



# Memo

4225 Easton Avenue  
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 18020  
610.814.6441 (office)  
610.814.6445 (fax)  
[njones@bethlehemtwp.com](mailto:njones@bethlehemtwp.com)

To: Honorable Members of the Bethlehem Township Board of Commissioners  
Melissa Shafer, Township Manager

From: Nathan D. Jones, AICP, BCO Director of Planning and Economic Development

Date: September 14th, 2016

Re: Planning, Zoning and Construction Departmental Report

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## Departmental Activities:

-The Bethlehem Township Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee convened September 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM to review draft plan documents and provide comments. These comments shall be compiled and included into future drafts in preparation for forthcoming meetings.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 6th beginning at 6:30 PM at the Township Municipal Building. This session shall be continued review of the draft plan. Additionally, on October 20<sup>th</sup>, the Comprehensive Plan Committee plans to host an open house session to present the draft plan, its main points and attempt to receive greater public feedback.

## Recent Submissions:

**-Please note: the Planning Commission shall meet on September 26th at 7PM.**

-The Backstage Library Works in LVIP IV has submitted a Site Plan for review to the Planning Commission for an addition to their building.

-Bethlehem Plaza has submitted a Modification of Plan to the existing development to enhance and enlarge the driveway/ entrance to the commercial site that was recommended for approval by the Planning Commission. The proposal is now before the Board of Commissioners for consideration and action.

-McDonald's on Route 191 has submitted for modifications to the approved development again to comply with PennDOT HOP requirements. The proposal is now before the Board of Commissioners for consideration and action.

-Traditions of America Planned Residential Golf Course Community is tabled and in administrative review before the Bethlehem Township Planning Commission.

### **Major Project Updates:**

-Master site planned **Madison Farms** remains active & under construction with work underway on commercial building fit outs and apartments. Phase Two residential work is expected to commence in the near future following passage of the recent phasing plan. The other recent approval of the West Village MOB and restaurant modification has begun construction.

Additionally, work has begun on the pedestrian and bike trail at the west end of the development. This trail will eventually connect with the Bethlehem Township Community Center. Residents in Wagner Farms have noted construction activities and tree clearing have led to concerns about loss of privacy. Township Staff are working with residents and KRE to find solutions to these concerns. To date, it appears more intense evergreen planting buffers are a viable option.

Also of note are several complaints and concerns the Township has received about a well which has been dug at the Madison Farms site. The well, which has been on all iterations of the development's plans since original submission and is part of the final approved and recorded plan, is designed to pump water into the most southerly wet basin should the water level drop too low. The basin is also the source of on-site irrigation for Madison Farms landscaping.

After consulting with the Township Engineer, staff has been advised that it appears the well did not trigger the need for additional permits or review by the DEP or Delaware River Basin Commission. Again, the well is only for supplemental purposes and utilized if basin levels drop below a prescribed point. Residents who have noted concerns on this matter have been advised by staff to the outcome of the inquiry.

-**Birchwood Commons** site work and apartment construction is underway. The Board of Commissioners granted permission for indemnification and other agreements to be signed for building permits to be issued prior to plan recording, as such the Department has released building permits for four of the apartment buildings, to date. The applicant continues to work with PENNDOT to address traffic concerns in order to gain an HOP for the project. Improvements at the intersection of Freemansburg Avenue and 12<sup>th</sup> Street (proposed extension) are the focal point of these discussions while construction continues ahead.

Additionally, the Applicant is currently reviewing and addressing stormwater and site run off matters at the direction of the Township and County Conservation District. The Applicant has been notified that all stormwater and run off matters must be addressed under the authority of the site's NPDES permit.

-**William Penn Commons** has seen little site planning or management activity since it was determined that the approved plan remains protected under the Governor's Permit Extension Act until July, 2017.

-**St. Luke's Hospital Anderson Campus** has begun construction of the Medical Office Building "MOB" on the site and plans to complete streetscape enhancements in the coming weeks. The Hospital has requested an extension for completion of the streetscape enhancements in order to plant in the proper timeframe and weather, further documentation on this request is in this month's meeting agenda packets.

-**Mill Creek Corporate Center** has submitted a Phase One Preliminary Plan of the proposed professional campus just north of the PennDOT Park and Ride. The Planning Commission reviewed a brief presentation on the project several months ago and provided feedback to the applicants and tabled the Plan. Further design review for matters involving the Township Overlay Districts, stormwater management and traffic management are necessary for the plans to progress. This site design has been taken into account with the overall William Penn Highway Corridor Traffic Study currently underway via the Township Engineer and PennDOT.

-**The Chrin- V7 Site** appears to be of interest once again since initial sketch plan submission two years ago. A pre-application meeting was held with the prospective applicants to address ordinance requirements. The site has also been taken into account with the Township Engineer for the overall William Penn Highway Corridor Traffic Study currently under review with PennDOT. Another pre-application meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, September 21<sup>st</sup>.

-**8030 William Penn Highway/ Gerber Collision** has begun site work at the new facility location. Building permits are being finalized with the Department, full construction is expected to start shortly.

-**Old Dominion Freight** remains under construction on Brodhead Road. The Township has received several complaints that temporary trench restoration at the site has not been adequate, causing concerns for motorists. The developers have been notified and will be repaving starting Friday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

-**Meyer Lane Apartments** has begun construction work at the project location on Falmer Drive and Meyer Lane. This project was approved some time ago and is now commencing with construction. The project will consist of two apartment buildings and associated amenities.

-**Bethlehem Area Vocational Technical School "Skills Hill"** subdivision is currently underway with construction of site work as allowed under state law and via an indemnification agreement with the Township. While site work is under way, several complaints have been made regarding site run off and stormwater that are being addressed by the Township and the Northampton County Conservation District.

For updates on any other plan submissions, project status or information; please do not hesitate to contact me with questions or concerns.

Respectfully submitted,



Nathan D. Jones, AICP, BCO  
Director of Planning and Economic Development  
Bethlehem Township, PA