

**BENNER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
May 12, 2016**

CALL TO ORDER

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Benner Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 PM by the Chairman, Nate Campbell who led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDANCE

Members present: Nate Campbell, Willis Houser, Paul Kurtz, Greg Jeffries, Sherry Dawn Jackson, and Lee Copper .

Members absent: Jim Swartzell

Others present: Sign-in Sheet attached to minutes

MINUTES

The minutes from the April 28, 2016 meeting were presented for approval. Mr. Jeffries made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Kurtz seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Vote:	Mr. Jeffries - yes	Mr. Campbell - yes	Mr. Houser - yes
	Mr. Kurtz - yes	Ms. Jackson - yes	Mr. Copper - yes

PERSONS TO ADDRESS THE BOARD:

1. Tom Songer addressed the Board. He noted that he owns property within the Penn Eagle Industrial Park, located on Rolling Ridge Drive off the Benner Pike. He stated that when he bought the property, the allowable impervious coverage was 80 percent, but that the Roth Zoning Ordinance adopted in 2009, this was reduced to 60 percent. Mr. Songer wanted to have it considered in the ordinance review that industrial properties, at least within this industrial park, that impervious surfaces should be increased to 80 percent, or at least 70 percent. He also proposed that there could be some grandfather clause that would permit these higher densities here, or that at least in the new park, the property buyers know that the coverage allowed is 60 percent when they buy the property. Mr. Songer noted that more concentration reduces sprawl. Mr. Songer presented an exhibit which shows his building along with some potential expansion plans. His current building represents a property coverage of 51 percent.

2. Renee Swancer led a discussion about protecting water, including the current ordinances for Spring Creek Canyon and Carbonate Geology. She also raised concerns over the recent airport variance and the concerns that were raised by the Walnut Grove community. She asked how stormwater is handled, whether the airport had to go through a conditional use process, the potential source of pollution raised by the airport (see the source water protection plans), and encouraged review of all stormwater issues to the highest levels.

NEW BUSINESS:

Bio Solid Ordinance

Greg Jeffries has prepared an ordinance for review. This ordinance would address bio solid and land application in Benner Township. The ordinance is based on a similar ordinance that has been adopted by Burnside Township. Mr. Anderson gave an overview of some of the process to adopt an ordinance. Mr. Jeffries noted that the ordinance language is intended to insure that documentation is done properly and that insurance is provided to insure that if there is a problem, something will be done about it. Mr. Campbell noted that the ordinance could add some baseline monitoring of local wells, as this happened when Penn State proposed manure storage (all nearby wells were tested to set a base). Renee stated that ground water monitoring could be added, especially during the comment period for the DEP permit. She noted that letters are being prepared by (Pa House of Representatives) Mike Hanna's office, which will be urging that some of the 2014 Burnside Township issues should be brought back for consideration into legislation, and urging (State Senator) Jake Cormans' office to join this discussion as well.

Mr. Houser asked who would be responsible for the water testing, that it should be done by an independent third party. Nate noted that any cost should not be the responsibility of the Township, that the initial testing should be covered by the up-front fee, and additional costs should be the responsibility of the applicant. Discussion suggested that some of the suggested changes be addressed by Greg and brought back before the Planning Commission at the May 28 meeting. Ms. Jackson noticed that the proposed language should be presented to the Township Solicitor at the same time that it is presented to the Board of Supervisors in order to efficiently process the request. It was noted that Mark Capriani said that the sewer plant would soon be producing data, which could include potential costs to treat the sewage by-product to Class A. The decision to table the discussion on the ordinance and continue discussion on May 28 was made by the Planning Commission.

OLD BUSINESS: Benner Township Zoning Ordinance

The Planning Commission continued its review of the Zoning Ordinance. Work continued with the Article on the R-1, Rural Residential zoning district. Permitted uses were considered with much discussion. Mr. Anderson noted that in considering some of the permitted uses, they could be approved with certain conditions (some uses are permitted now, but still have to meet certain criteria), or if the proposed uses are just not appropriate for the zoning district, they can be removed entirely.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

1. Zoning Officer report

Mr. Anderson summarized the recent permits issued, variance request for State Police barracks.

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. State Police Barracks
2. Amberleigh Lot Consolidation
3. Restek fitness center

ADJOURN: The meeting adjourned at 8:49 PM

Respectfully submitted by:
Christopher Anderson, Zoning Officer
By listening to the tape of the recorded meeting.