



TOWNSHIP OF ABINGTON

Office of the Township Manager

MEETING NOTES

February 25, 2021 6:30 p.m.

TO: Richard J. Manfredi, Township Manager

DATE: FEBRUARY 25, 2021

SUBJECT: VPRB MEETING

REFERENCE: VPRB MEETING OF FEBRUARY 25, 2021 VIA ZOOM

ATTENDEES: BOB GREAVES, CHAIRMAN, COMMISSIONER SPIEGELMAN, DAVID FORBES, LUCY STRACKHOUSE, MICHAEL SCHLAGHAUFER, SHAUN LITTLEFIELD, NATHAN VASSERMAN, MARIA WYRSTA, ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER

SUMMARY: AS FOLLOWS

General Discussion:

Meeting notes from January 2021 were approved.

Presentation – GIS System:

Mr. Greaves gave a presentation on how proposed GIS map system can enhance the work of the VPRB by being more efficient and transparent as well as making it easier to identify vacant commercial properties; also, to obtain feedback from the Board of Commissioners on this proposal.

Ordinances establishing the VPRB were adopted in 2015 – Ordinance No. 2097 requires registration of vacant nonresidential buildings and Ordinance No. 2098 directs the VPRB to examine vacant commercial properties and determine whether they are blighted.

Since our first meeting in 2016, the VPRB has worked closely with Township Code Enforcement Department staff, and together, we developed both a spreadsheet and a process to track and evaluate vacant properties as they arise. We also improved access to the Township's registration requirements and documents by updating forms and made them available on the Township's website.

Over the past several months, the VPRB and Township staff have worked together to explore the use of the Township's GIS system to track and display vacant properties. GIS provides the same tracking capability as an Excel spreadsheet and allows sites to be featured on a map. GIS can also easily display other useful local features such as a ward map of the Township; Abington zoning requirements; and the vacant property location in addition to several base map viewing options.

A demonstration was presented on how to use proposed GIS map system that will provide an excellent platform to capture its work and improve access to vacant commercial properties by both the public and prospective purchasers using technology already owned by the Township. The resource cost of maintaining this GIS platform is equivalent to existing Excel spreadsheet tracking system.

Suggested was getting approval by Township Manager to share the presentation with the Board of Commissioners for their feedback and then share it with the public.

Site updates:

1864 Horace Avenue – property is still being renovated; 1933 Old York Road – property owner intends to fix it up and lease it out; three registration letters were sent to owners of 1125 Easton Road, 3021 Mt Carmel Avenue, and 1916 Old York Road. Hedwig House –potential uses are office, multi-office or residential.

Public Comment:

Lora Lehmann, resident, expressed concern about not getting documents for the meeting. She asked about trucks parked outside of the Patane property and whether that is an accepted use.

Mr. Littlefield replied they have been there for two-three years and a Use & Occupancy permit was issued.

Next scheduled meeting is Thursday, March 25, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

Action Items and Responsibility:

Approval by Township Manager to share the presentation with the Board of Commissioners for their feedback and then share it with the public.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Liz Vile, Minutes Secretary