

**Benner Township Planning Commission
January 11, 2024**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Benner Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by the Chairman, Willis Houser with members Judson Mantz, Alex Moyer, Randy Moyer, Jim Leigey, and Lee Copper present. Ms. Chaplin was absent. Also in attendance were Thomas Waniewski, Ronald Spicer, Everett Spicer, Kathy Evey, Larry Lingle, John Elnitski, Sharon Royer and Michael Lesniak.

MINUTES

The minutes of November 9, 2023, were presented to the Board for their review and comments. Mr. Randy Moyer moved to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Copper seconded the motion.

Vote: Mr. R. Moyer – yes Mr. A. Moyer – yes Mr. Mantz – yes Mr. Copper – yes
Mr. Leigey – yes Mr. Houser – yes Ms. Chaplin – absent

PERSONS TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Thomas Waniewski of Diamond Communications: Mr. Waniewski was present to review his conditional use application for a cellular tower to be located on the Spicer property having the tax parcel number of 12-002-094. Mr. Waniewski gave the Board the following overview:

- *Proposing a 254' lattice tower.
- *Verizon would be located at the 240' height.
- *Tower is capable of carrying a total of 4 users.
- *The leased area where the tower and building will be located will be 70' X 70'
- *The leased area will be enclosed by a 8' high chain link fence that is topped by 3 strands of barbed wire
- *The tower is designed to collapse within its self
- *The tower will have limited vehicular traffic with the site only being visited every 6 to 8 weeks for maintenance
- *It is estimated that that it will take a total of six weeks to complete construction
- *If approved the site will be built this year.
- *This tower is located 1.73 miles northeast from the closest Verizon tower
- *It is needed to fill in the valley for service. Many dead service areas in and around Continental Courts/Armagast Road

Mr. Waniewski noted that he is expecting the FAA letter of determination of no hazard any day now which is needed in order for this project to proceed with the process.

Mr. Lesniak noted that if approved for the conditional use application that the applicant would then need to go before the Zoning Hearing Board and seek a variance for the tower height and fall zone area requirements.

John Elnitski noted that this tower is being proposed in the wrong location on the property. He noted that the proposed location is very dangerous for pilots in training as they are turning at this location to start descending to the Bellefonte Airport. He noted that the AOPA has written the Board of Supervisors a letter stating that encourage the tower to be constructed at a different location due to concerns for pilots. Mr. Elnitski noted that there is a such thing as target fixation, where students try so hard to avoid something that they end up hitting it.

Mr. Waniewski noted that there will be professionals attending the Supervisors hearing to testify regarding the placement and height of the tower as well as the requirements of FAA.

Mr. R. Moyer moved to forward this request on to the Supervisors for the public hearing. Mr. A. Moyer seconded the motion.

Vote: Mr. R. Moyer – yes Mr. A. Moyer – yes Mr. Mantz – yes Mr. Copper – yes
Mr. Leigey – yes Mr. Houser – yes Ms. Chaplin – absent

NEW BUSINESS

Barn's Lane Subdivision Sewage Planning Module: The sewage planning module for the Barns Lane Subdivision was presented. It was noted that an existing 24.945 acre parcel with a home is being divided into a total of 10 lots. Sewage planning has been completed by the sewage enforcement officer with two septic sites located on each lot. Well locations are shown on each lot and meet the isolation distances to the septic system locations. Mr. Mantz moved to approve the sewage planning module for the Barns Lane Subdivision. Mr. Copper seconded the motion. Mr. R. Moyer noted that he was abstaining as he is involved with this Subdivision personally.

Vote: Mr. R. Moyer – abstained Mr. A. Moyer – yes Mr. Mantz – yes Mr. Copper – yes
Mr. Leigey – yes Mr. Houser – yes Ms. Chaplin – absent

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned the time being 7:30 p.m.

Sharon Royer, Recording Secretary