

BYRAM TOWNSHIP ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

MINUTES, JANUARY 14, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 p.m. Present were Chairman Vince Gallo, Susan Mirz, Andrea Proctor, Eric Serrilli, Carol Barry, and Margaret McGarrity (also acting as secretary).

The December 10, 2014 minutes were approved, pending Margaret resending to all ARC members with minor revisions proposed by Vince: motion by Andrea; second by Vince; unanimous.

Correspondence and updates: Articles about walkable commercial district in Princeton (a very different town from Byram) and about the health of small-medium sized businesses in Germany, where they constitute half the GDP of that country.

Business:

Membership: Carol Barry was appointed as the ARC's newest member, providing a full board.

Planning Board:

- Sign ordinance: Lisa Shimamoto cannot work on this issue, due to a conflict of interest. ARC members are to review the draft ordinance and send any comments to John Morytko, who will represent the ARC on the ad-hoc ordinance committee (to be discussed at the February 3 Council meeting). The ARC had a brief discussion about whether this and other design ordinances for our commercial districts are becoming too restrictive. How do we manage the appearance of our commercial areas without eliminating variety and a lively streetscape?
- Vince's memo to the Planning Board about the Byram Car Wash: The ARC memo will explain that the colors of the building vary from what the owners proposed to the ARC, being more orange as versus quieter earth tones, and that the blue canopies and red-topped colorful vacuums add to a very busy appearance. The ARC also will ask about the enforcement process, to make sure that agreements about aesthetic issues such as this are carried out as promised. When the car wash comes to the Planning Board for site plan review, the ARC hopes that other aesthetic elements including signage, landscaping, lighting will help quiet down the appearance of the site. The ARC discussed whether the Township could impose more specific aesthetic codes, such as for building colors. ARC members will review the Design Guide (on the Township website) and continue this discussion at future meetings.

Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC): The Committee is pursuing Highlands Council funding for an economic feasibility study. The EDAC is working on five objectives for 2015 (the EDAC's minutes are attached, which Eric emailed to the ARC).

ARC and economic/Village Center development: The ARC again discussed inviting speakers to propose ways to develop the Village Center and create a successful future for Byram. Margaret and Eric both spoke about creating something very different in Byram, a new place for people to live-work-visit. Eric recommended that speakers be developers, not planners or architects. Margaret will send around information about the 2012 Smart Growth America workshop, which addressed Byram's economic development and finding developers to build what the Township has envisioned. There was a general discussion about the attractions that already exist in Byram, such as Waterloo Village and the trail network, and on using those as the centerpiece of an advertizing campaign.

No Net Loss tree planting grant: ARC members can suggest sites for planting the 1,058 trees Byram will get under this grant; sites must be on public land (local, county, state, including possibly roadside rights-of-way. This is State money to remediate for trees cut down during the Route 206 Cat Swamp Hill project.

Adjourn: 9:55. Motion by Vince; second by Eric.