

**BETHLEHEM TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING  
FEBRUARY 27, 2017**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mrs. Snover called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. The following members were present: Leslie Walker, Harold Powell, Kenn Edinger, Mark Grandinetti, Jim Daley and Lee Snover. Also present were Wendy Nicolosi, Township Solicitor, Anthony Tallarida, Township Engineer, Nathan Jones, Planning Director and Laura Zapata, Recording Secretary.

Member Absent: Don Wright

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Daley made a motion, seconded by Mr. Powell, to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2017 regular public meeting of the Planning Commission as presented. The motion carried by a 6-0 vote.

**COURTESY OF THE FLOOR**

Mrs. Snover stated she would take general comments during “Courtesy of the Floor” on anything that does not deal with the agenda; however, anyone with specific, technical questions on an agenda item should wait until that agenda item is discussed to offer their comments or questions.

There were no questions or comments during Courtesy of the Floor.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

Mrs. Snover noted the correspondence as listed on the Planning Commission agenda of February 27, 2017 and asked that any member of the Planning Commission that did not receive any of the correspondence to please contact staff.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- **MEYER LANE APARTMENTS, CAHIL PROPERTIES, MODIFICATION OF FINAL PLAN**

Bob Cahil, Cahil Properties explained that changes in the plan include additional garages in lieu of lot spaces, a dog area, propane fueled fire pit and grills, ornamental fencing and piers and enhanced signage. He said elevators have been installed. Mr. Cahil said that extra money was spent for quality.

Mrs. Snover said there were all enhancements discussed in the comprehensive plan and was in favor of them. Mr. Walker was concerned about shortage of parking spaces. Mr. Cahil said 2 spaces are needed per unit. He said garages would all be the same size and attractive curbing would be installed. Mr. Walker asked if on street parking was permitted. Mr. Jones said it is permitted. Mr. Cahil added that several doggie waste stations would be installed. Mr. Daley said he is concerned that on street parking means that they applicant may not have sufficient parking spaces on the property.

Barry Roth, 4323 Chetwin Terrace

Mr. Roth stated that parking on Falmer Drive should not be permitted as it makes the street narrow. He asked the members to consider visiting the street to see the parking situation.

Mr. Edinger asked if the Police Department had any comments concerning on street parking. Mr. Jones said on street parking is not prohibited on that part of Falmer Drive and that the plan had met international safety codes. Mrs. Snover commented that just a few spaces were needed for overflow. Mr. Edinger said he is concerned that when the Bulldogs have games, there wouldn't be enough on street parking on Meyer Lane and Falmer Drive. Mr. Jones said that this area complies with the Smart Growth District which allows some level of on street parking. Mr. Daley feels that parking on the street would be used as a last resort.

Mr. Edinger said he is concerned that the garages would be used for storage and not parking and asked who would monitor the use. Mr. Cahil said he is speaking with Self Storage about additional storage for tenants. Mr. Walker asked if this would impact stormwater. Anthony Tallarida, Township Engineer said it would not change the run off. Mr. Edinger asked if the fire pit is permissible. Mr. Jones said it is contingent upon the Fire Marshal's approval.

A motion was made by Mr. Walker to approve the Meyer Lane Apartments, Cahil Properties, Modification of Final Plan based on the February 13, 2017 Township Engineer's review letter and contingent upon the Fire Marshal's approval. The motion was seconded by Mr. Daley and passed unanimously.

- **DUTT TRACT, JERC PARTNERS XVII, LP, SKETCH PLAN- WITHDRAWN**

Mr. Jones stated that the applicant wants to meet with the township first before presenting the sketch plan.

- **DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PORPOERTY REZONING REQUESTS REVIEW & DISCUSSION**

Several members of the community addressed the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee and Planning Commission with specific requests for changes in zoning to their properties as part of the planning process. The Board and Committee both took requests under advisement. Mr. Jones said he will set up a meeting with Becky Bradley of the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission.

Mr. Walker suggested that the members consider the requests.

