

**BENNER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
August 22, 2013**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Benner Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Paul Kurtz, Vice-Chairman, at the Benner Township Municipal Building.

**ATTENDANCE**

Members present: Genevieve Robine, Paul Kurtz, Jim Swartzell, and Willis Houser

Members absent: Mr. Anthony, Mr. Campbell, Mr. Copper

**MINUTES**

The minutes from the July 25, 2013 meeting were presented for approval. It was noted to add the appointment of Mr. Kurtz as the Vice-Chairman of the Planning Commission to the meeting minutes. Mrs. Schoch indicated that the changes will be made. Mr. Swartzell made a motion to approve the minutes with the changes. Mr. Houser seconded the motion.

Vote:           Mrs. Robine-yes                   Mr. Houser-yes           Mr. Kurtz-yes  
                  Mr. Swartzell-yes

**PERSONS TO ADDRESS THE BOARD:** No persons were present to address the Planning Commission

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Benner Commerce Park Preliminary/Final Subdivision Plan**

John Sepp, P.E., Penn Terra Engineers was present to discuss the Benner Commerce Park Preliminary/Final Subdivision Plan.

The Plan creates two lots, gives Krouts as access easement, renames one of the roads, changes the length of the cul-de-sac, and asks for a waiver to make one road private.

It was noted that the Township Engineer has reviewed the Plan and wrote a review letter dated August 22, 2013 indicating he has no objections to a waiver request.

Mrs. Robine asked what the status of the Auditor General looking into Benner Commerce Park being purchased with tax payer's money, then being sold to private developers.

Mr. Sepp indicated that they did investigate and nothing ever came of it.

Mr. Sepp said the Centre County Industrial Development Corporation (CCIDC) have no immediate plans for the Benner Commerce Park, other than the YMCA purchased a lot and will establish a Regional YMCA Facility in Benner Commerce Park.

Mrs. Schoch asked about the Valentine Iron Washing Plant that was noted in a letter from the Centre County Planning and Community Development Office.

Mr. Sepp told the Planning Commission that there was an Iron Ore Washing Plant on the site, all that exists now is a foundation. It will be noted on the plan where the foundation is located.

Mrs. Robine inquired about Stormwater Management and Best Management Practices, such as plantings in the basins. She feels that this would be a good opportunity to put the BMP into place.

Mr. Sepp did not know at the time who will be purchasing the lots and developing them and at this point, it is only a subdivision plan. Land Development Plans will come in front of the Planning Commission when they are being proposed, and at that time, we could discuss it.

Mr. Swartzell noted that the Planning Commission can only make recommendations when the Development Plans come in for approval and at that time the Planning Commission can ask for something more than just the minimum requirements.

With no other comments from the Planning Commission or Mr. Sepp, Mr. Swartzell made a motion to Recommend Approval based on the conditions that the Waivers are approved and all remaining comments from the County Planning and Development Office are satisfied. Mrs. Robine seconded the motion.

Vote:           Mrs. Robine-yes                           Mr. Houser-yes                           Mr. Kurtz-yes  
                  Mr. Swartzell -yes

## **2. Centre Region Comprehensive Plan Update**

The Township received a letter from the Centre Regional Planning Agency (CRPA) on August 1, 2013. To fulfill the requirements of the PA MPC, the CRPA is sending the Township a copy of a plan for our review and comment.

A recommendation that includes Benner Township is to coordinate with PSU and the Centre County Airport Authority, to identify and implement improvements in commercial and general aviation services and facilities at the University Park Airport.

The Planning Commission reviewed the Future Land Use Map, which was projected onto the screen for easier viewing.

Mr. Swartzell noted that the Growth Boundary is encroaching on Benner Township in the Shiloh Road Interchange area.

This could potentially lead to the establishment of water and sewer service to the Shiloh Road Interchange, which would then bring development to that area.

The Planning Commission is interested in learning more about the Plans the CRPA has for the Growth Boundary and how it will ultimately affect Benner Township and our Future Development Plans for that area.

After more discussion, the Planning Commission is recommending that Board of Supervisors write a letter to the CRPA indicating that we have reviewed the Plan and touch on the comments regarding the Regional Growth Boundary.

### **3. FEMA Floodplain Map Review**

The Township received maps from FEMA for the Township's review.

Mrs. Schoch noted that the maps have been revised; now review and comments from the Township have been requested.

Mrs. Schoch indicated that the Township received the maps earlier that day and has not had much time to look into the plan and maps to see what has changed.

The Planning Commission was able to view both the existing floodplain map on the County's GIS website and the proposed floodplain maps, which were delivered to the Township. It was difficult to tell what has been changed.

Mrs. Schoch read through the Study and found that the Levee System is not longer recognized as providing protection from the Base.

The Planning Commission was not aware of any Levees on Spring Creek and requested Mrs. Schoch look into this more and come back with more information.

The review was tabled until more information is available.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Septic Management Ordinance-Sewer Authority Members have been asked to attend an upcoming Board of Supervisor's meeting to give their input on the Septic Management Program:**

It was noted that the members of the Sewer Authority are Mr. Tim Miller, Mr. William Hughes, and Mr. Dan Hoffman.

Mr. Kurtz indicated he feels the Township should take action sooner rather than later to avoid any mandates from DEP.

Mrs. Schoch noted that she will keep this on the Agenda as an on-going item.

### **Zoning Ordinance Update:**

A landowner in Benner Township contacted Mrs. Schoch early in August to discuss having a welding shop in an Industrial District. When she looked into it, she found that in some cases, machine, tool and die, and metal fabrication shops are permitted where welding shops are not. He asked if this was a possible oversight and if he did come in to request that the Ordinance be amended, if the Planning Commission

would be for it or against a change or if "the skies were cloudy or clear?"

Mrs. Robine said she remembers an issue with a welding shop, but that was in the Agricultural Zoning District and not in an Industrial District.

It was noted that when the Zoning Ordinance was being prepared by the consultant, the Planning Commission would have the opportunity to review the requirements being proposed; sometimes their recommendations did not end up getting placed into the Ordinance.

The Planning Commission felt that if an amendment to the Ordinance will make it simpler, then they agree. And that Mrs. Schoch can indicate to the man who has the request that the skies are clear.

Mrs. Schoch informed the Planning Commission members that she has been keeping notes of issues she has found in the Zoning Ordinance, these range from typos to items that do not make sense or that are very difficult to interpret. She is going to discuss with the supervisors eventually updating the Ordinance and making one large amendment. The timing is right since the Regional Comprehensive Plan Update is being worked upon this year and that other Townships in the region are starting to work on amending their ordinances.

The Planning Commission agreed and will be on board.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** None

**NOTES:** Mrs. Robine asked Mr. Swartzell about flights from the University Airport directly to Chicago. He said it is still in the works, but United Airlines is getting close.

Mr. Swartzell asked about Chickens in the Township and if the Ordinance is online. Mrs. Schoch told him the Ordinance and all of the other Township Ordinances are on the Township Website.

**ADJOURN**

With all business complete, Mr. Swartzell made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Lindsay Schoch, Zoning Officer