

**Benner Township Planning Commission
November 14, 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 Lee Copper, Judson Mantz and Lynn Chaplin were present. Josh Fitz was absent. Staff in attendance were Michael Lesniak and Sharon Royer. The guest list is attached.

MINUTES

The minutes of September 26, 2024, were presented to the Board for their review and approval. Ms. Chaplin noted that her name was spelled incorrectly in the minutes in the location where the vote was taken. Mr. Mantz moved to approve the minutes with the correction of Ms. Chaplin's name spelling. Mr. Houser seconded the motion.

Vote: Ms. Chaplin – yes	Mr. Houser – yes	Mr. Fitz - absent
Mr. Copper – yes	Mr. Mantz – yes	

PERSONS TO ADDRESS THE BOARD

Cindy Carola – PA Game Commission North Central Office Land Development Plan: Cindy Carola from the HUNT Engineering firm was present to go over the land development plan for the new North Central Game Commission Office. Also joining Ms. Carola were Pete Myers from her firm, Austin Kieffer from the PA Game Commission and Benjamin Cassidy from the Pennsylvania Department of General Services. It was noted that the site is mainly a meadow currently with a small gravel parking area right off I-99 along Shiloh Road. There will be an administrative building built, an auxiliary building, staff parking and visitor parking. Renderings from the architectural firm were shared with the Planning Commission that offered different viewpoints of the property with the buildings shown on them. Ms. Carola noted that the Centre County Planning Commission has reviewed their plans and that most of the comments that they had have been satisfied. Mr. Franson, township engineer, has also reviewed the plans and offered his comments which have also been satisfied except for the NPDES approval being received. It was noted that they are waiting for the NPDES approvals to satisfy all the County's remaining comments. Mr. Houser questioned where the water for the building's use will come from. Ms. Carola noted that a domestic water well has been drilled near the future location of the auxiliary building and has been tested. A geothermal heating system will be installed near the staff parking area. The sewer will be handled by Spring Benner Walker Joint Authority with the Shiloh Road sewer line extension. Electric and telephone lines will also be extended to the site. Mr. Lesniak noted that due to existing laws, the Game Commission is exempt from complying with most local regulations but has been cooperating with the County and Township with almost everything. Mr. Lesniak stated that his comments on parking have been addressed, his remaining comments deal with lighting. Ms. Carola noted that the lights will comply with the dark sky requirements in the Spring Creek Overlay Ordinance. Mr. Mantz moved to recommend approval of the PA Game Commission North Central Office Land Development Plan. Mr. Copper seconded the motion.

Vote: Ms. Chaplin – yes	Mr. Houser – yes	Mr. Fitz - absent
Mr. Copper – yes	Mr. Mantz – yes	

Matt Harlow – ELA Group/Harvest Meadows Phase II: Mr. Harlow noted that he was present to review Phase II of the Harvest Meadows Plan. Phase I consisted of 133 single family townhome units, of which approximately 2/3 of them have been constructed. Phase II will offer a second access on to Fillmore Road and will have 30 single family detached lots as well as 5 townhome units. This phase will also have an auxiliary parking lot built for overflow parking. Mr. Harlow noted that they have addressed the first round of comments from the County Planning Commission and

are still awaiting comments from Mr. Franson and Mr. Lesniak. Mr. Lesniak questioned if the roadway will be extended the entire way from Phase 2 to Phase 1. (Phase 3 is located in between these two phases.) Mr. Harlow indicated that the area will be almost level, but that it will not be paved or opened to traffic. He indicated that the auxiliary parking lot will act as the turning around point for that part of the phase and at the other end of the phase a hammerhead turn around will be installed. It was noted that a condition of this phase being approved is the roadway improvements to Fox Hill Road and Fillmore Road must be completed. Mr. Harlow noted that the permits for the roadway improvements have been submitted to PennDot and it is hoped that they will be constructed in 2025 once the weather breaks. Ms. Chaplin moved to recommend approval of Harvest Meadows Phase II. Mr. Copper seconded the motion.

Vote: Ms. Chaplin – yes
Mr. Copper – yes

Mr. Houser – yes
Mr. Mantz – yes

Mr. Fitz - absent

Daye Palmer – Conditional Use Request – Townhomes in the Commercial District: Mr. Palmer noted that he is attending this evening representing Yingst Homes, Inc. He indicated that Yingst Homes, Inc. is the developer of Logan Greene development, and that part of that subdivision plan requirement was to come up with a solution to keep traffic from going through the existing Amberleigh Development to get back out to the Benner Pike. The developer has purchased the commercial lot that surrounds the Penn State Federal Credit Union and plans to construct an extension of Valentine Hill Road through this lot and connect it to Amberleigh Lane so traffic can then enter the Benner Pike at the Amberleigh Lane traffic light. He indicated that his purpose for attending tonight is that they would like to utilize the remaining lot area to construct townhomes. It was noted that this parcel is zoned Commercial. Commercial uses were looked at, but it was determined that residential uses on the remaining parcel would probably fit the existing neighborhood better. A sketch plan was shown to the Planning Commission indicating where 24 townhome units and an auxiliary parking lot could be built. It was noted that townhomes are allowed by Conditional Use in the Commercial zoning district.

Mr. Lesniak noted that the first time that townhomes were allowed by conditional use in the Commercial District was for the Bella Rose Development. It was designed for small lots that have less than ideal access for commercial businesses. He noted that if this Conditional Use isn't allowed that uses such as a garage, storage units or such could be built. Board members agreed that they felt that townhomes would be a better fit for the area instead of commercial uses. Mr. Palmer noted as shown that each of the townhomes would have their own fee simple lot.

Mr. Copper made a motion to recommend to the Board of Supervisors that Townhomes be considered favorable on this commercially zoned lot by Conditional Use. Ms. Chaplin seconded the motion.

Vote: Ms. Chaplin – yes
Mr. Copper – yes

Mr. Houser – yes
Mr. Mantz – yes

Mr. Fitz - absent

ADJOURNMENT

Being no further business, Mr. Mantz moved to adjourn the meeting the time being 7:22 p.m. Ms. Chaplin seconded the motion.

Vote: Ms. Chaplin – yes
Mr. Copper – yes

Mr. Houser – yes
Mr. Mantz – yes

Mr. Fitz - absent



Sharon Royer, Recording Secretary

Benner Township Planning Commission

November 14, 2024 - 7:00 p.m.

Sign in Sheet

(Please Print)

Name

Address

MATT HARLOW
Natalie Hatch

ELA GROUP, INC
Penn State

Nandini Samghini
Dave Palmer

Penn State
Valentine Hill Road

PATE MYERS

HUNT ENGINEERING CO.

CINDY CAROLA

" " "

AUSTIN KIEFFER

PGC

BENJAMIN D. CASSIDY

PA DGS