

**BENNER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
August 26, 2004**

CALL TO ORDER

Regularly scheduled meeting of the Benner Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chairman Rob Fugate at the Benner Township Municipal Building.

ATTENDANCE

Members present: Tim Robinson, Joe Shultz, Mike Anthony, Genny Robine, Jim Swartzell, and Rob Fugate. Member absent was Bob Morrell. Also present: Renee Swancer, Zoning Officer, Michael Shamalla—Park and Rec. Director. Residents present: Paul and Tracy Ross.

MINUTES

Planning Commission received the meeting minutes of August 12, 2004 for their review and approval. Mr. Shultz moved the minutes be accepted. Mr. Anthony seconded the motion.

Vote: Mr. Swartzell: yes Mr. Fugate: yes Mrs. Robine: yes Mr. Morrell -absent
 Mr. Shultz: yes Mr. Anthony: yes Mr. Robinson: yes

PERSONS TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Proposed Rails-to-Trails along Buffalo Run: Mr. Mike Shamalla, director of Benner Township Park and Recreation, continued discussing the proposed rails-to-trails Feasibility Study along Buffalo Run to the Commission. Mr. Shamalla noted that an alternative route may be sought through Continental Courts to avoid Melissa Gummo and Fred and Carol Gay's property. Property owners along the proposed trail were sent postcards from the Centre County Planning Office announcing a public meeting was to be held at the Benner Township Planning Commission meeting where information would be presented about the study. Melissa Gummo felt the postcard was misleading and that is why more residents were probably not present to hear the discussion. Mr. Shamalla noted that Bellefonte Planning Commission, Patton Township Supervisors, and Spring Township recommended to financially support the project. Mr. Shultz asked how many property owners are within the eight miles of trail. Mr. Shamalla noted he could have this information for the next meeting. Roughly 120 postcards were sent to property owners and adjoining landowners. It was noted the last time a rails-to-trails was discussed in Benner Township was in 1975. Mr. Fugate asked if Clearwater Conservancy was contacted for support. Mr. Shamalla noted a letter of support is forthcoming. Ms. Robine indicated Brian Auman, a local, is highly experienced in rail-to-trail conversions, and that contacting him would be beneficial. The Planning Commission talked about the recommendation of support to the Benner Township Supervisors to expend funds of \$13,500 for the Feasibility Study. The Rails-to-Trails Task Force estimates the study could cost \$100,000. Matching funds of \$50,000 is needed from participating municipalities. Mr. Robinson moved to recommend the Supervisors to financially support the feasibility study. Ms. Robine seconded the motion.

Vote: Mr. Swartzell: yes Mr. Fugate: yes Mrs. Robine: yes Mr. Morrell -absent
 Mr. Shultz: no Mr. Anthony: yes Mr. Robinson: yes

NEW BUSINESS

OLD BUSINESS

CORRESPONDENCE

ADJOURN

With all business complete, the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:
Renee Swancer, Zoning Officer