

**BOROUGH OF QUAKERTOWN
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
APRIL 5, 2017**

The regular meeting of the Quakertown Planning Commission was held on Wednesday, April 5, 2017 at 6:30 p.m.

Those in attendance were Chairman Michele Scarborough, Vice Chairman Bill Kee, Secretary Cathy Gillahan, Scott Cassel, Karen Rowley, Ron Heller, Building Code Officer Doug Wilhelm and Recording Secretary Missy Molnar. Absent were Philip Abramson and John Schlupp.

670 S. MAIN STREET – APPROVAL FOR QUAKERTOWN ACTION PARK TO APPLY FOR GRANT FUNDING BASED OFF OF THE CONCEPT THAT WAS PRESENTED

Pastor Dave Kratz represents the Action Park Committee. Slides were shown of phases to take place and what is anticipated.

The skate park was built in 2003 and in 2008 the Borough was struggling to maintain park and thought of closing it. The Borough moved ahead with organizing a committee “Quakertown Action Park” in 2011 and held an event which was an asset. Private funding started in 2016. This park is free to the public. We have secured \$300,000 in match money with companies like Bergey’s Auto, Clemen’s Family, Marcho Farms and individual donations.

Phase 1 – The basketball courts were to be moved, the Borough sewer project happening helped us out in a big way. A building would be built behind the basketball courts which would consist of bathrooms, snack room, 2 offices which would be for the parks and recreation staff. This will be further discussed. Also there will be an office for Free Fall. A discussion hopefully having a shared meeting area and having staffing for after school.

Phase 2 – Pursue working on grants for the skate park and to build the skate park.

Phase 3 – Completing project by adding walking paths and park benches.

The Action Sports Committee had five summer events last year and the main one “Free Fall” was held in September with 600 people attending.

There is a group of kids which call themselves the “goodlums”. They stay out of trouble and help with fundraising by talking and doing presentations and demos at churches.

It was brought up as to who would be doing the general maintenance, repairs, cutting the grass, etc. Partnering with the Borough is to share the responsibility of labor.

A motion was made by Bill Kee, seconded by Scott Cassel and was unanimously carried to approve the recommendation that a letter go to Borough Council to move forward with the project.

140 N. NINTH STREET – CONDITIONAL USE RECOMMENDATION FOR A TRAINING FACILITY

Heather Lloyd – Tails of Valor

Demolish and rebuild the present property for a facility to train service dogs for veterans with PTSD, TBI and Physical Disabilities. This would be a three story complex. This property is zoned medium density residential.

First Floor – This would have a puppy room, training room, intermediate room and an advanced room. Having a café which can be patronized would also cut down the costs. This would be handicapped accessible and would be open during the day and closed in the evenings. All training is done inside. There will be no outside kennels.

Second Floor – Will have manimal and non-manimal therapy, massage therapy, acupuncture, family and nutritional counseling, psychiatrist and psychologist. This will be like a spa setting – treating the veteran and their families. There will be rented office spaces.

Third Floor – This would be a mock setting for 2 apartments – one for the actual veteran to be able to stay overnight for the upcoming graduation. The veteran and their dog would stay for two weeks and work with the dog eight hours a day. During this time testing will occur for PTSD nightmares and/or night terrors and to monitor and understand the bond between the veteran and the service dog. Veterans are the number one priority during the graduation with their dog and the trainer.

The other apartment would hopefully be for the dog if no puppy raisers are available.

Heather has a place in Coopersburg and Springfield Township and has solidified a partnership with the Veterans Associations of Philadelphia and the goal is to mirror for Wilkes-Barre and Coatesville. Staff consists of 2 trainers – one in the morning and one in the afternoon; a person for 20 hours of paid service, which will be writing grants and 20 hours of volunteering.

The dogs used are shepherds, labs and now starting with pit bulls. The rescue dogs are between 8 and 10 weeks old which will be placed with a puppy trainer evenings and weekends. During the day the dogs come to canine connection which is like a daycare setting for them to train for an 8 to 10 week period. They will learn 40 commands and 100 exposures. Service dogs are taught not to bark. They are also used for ADA (American Disability Act) and ADI (Assisting Dog International). The cost to train each dog is \$25,000-\$30,000 with 1,500-2,000 hours of training. The dogs have the ability to take the socks off a human and put in a laundry basket.

If service dogs do not meet the expectations with the companion they will become a therapy dog which takes about 8 to 10 weeks of training with one class at night once a week for a total of twenty hours of training.

A motion was made by Cathy Gillahan, seconded by Karen Rowley and was unanimously carried to approve the conditional use recommendation for a training facility.

The next regular meeting will be held on May 11, 2017.

Recording Secretary
Missy Molnar