

**BENNER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
November 14, 2013**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Benner Township Planning Commission was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Nate Campbell, Chairman, at the Benner Township Municipal Building.

**ATTENDANCE**

Members present: Nate Campbell, Paul Kurtz, Genevieve Robine, Lee Copper, Willis Houser, and Mike Anthony

Members absent: Jim Swartzell

**MINUTES**

The minutes from the October 10, 2013 meeting were presented for approval. Mr. Anthony made the motion to approve the minutes and Mr. Kurtz seconded the motion.

Vote:	Mrs. Robine-yes	Mr. Kurtz- yes	Mr. Campbell-yes	Mr. Copper-yes
	Mr. Anthony-yes	Mr. Houser-yes		

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

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Zoning Amendment Request: Buffalo Run United Methodist Church**

John Sepp, Penn Terra Engineers, was present to discuss the proposed Amendment.

The Church is requesting an Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to allow churches and daycare facilities within the Airport Industrial Zoning District.

The Buffalo Run United Methodist Church is considering building a new church in Airport Park; this church would be large enough to combine all three of the Methodist Churches in Benner Township: Buffalo Run, Valley View, and Fillmore. The church holds an annual coat drive throughout the winter months and has other events throughout the year, which brings many from the community to the churches. Most of the events are held in the church basements, which does not allow for people of all abilities to access the events.

Mrs. Schoch indicated that if the amendment is approved and adopted, the church will have to go through the Land Development Process.

Mr. Anthony stated that the church will have to stay within the requirements for height restrictions set forth in the Ordinance.

Overall, the Planning Commission felt a church is a good fit and with that, Mrs. Robine made a motion to

recommend including Churches and Daycare Facilities in the Airport Industrial Zoning District to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Anthony seconded the motion.

Vote:           Mrs. Robine-yes           Mr. Kurtz- yes           Mr. Campbell-yes           Mr. Copper-yes  
                  Mr. Anthony-yes           Mr. Houser-yes

## **2. Zoning Amendment Request: Graystone Courts**

John Sepp, Penn Terra Engineers was present to discuss the proposed change to the Zoning Ordinance. He noted that the Age Qualified Housing Zone was created to allow for 55 and over residents, but does not include assisted living facilities, which go hand in hand in some cases.

Mr. Campbell indicated that the change should be made only to the Age Qualified Housing Amendment already established in the Zoning Ordinance and not allow Assisted Living Facilities throughout the entire Highway Commercial Zoning District.

Mrs. Schoch noted she will prepare the amendment, permitting the use within the Age Qualified Housing Zone only.

Mr. Sepp included that the existing parking area on the Development Plan for Graystone Courts will be covered, turning that into a parking garage and the assisted living facility will be built on top of that parking garage.

Mrs. Schoch informed everyone that this will have to be approved through the County's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

All comments were taken into consideration and Mr. Campbell made a motion to recommend including Assisted Living Facilities in the Age Qualified Housing Zone to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Houser seconded the motion.

Vote:           Mrs. Robine-yes           Mr. Kurtz- yes           Mr. Campbell-yes           Mr. Copper-yes  
                  Mr. Anthony-yes           Mr. Houser-yes

## **3. Airport Parking Lot: Plan Review**

Michael Pratt was present to discuss the Airport Parking Lot. He noted that this is not considered a Land Development under the County's SALDO, but the Township wants to see it through, so we are taking the same steps as we would if the plan were considered a land development.

Mr. Pratt gave an overview of the process from the beginning. This included a variance (which was granted) to change the coverage requirement from 40% to 60%, a Conditional Use Approval, discussion on how users will get from the parking lot to the airport (since crossing Fox Hill Road is dangerous and undesirable), and if the Plan will be phased.

Mr. Pratt also discussed the storm water at the location. Since it is adjacent to the University Park Airport, steps had to be taken to ensure water would not stand for a long period of time and trees and

grass would not attract birds. The pipe system is subsurface and they convey all of the storm water into a private bmp, which mechanically cleans storm water.

Mrs. Robine indicated that she is happy to see Best Management Practices being put into place.

Mr. Houser asked how high the fence around the parking lot will be, and Mrs. Robine asked what type of material the fence will be made from

Mr. Pratt answered with a 6 foot high chain link fence, possibly vinyl.

