as locations where group homes can be located. He suggested that we pick specific districts within the Township.

Ms. Heckman asked when existing group homes would come under the requirements of the new ordinance. Mr. Bortnichak advised that an existing group home would have to cease operating as a group home for a period of a year or more and then attempt to resume operations before they would fall under the requirements of the proposed ordinance.

Carol Afrassiabian of 114 Barley Sheaf Drive asked about fire inspections and if fees are charged by the Fire Marshal.

Damian DiLeo asked about how it would be determined that the individuals residing in a group home are actually disabled. Mr. Bortnichak advised that an applicant would have to present sufficient evidence to the Zoning Hearing Board to obtain a special exception. Mr. DiLeo also suggested that the ordinance be revised to require that a house occupied by residents of a group home be entirely occupied by disabled residents and that no portion of the home be rented out to other people.

Mr. Tornetta made a motion to recommend that the Board of Supervisors wait to adopt the ordinance until it can be changed to address the following:

- 1) That the ordinance call for annual inspections by the Fire Marshal;
- 2) That the ordinance call for the regulation of medical waste;
- 3) That the operator of a group home pay an annual fee and obtain an annual license from the Township;
- 4) That the ordinance require that no portion of the house be rented or occupied by individuals other than those with disabilities;
- 5) That the owner/operator of the group home demonstrate that they are licensed by the appropriate state agency.

6) That the for profit or not for profit status of the group home owner/operator be disclosed.

Ms. Heckman seconded the motion and the motion passed 5-0.

4. **Other Business:**

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

Mr. Schottmiller noted that they would table a recommendation on Mr. Moller's letter relating to sidewalks until more members of the Planning Commission are present at a future meeting.

5. **Adjournment:**

Mr. Tornetta made a motion to adjourn. The motion was second by Mr. Kolb and passed 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Chairman Robert Schottmiller
East Norriton Township Planning Commission



Bryan Bortnichak
Zoning Officer