

BERKS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
BERKS COUNTY SERVICES CENTER
633 COURT STREET, 14TH FLOOR.
READING, PA 19601-4309

September 13, 2023

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Jodi L. Gauker called the monthly meeting of the Berks County Planning Commission to order at 3:00 p.m. The meeting was held on Wednesday, September 13, 2023, as a virtual meeting using the platform Microsoft Teams.

The following members were present:

Jodi L. Gauker, Chairwoman
Christopher J. Spohn, Vice Chair
Glenn R. Knoblauch
James C. McCarthy, P.E.
Thomas C. McKeon, AICP, CEcD
David H. Turner
Miguel A. Herrera
David N. Peris, Assistant County Solicitor

Also Attending:

David N. Hunter, Sr., AICP, Executive Director
Ashley J. Showers, Assistant Director
Beth Burkovich, GIS Analyst
Michael D. Golembiewski, Transportation Modeler
Taylor Lawrence, Planner II
Laura Mursch, Intergovernmental Planner III
Alan D. Piper, Transportation Planner III
Richard L. Royer, Design Planner
Matthew McCough, Transportation Planner III
Michelle Franklin, Subdivision Planner III
Shanice Ellison, Planner I
Cheryl Auchenbach, Community Planner III
Devon Hain, Transportation Planner II
Amanda Timochenko, Transportation Planner II
Jeremy Zaborowski, Berks County Industrial Development Authority
Heather Berger, Information Systems
Derek Harris, Economic Development Coordinator
Deb Millman, Greater Reading Chamber Alliance
Carl Long, County IS
Melissa Lewis, County IS
Ryan Rhode, Lenhartsville Borough Engineer

Cody McCuean, Representative COLE Subdivision Plan
Sarah Phillips, Irish Creek
M. Lynn, COLE Subdivision
Jaime Perez, County Redevelopment Authority
Emily Wangolo, Director County Ag Department

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

3. REPORT OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

A. Executive Director's Report

David Hunter began his report by reviewing some resolutions to be voted on in the consent agenda for today. The first resolution discussed was the Leesport Borough and Ontelanee Township Berks County Comprehensive Plan Amendment Request. The second resolution discussed was regarding the addition of the former Exide Technologies in Laureldale Borough/Muhlenberg Township to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Superfund National Priorities (NPL) List.

Executive Director Hunter also invited everyone to attend the PSATS Solar Workshop being held on October 11th from 8:30am – Noon at South Campus in Mohnton, PA. Mr. Hunter also stated that the staff will delay the release of the Planning's solar advice handout until after the Solar Workshop due to additional information that may be discussed at the Solar Workshop. Mr. Hunter noted that after attending the Solar Workshop and gathering any additional information, the staff will present the proposed advice to the County Commissioners. Following the County Commissioners presentation, the solar advice handout will be released to the municipalities and development community. Mr. Hunter also invited everyone to attend the Commissioner's Public Hearing being held on October 5th for the Leesport Borough and Ontelaunee Township County Comprehensive Plan Amendment request.

Mr. Hunter also discussed the upcoming conferences for the Pennsylvania Planning Association and the Pennsylvania Economic Association that are available for everyone to attend. Mr. Hunter asked Ashley Showers to share some of the updates on EV Workshop session with Met-Ed/First Energy, and DEP. Ms. Showers went on to share some of the information provided at the EV Workshop. She stated that the outreach session was for the municipalities. Ms. Showers explained that Met-Ed stated that they know that electric vehicle technology is here and will be expanding, and that municipalities should coordinate with Met-Ed to support the expansion of the technology. Ms. Showers also shared the next upcoming virtual sessions available with DEP. Additionally, Ms. Showers shared that there is a MS4 training for municipalities on October 12th at Berks Nature and that a flyer will be provided if anyone wants to circulate.

In conclusion, Mr. Hunter shared the next BCPC Meeting will be held in person on October 12th at 3pm in the Planning Commission's Library.

