

# Swarthmore Planning Commission

## Meeting Minutes

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Date: October 18, 2023  
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### Commission Attendees

James Levine -- Chair Doug Harnsberger -- Vice Chair Rex Brien -- Secretary Don Jones Chris DeBruyn	Steve Minton John MacCallum Chris Kenney
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Meeting Location

Borough Hall  
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- James Levine called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m.
- **Public Comment**
  - Francie Halderman, Human Relations Committee, requested review of the language in the draft Town Center Zoning Update addressing housing affordability.
  - Rachal Pastan expressed concern that the draft Town Center Zoning Update will be detrimental to housing affordability and proposed addressing the Comprehensive Plan update first. She also was concerned that the proposed height regulations may displace some residents.
- **Agenda Item 1:** Motion to approve September 20, 2023 meeting minutes; seconded and approved with amendment and agreement to include James Levine's October 9, 2023 e-mail to BC as an attachment to the minutes.
- **Agenda Item 2:** Committee Reports. See below.
- **Agenda Item 3:** 2024 Meeting Schedule
  - Motion to change start time of PC Meetings to 7:00 p.m.
    - Motion seconded and approved, to commence in January 2024.
- **Agenda Item 4:** Town Center Zoning update.
  - Discussion:
    - James Levine reported that BC is reviewing PC's October 9, 2023 e-mail re: PC's involvement in reviewing the Draft TC Zoning Update and making recommendations re: same. Kristen Seymore/BC has asked how long PC review would take. James told her that PC review would require at least two meetings and could have recommendations by March 2024. BC is inclined to complete the TC Zoning Update now, with the possibility of subsequent changes made in the updated Comprehensive Plan. James proposed inviting Bill Webb to attend PC meetings discussing the TC Zoning Update.

- Doug Harnsberger reported that the Historic Preservation Task Force is expected to have a report by March 2024.
  - Chris DeBruyn stated that the draft TC Zoning Update regulations re: street trees are vague and contradictory. He also noted that the draft is not clear re: affordability and historic preservation. Chris commented that the Borough bought a limited amount of work from the consultant, FHI, which did not allow for extended comment.
- **Agenda Item 5: Comprehensive Plan Scoping Update**
  - Discussion:
    - As noted, James Levine asked BC to include PC in preparing the draft RFP for the Comprehensive Plan Update.
    - John MacCallum noted that the Comprehensive Plan’s impact on the Borough requires a more robust review and comment process.
- **Upcoming Topics:**
  - Discussion:
    - In addition to the Upcoming Topics noted in the agenda, expect discussion re: the size of signs for home businesses, as well as signs on commercial vehicles.
    - Chris DeBruyn proposed further discussion re: the removal of many trees in the Borough without replacement.
- **Agenda Item 6: - Committee Notes**

Committee	Meeting info (time is PM unless noted.)	Planning Commission Liaison
Borough Council		A Request for Proposal re: the Comprehensive Plan Update was submitted to BC. James Levine requested a copy of the RFP and that PC be permitted to review and provide recommendations. Doug Harnsberger provided a supplemental list of possible consultants for that update. (Note that PC submitted a proposed RFP to BC in July 2023, without a response to date).
Environmental Advisory Council (EAC)	4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday @ 7:30	Discussed prep of statement re: LEED buildings in TC and whether it should apply Borough-wide. Agreement that building height credit should apply to green buildings and affordability guidelines. Also discussed provision of electric auto

		charging in parking areas; native species requirement in TC; reduction of window bird strikes; and support for higher building density.
Traffic Advisory Committee	Meetings as needed.	Delco Planning Dept. will have funds for Borough-wide review in Spring, and PennDOT may also have funding. Discussed 4 dangerous intersections in Borough and proposals to reduce danger.
Tree Committee	David Page – Meets as needed.	Discussed draft TC Zoning Update's treatment of street trees.
UCC Board of Appeals	Meets as needed.	No meeting.
Zoning Hearing Board	Meets as needed, 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday.	No meeting.
Borough Council – Environment	4 <sup>th</sup> Wednesday 7:30	No meeting.
Borough Council – General Government & Hum. Services (Library, town center)	Sarah Graden – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday @ 7:30	No report.
Borough Council - Planning & Zoning	Kristen Seymore – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday 7:30	No report.
Borough Council - Public Safety	Jill Gaieski – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday	No report.
Borough Council - Public Works/Parks & Rec.	Francie Halderman – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thursday 8:30 AM	No meeting.
Borough Council – Finance	TBD – 4 <sup>th</sup> Monday @ 7:30	No meeting.

The meeting adjourned, upon motion, at 8:48 p.m.

**NEXT MEETING:**

The next scheduled meeting is scheduled for December 20, 2023, 2023 at Swarthmore Borough Hall.

End of Meeting Minutes