



BETHEL TOWNSHIP

DELAWARE COUNTY
1092 BETHEL ROAD
GARNET VALLEY, PA 19060

Planning Commission

Louis Torrieri-Chairman
Kenneth Laaken, Jr.-Vice-Chairman
Rebecca DeMuth--Secretary

Phone: (610) 459-1529
Fax: (610) 459-2921

Email: planning.commission@betheltwp.com
www.twp.bethel.pa.us

Paul Battinieri
Giovanna Iacono
Ed Miles
Rajesh Shah
David Tustin

Matthew Houtmann, P.E.
Township Engineer

Laurence L. Smith, Esquire
Planning Commission Solicitor

PLANNING COMMISSION RECORD OF MINUTES March 6, 2019

The Regular Meeting of the BETHEL TOWNSHIP DELAWARE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION was held on Wednesday, March 6, 2019, in the John Myers Building, 1092 Bethel Road, Garnet Valley, PA 19060.

PRESENT:

Lou Torrieri- Chairman	Giovanna Iacono
Ken Laaken, Jr.- Vice Chairman	Paul Battinieri
Larry L. Smith, Esquire	Ed Miles
Raj Shah	Dave Tustin

APOLOGIES:

Matt Houtmann, P.E.

OBSERVERS:

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC, 7

The Regular March 6, 2019 Planning Commission Meeting convened at 7:30 pm.

Chairman requested everyone to please silence all electronic equipment and announced the presence of a recording device for the purpose of minute taking. A copy of the approved minutes will be available on the Bethel Township website.

Lou asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the February 6, 2019 regular meeting. Minutes transcribed from recorder.

Motion: Moved by Ken Laaken, Jr. and seconded by Paul Battinieri to approve the minutes from February 6, 2019 as prepared by the Secretary. Motion carried unanimously.

Lou asked for a motion to approve 5 hours of service for the Planning Commission Secretary, Becca DeMuth, for month of February.

Motion: Moved by Ken Laaken, Jr. and seconded by Giovanna Iacono to approve 5 hours for the Planning Commission Secretary for the month of February. Motion carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Any correspondence will be addressed during the meeting where applicable.

REPORTS:

SEWER AUTHORITY: No Report.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Bethel Township Preservation Society, Judy McCleary:

Judy reported that the Preservation Society will be participating in Elder Week, March 12, 13, and 14, at the Delaware County Community College. Judy detailed that the Preservation Society would be leading four sessions, and she encouraged all 65 and older residents to attend.

Lou reminded everyone that effective as of January 2017, the new Board of Supervisors' policy is that the earliest review of approved plans will be at the succeeding month's Board of Supervisors' meeting. In other words, approved Planning Commission plans will not be reviewed or approved by the Board of Supervisors in the same month that the Planning Commission approves them.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Project PC-2019-1. 3039 Foulk Road, Parking Lot Expansion and Driveway Relocation

The applicant submitted the preliminary plan and overview for parking lot expansion and driveway relocation in February 2019. The Township Engineer has submitted plan review comments, which are available for discussion. Please note the discussion did take place without Township Engineer, Matt Houtmann, who was unable to attend due to a family emergency.

Project Engineer, Chuck Dobson, In Land Design, recognized that they would be able to go through a few things in Matt's absence; however, most comments would need clarification or answers from the Township Engineer.

In the March 4, 2019 letter from GD Houtmann and Sons (Township Engineer), there were three zoning questions to be addressed by the applicant. First, the letter noted that the barn on the property was currently housing a Realtor's office, a secondary commercial use. Given Bethel Township's Zoning Code, a secondary commercial use is not permitted within the C-1 district. The Project Engineer recognized that he does not have the same interpretation of the zoning regulation as the Township Engineer. He then asked for the Planning Commission's thoughts on the matter. Chairman Lou Torrieri recognized that they would like to wait until Matt Houtmann is available to address that concern.

The Project Engineer then moved to a storm water management and grading comment. This comment recognized that Matt Houtmann would like all of the storm water to be dealt with at the front of the property; the current plan has the storm water being diverted to a rain garden in the corner of the property with overflow going to an existing seepage bed in the back of the property. The Project Engineer stated that they completed multiple geotechnical tests that all reflected that the soils on the front of the property would not percolate.

The Project Engineer recognized that they need to meet with Matt Houtmann about potential storm water alternatives. Planning Commission member, Giovanna Iacono, asked if it would be possible to expand existing facilities in the back of the property and create an inlet in the front parking lot to convey storm water to it. The Project Engineer recognized that they had looked at options in the back previously and found that it has very favorable percolation rates, so it is an alternative they are looking at. Chuck Dobson continued by recognizing that Matt Houtmann had requested an as-built survey detailing the existing facilities and the existing storm water infrastructure on the property, as the preliminary plan was based off of design standards.