**1. To rezone the lots at the intersection of Christian Springs Road and Nazareth Pike/Rt. 191 from Neighborhood Enhancement Overlay to the Commercial Enhancement Overlay. This request came from a land owner in this area who noted that he would like the zoning to match all of the areas other lots.**

Mrs. Snover said that the gentleman who owns the car dealership would like to utilize the lot for ancillary lots as it is in the General Commercial District. She said that the residents have a hard time selling their homes as a result of the car dealership. Mr. Walker said he doesn't want the lot to be used for cars. Mr. Jones said property is not zoned to have an outside business.

Barry Roth, 4323 Chetwin Terrace

Mr. Roth believes that Christian Spring Road and Route 191 is becoming an accident spot and feels the dealership may be in violation of too many cars parked on the property.

Mr. Daley said the only alternative is to recommend a zoning change. Once there is a plan presented, they can address the issues. Mr. Jones suggested strong buffering between the lots and homes, larger than normal and special lighting.

Solicitor Nicolosi cautioned the members to be careful not to spot zone but to rezone to include the surrounding areas. She also mentioned that once an area is rezoned, the township no longer has control. Mrs. Snover said it is a huge rezoning for one applicant. Solicitor Nicolosi said there would have to be enough area to not spot zone. Mr. Walker said the applicant would have to go before the Zoning Hearing Board for relief. Mrs. Snover said she would not be in favor of rezoning.

Solicitor Nicolosi said the perhaps another overlay could be created that went only a certain distance from a major artery but event then you would have to be careful of spot zoning. She said more research would be needed to determine the legality of a density variance should the members agree. Mr. Jones said that perhaps the language could be adjusted keeping the best interest on the township. Solicitor Nicolosi said perhaps a conditional use with very specific criteria.

**2. St. Luke's University Healthcare Network has requested consideration of modifying the Town Center District east of Route 33 and south of Freemansburg Avenue. While the land was originally planned to have a mixed-use lifestyle center, St. Luke's has taken ownership of the land and has requested consideration for greater latitude of uses including some healthcare or medical industry/science uses somewhere on the land.**

Mrs. Snover commented that she doesn't want the property to become all hospital. Mr. Jones suggested medical in partnership with the hospital or ancillary. Mr. Edinger added not institutional where it would make it tax exempt. Mr. Jones said it would remain a Town Center District. Solicitor Nicolosi said with a large property and without a plan she would be reluctant to make a zoning change. Mr. Edinger said to let them come forward with a plan.

Barry Roth, 4323 Chetwin Terrace

Mr. Roth asked if there was a way to make the acreage taxable and feels the township is being shortchanged. Mrs. Snover said it would be taxable as it is a Town Center District.

Mr. Walker said there are benefits to having a hospital in the township such as giving big donations to children's causes and providing high paying jobs. Until a plan is submitted, they should not take any action. Mr. Daley said the property will be ratable.

**3. Mixed-Use Overlay District land owners requested a modification to allow uses in this overlay zone currently not allowed, specifically: gas refueling stations. The Committee discussed how this may have been an anticipated allowed use in a session of zoning revisions several years ago that did not actually come to fruition. The changed would be a text amendment.**

Mrs. Snover mentioned that gas refueling was allowed in the Overlay District although it was not specifically mentioned in the language. She said she remembers the change as she voted on it and that perhaps it can be formalized. Mr. Walker stated that zoning allows for a service station. Mr. Edinger stepped down as Secretary and proceeded to comment. He asked for a text change in the zoning ordinance to allow convenience stores with a fueling station. Mrs. Snover agreed.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW**

- **NANCY RUN ESTATES, PHASES 7- 10, FINAL PLAN-NO NEW SUBMISSION MADE**

**PLANNING DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Mr. Jones said the Comprehensive Plan needs to be adopted. Solicitor Nicolosi said they can begin working on an ordinance adopting it. Mr. Walker asked that the revised ordinance show the mark up version and see it in text. Mr. Edinger said he never got a copy of the codified ordinances in the past. He said things would be changed and wouldn't know until after it was passed. Mr. Edinger said he would like to see the ordinance before it becomes law. Solicitor Nicolosi said they shouldn't be passed without a recommendation from the board. She said she will make an effort to notify the members well in advance.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Edinger made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:53 PM p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Daley and carried unanimously.

**NEXT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

Monday, March 27, 2017 – Regular Public Meeting

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Zapata  
Recording Secretary

Nathan D. Jones  
Director of Planning