B. STAFF REPORTS

a. Michelle Franklin
Lenhartsville Borough – Cole Lot Consolidation

This plan was presented for formal approval by the Berks County Planning Commission due to Lenhartsville Borough not having their own subdivision and land development ordinance. The proposed subdivision plan is for a lot consolidation. The property owners have two adjacent properties they wish to make into one lot by deleting the internal property line. The plan is consistent with the County's subdivision and land development ordinance and the County's Comprehensive Plan. The final recommendation is for the approval of the plan due to its consistency with the County's Comprehensive Plan and County Subdivision Ordinance.

b. Michelle Franklin
New Morgan PRD

The land development plan was submitted as a tentative plan for a Planned Residential Development (PRD). It is consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan, although there is a disagreement on it being a PRD, but ultimately it is up to the Municipalities' zoning requirements. There were 36 comments made in the review letter. Some comments were about concerns with environmental issues with the lake in the middle of the property as well as the presence of Hay Creek that they will have to take into consideration when building. There may be additional stormwater watershed calculations that may be accounted for as the development is in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The main access to the property will be via Rt. 10. The secondary access to the site is also of concern and was reflected in the review letter.

Discussion ensued regarding the plan, comments, and concerns on the New Morgan Planned Residential Development review letter.

Ontelaunee Township Willow Creek Residential Plan

The land development plan is still under review, but it consists of 109 single family homes and 115 townhomes. It is being proposed in two phases, the single-family homes will be phase 1 and the townhomes will be phase 2. The townhome section has a concern with access. The plan has main access along Snyder Road and an emergency access and cul-de-sac off site that goes onto Rt. 222 which will need a Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP) and proof that they do have the emergency access. The County's Comprehensive Plan has it listed as a future growth area and

environmental hazard since Willow Creek runs through the property. Staff noted that section of Willow Creek is a high-quality designated stream.

Discussion ensued regarding the plan and some clarification was requested on the environmental hazard since that section of Willow Creek is a high-quality designated area.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of August 9, 2023, Minutes
- B. Planning Commission Memorandum and Resolution to County Commissioners for Ontelanunee Township Comprehensive Amendment Request
- C. Planning Commission Letter and Resolution Endorsing Exide Site being placed on Superfund National Priorities List
- D. Cole Lot Consolidation Plan Review Letter for Lenhartsville Borough
- E. Reports for Approval
 - Land Development & Subdivision Activity Report/Summary
 - Endorsed Land Development & Subdivision Activity
 - New Housing Units & Non-Residential Activity for 1st Quarter of 2023

MOTION: Jim McCarthy made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by David H. Turner and passed unanimously.

5. STAFF, STAKEHOLDER AND BOARD MEMBERS REPORTS

A. Michael Golembiewski-Census 2020 Overview

Mr. Golembiewski started his report by reviewing the last discussion on the Census 2020 two years ago and the data that was collected. The results of the Census 2020 were released later than usual due to COVID-19. The data showed that overall population growth in Pennsylvania from 2010 to 2020 has decreased compared to the previous years. The largest municipalities that showed significant growth were mostly suburbs and rural areas; 26 out of 72 municipalities had significant growth in Berks County. Berks County as a whole has become increasingly diverse, and the growth of Latinos and multiple races has increased. The workforce in Berks County, population from the ages of 18 to 64, has stagnated. The elderly population has grown over the years but the numbers of children in the County has decreased. The number of school age children has also decreased over the years. The data also showed the decrease from Census 2010 to Census 2020 of household numbers and decrease in housing units. School Districts should be cognizant of lower numbers of youth and plan accordingly. Workforce development efforts should include increasing the number of persons able to work. Providers of services to the elderly will continue to have increasing demands for their services.

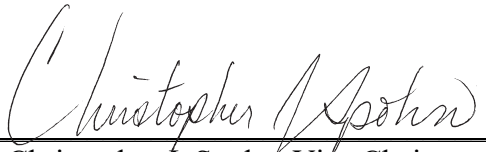
Discussion ensued on the great presentation conducted by Michael Golembiewski on the Census 2020 overview. A point was made by Tom McKeon for this presentation to be shared and put on the website for people to access, to get this information out there.

6. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Glenn R. Knoblauch made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:08p.m. The motion was seconded by David H. Turner and Tom McKeon.



Jodi L. Gauker, Chairwoman



Christopher J. Spohn, Vice Chairman