The second zoning comment recognized that the requirement of the C-1 district, when the property is next to residential homes, is to have a 50-foot buffer. Chuck Dobson stated that there was an existing fence on the property and some heavy vegetation. The letter noted that the plan currently has the driveway coming off of Foulk Road within the required 50-foot buffer. The Project Engineer explained that Dr. Martin, the applicant, currently owns the neighboring property and that if additional buffering would be required they would put it on the adjacent property. Planning Commission member, Ed Miles, questioned if that was the property that Dr. Martin was looking to sell, referring to a conversation that took place at last month's meeting. Chuck Dobson affirmed that it was the property Dr. Martin was looking to sell, in which case, the Planning Commission voiced its discomfort in allowing the buffer to be placed on the neighboring property as the applicant may not be the owner in a few months. They felt that the new property owner would be burdened with a required buffer on their property.

Planning Commission member, Giovanna Iacono, also voiced her concern about site distance from the driveway, if they were to line the property with trees. Chuck Dobson recognized that all buffering would meet the required parameters for site distance. Larry Smith, Planning Commission Solicitor, questioned their thoughts on the buffer on the additional property. The Project Engineer suggested that a covenant or declaration be placed on the deed of the adjacent property, requiring the buffer. Further conversation ensued about the existing buffer with the neighboring property. Ed Miles expressed his discomfort with the suggested buffer and requested that Project Engineer talk to Matt Houtmann about this. The Project Engineer agreed with the request.

The third zoning matter addressed in the Township Engineer's letter discussed what a buffer should look like along these properties with specific mention to trees and a fence. The Project Engineer continued on to mention that most of the comments in the letter are a will-comply. Chuck Dobson went on to summarize those will-comply points including, an updated as-built survey and a Highway Occupancy Permit. He concluded that the discussion probably should not go further without the Township Engineer. He explained that he would meet with Matt Houtmann prior to the next meeting so discussion will be ready for the next meeting.

Planning Commission member, Ed Miles, requested that in the Project Engineer's research he look into what variances have already been placed on this property, given its unique circumstance of being zoned C-1 in a completely residential area. Chuck Dobson agreed. Planning Commission member, Ken Laaken, recognized that in the past, the applicant had stated that there would only be storage in the garage. The Project Engineer acknowledged the comment but established that he was not sure and would look into it.

Giovanna Iacono questioned if the plan's parking calculations for required spaces included the Scott Realty office. The Project Engineer stated that he did not know and that he would look into the calculations. Giovanna Iacono stated that she assumed parking would have to be included for that office, as well, to remain compliant with the Bethel Township Zoning Code.

Chairman Lou Torrieri thanked the Project Engineer for taking the time to address some of their concerns and recognized that they will further discuss the content of the letter at the next meeting.

Following discussion, Planning Commission member, Ken Laaken, informed the Commission that the applicant did turn in all of his green cards, recognizing that all adjacent property owners had been notified of the plan.

2. Project PC-2018-1 2-Lot Subdivision, John Minnebo

Chairman Lou Torrieri gave Project Engineer, Mike Ciocco of Catania Engineering, the floor to discuss PC-2018-1. Mike Ciocco informed the Commission that he had received Matt's most recent letter and that it was pretty clean. He provided insight recognizing that comments revolved around making an adjustment on sheet one of the plan, moving drainage lines on sheet two, and removing the sewer lines on sheet one to make it easier to read. The Project Engineer informed the Commission that all requested changes had been made. He also let the Commission know that Lot One on the plan would be connecting to public water and that he made a note in the plan that the well would be disconnected from the house but would continue to be used for irrigation and other outside uses. He continued on to let the Commission know that they did receive their Highway Occupancy Permit from PennDot and had also received their module back from the Department of Environmental Protection; he included the approval letters in the packet for the Commission. With those comments made, Mike Ciocco, requested a final plan approval. Chairman Lou Torrieri notified the engineer that an extension would need to be signed before the plan could go on to the Board of Supervisors.

Ken Laaken made a motion to recommend final plan approval for Project PC-2018-1 2-Lot Subdivision, John Minnebo, as suggested in the Township Engineer's March 1, 2019 review letter. Ed Miles seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

Ken Laaken made a motion to extend Project PC-2018-1 2-Lot Subdivision, John Minnebo, to June 15th, 2019. Raj Shah seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

Chairman Lou Torrieri informed Mike Ciocco that he would be responsible for contacting the Board of Supervisors to get on their April 10, 2019 meeting. He asked that he bring six final plans for that meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS:

Jim Bradenburg, 1252 Longmeadow Drive, asked if he could get a copy of the Township Engineer's letter to the applicant, following the discussion about Project PC-2019-1. The Planning Commission directed Mr. Bradenburg to file a Right to Know request at the Township Building, and they would be happy to give it to him.

CLOSING COMMENTS:

Lou thanked the Board members and members of the public for attending the meeting.

The next regular Planning Commission meeting will meet on Wednesday, April 3, 2019 at 7:30 pm.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm on a motion by Ed Miles, and seconded by Giovanna Iacono. Motion carried unanimously.

Becca DeMuth/ Planning Commission Secretary
Minutes prepared from recorded device.