Mrs. Schoch asked about ADA Parking Spaces and where they will be placed, indicating that they are not shown on the plan.

Mr. Pratt said that all of the ADA Parking is satisfied in front of the airport terminal.

Robert Jacobs, Centre County Planning Director, asked who was involved in the process.

Mr. Pratt responded: USDA, DEP, Conservation District, Game Commission, Benner Township, State College Borough Water Authority, PennDOT and the FAA.

The Planning Commission was satisfied with Mr. Pratt's presentation and Mr. Anthony made a motion to recommend approval to the Benner Township Board of Supervisors as long as all permits are obtained. Mr. Kurtz seconded the motion.

Vote:	Mrs. Robine-yes	Mr. Kurtz- yes	Mr. Campbell-yes	Mr. Copper-yes
	Mr. Anthony-yes	Mr. Houser-yes		

#### **4. Benner Township Official Map**

Robert Jacobs, Centre County Planning Director was present to discuss the Official Map Process with the Township Planning Commission.

He prepared the second draft of the set of three maps for the Planning Commission to review.

He began his presentation stating that the University Park Airport is working on an update to their Master Plan; therefore it is an opportune time for the Township to consider the adoption of an Official Map. The Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) allows Municipalities to adopt an Official Map. The Official Map ties into the Comprehensive Plan and other Recreation Plans the Township is a part of.

The Official Map gives the Township the ability to negotiate with potential developers with a timeframe of one year. In that one year time period, the Township can ask the developer to take the property and build what the Township wants, let the developer do what they originally planned to do, or negotiate a purchase of the Plan to the Township from the developer. He went on to say that preparing and adopting the Official Map does not denote a taking, but allows the Township to show a representation of what we want. The Official Map Process should be very public and allow the residents of the Township to give their input.

Mrs. Robine brought up the existing Airport Master Plan and its plans to extend the runway. Her property is included in the runway expansion and has had concerns.

Mr. Jacobs indicated to Mrs. Robine that the public process is very important in the Official Map Process and that is the time to bring up any concerns the public may have with the proposed Map.

Mrs. Robine then asked about the cost of the Official Map.

Mr. Jacobs said there would be no cost to the Township and that the County Planning Office would prepare the Map, but advertising costs would be the responsibility of the Township.

Mr. Copper pointed out that the Grove Road Area on Map is shown differently on all three maps and it should be changed.

Mr. Jacobs said he would tell their GIS Planner to make changes.

Mr. Campbell suggested that the Township Planning Commission wait for the Airport Master Plan to be near completion until we move forward with the Official Map. Mr. Campbell sits on the Airport Master Plan Committee and will bring back any information to the Planning Commission as necessary.

The Planning Commission will take the next few months to review the Official Map and think of anything else they want to see on the Map.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

### **1. Review and Discussion of Permitted and Conditional Uses from October 10, 2013 Meeting.**

Mrs. Schoch provided the Planning Commission with a copy of the Sign Section of the Ordinance and a listing of proposed changes. She asked the Planning Commission to review it and come back to our next meeting with comments.

### **2. Septic Management Ordinance**

There will be more information after the reorganization meeting of 2014. Chuck Herr has given the Township a proposal for him to prepare the Septic Management Ordinance and for him to administer the Ordinance. The Board of Supervisors will be discussing this in more detail in January.

**CORRESPONDENCE: None**

## **NOTES:**

Mrs. Schoch asked the Planning Commission about a question she had from a potential property owner in the Township. He asked about "Agricultural Tourism" and if it is a permitted use within Benner

Township. She indicated that the definition in the Ordinance may allow something like the man is proposing, but wanted to get the input of the Planning Commission since some of the members were here when the Ordinance was being prepared and if this was their intent.

After some discussion, Mrs. Robine and Mr. Campbell both agreed that when the Ordinance was being prepared, that encouraging agricultural based businesses was to be an accessory use to Agriculture.

Mrs. Schoch thanked the Planning Commission and indicated that she would contact the person interested and let him know this outcome.

**ADJOURN**

With all business complete, Mr. Anthony made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lindsay Schoch, Zoning Officer