

**HELLAM TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
Minutes of February 9, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman Devin Winand. The meeting was held at the Hellam Township Municipal Building. Chairman Winand led the Pledge of Allegiance. Other members present were, Christopher Altland, John Eifert, Rick Cooper, Jay Kokiko, Susan Enrico (alternate) and Michael Shillott. Other attendees included Rachel Vega, Zoning Officer, Corina Mann, Township Manager, Steve Fetrow, alternate and William Conaway, Supervisor.

Approval of Minutes

The Planning Commission reviewed draft minutes from the January 12, 2023 meeting. Mr. Eifert asked the additional language of "due to the potential impacts to the area" added to the first paragraph on page two after "(YCPC)." Upon a motion by Mr. Shillott, seconded by Mr. Kokiko, the Planning Commission approved the minutes with the above-mentioned change. Motion carried unanimously.

New Business

Z-2023-4 Benton/Fisher Variance Request for 4079 Deerhill Drive

Kent Rafensberger from Johnston and Associates along with the property owners, Zane Benton and Tracy Fisher presented their variance application. This parcel was created in 1984 as a single-family dwelling lot. This predated the Steep Slope Overlay Zone. The property owners would like to construct a new single-family dwelling and driveway which would encroach on slopes greater than 25%. Section 490-21.F(1)(a) does not allow disturbance of slopes greater than 25%.

Mr. Eifert asked for clarification of the shading on the plan and how steep the slopes are if they are over 25%. The dark shaded areas are over 25% and the light shaded areas are 15-25%. The average slope of the dark shaded area is 30-33%. Mr. Winand began an extensive conversation regarding relocating the dwelling to a less sloped part of the property. Due to the slopes and soil there is minimal area suitable for infiltration for the septic system and stormwater management. Lot coverage must also be considered because moving the dwelling would create additional impervious area for a longer driveway. The proposed location has the least impact to the steep slopes on the property. Moving the dwelling to the rear of the property would still require a deep cut into the slopes to get a driveway to the dwelling. This would also require the removal of additional trees. Both issues would create more stormwater. Mr. Shillott mentioned comments regarding stormwater issues that were sent in by a neighbor who was not present. The property owners will manage the stormwater in accordance with the new Stormwater Management Ordinance which requires stormwater be managed so no additional stormwater leaves the property post development. Sediment will be controlled with appropriate erosion and sediment control measures during construction. Post construction, the property will be permanently stabilized with vegetation.

Mr. Fetrow asked if the applicant looked at the lot coverage on the property so they do not have to come back with an additional variance request. The permitted lot coverage is 15%. For a one acre parcel they are permitted 6,534 square feet of impervious coverage. The dwelling is 1,600 square feet plus the driveway. The applicant feels they are within the permitted 15% lot coverage.

Mr. Cooper asked how stormwater will be controlled so it does not run off onto Deerhill Drive. The roof area will be collected and piped to a seepage pit. The driveway will also be directed to a seepage pit. There is an option to add amended soils to the front yard to further promote infiltration. Mr. Cooper further added that with the steep slopes on the property, this will increase the velocity of the stormwater. Mr. Rafensberger responded that they are required to control the 100 year storm which is about seven to eight inches of rain in a 24 hour period. The Stormwater Ordinance already requires oversized stormwater management facilities. There was a discussion about possibly putting a berm in the front yard to further slow down the run off.

Upon a motion by Mr. Shillott, seconded by Mr. Cooper, the Planning Commission recommends approval of Z-

2023-4, variance request from Section 490-21.F(1)(a) to permit disturbance of steep slopes with a grade over 25% at 4079 Deerhill Drive with the condition that an additional Best Management Practice (BMP) such as a berm be added to the front yard to decrease the velocity of the stormwater. Motion carried 6-1 (Mr. Eifert dissenting).

Hellam Township Vision Statement

Mr. Shillott began by reading a lengthy vision statement that he prepared and provided to Chairman Winand. He would like to see a trail system and promote eco-tourism. He would also like to promote business that support eco-tourism. Revising the Zoning Ordinance to add additional zones and reduce the permitted uses in each zone would also help refine appropriate uses for each zone. The Township should also look at affordable housing. He would like the Township to match the vision of the preservation areas. Ms. Katina Snyder asked what types of businesses should be promoted and where they should be encouraged. Mr. Shillott was thinking small shops and hotels in higher density areas like Hallam and Wrightsville Boroughs.

Mr. Owens submitted a written vision statement prior to the meeting. He would also like to promote ecotourism with a focus on protecting and promoting the unique natural and historical features in the Township while discouraging high impact commercial developments. The rural character of the Township should be maintained to keep from becoming highly developed like the municipalities to the east and west.

Mr. Winand would like to focus on DCNR's state park, Lancaster County Conservancy and Susquehanna Heritage properties. There is lots of money for investment in ecotourism. Fourteen billion dollars is spent in recreation tourism in Pennsylvania. He would like to preserve agriculture, open space and woodlands. Each of the municipalities involved in the regional comprehensive plan are equally important. The Boroughs could give the region a main street setting.

Mr. Altland would like to preserve agricultural land and woodlands for recreation as well as addressing the Township's stormwater problems.

Mrs. Enrico values historic preservation. We live in a unique area in close proximity to Gettysburg. There is a great deal of history with the civil war through our area. She would also like to address pollution.

Mr. Eifert values preserving the natural features that the surrounding municipalities have lost. He would like to see forward thinking planning so we don't end up looking like Springettsbury Township. Forty years ago, Springettsbury Township looked like Hellam Township.

Mr. Kokiko is concerned about increasing the tax base. The boroughs are built out and the Township has so much land in conservation now. If we don't allow businesses to come in that will increase the tax base we will have to raise taxes. Mr. Fetrow is also concerned about the tax base but likes ecotourism and thinks the 2,500 acres of preserved land will attract people. He would like to see amenities like camping and hiking. Mr. Eifert stated that to increase the tax base with business we would need one with a large footprint. There is some space available in the Township. He would like to see more medical facilities or campuses that would bring better jobs to the Township.

Michael Leahy of 957 Whitetail Lane expressed his concerns with all the preserved land being open to the public. His property backs up to Wizard Ranch. He is worried that bringing in additional people for recreation will create issues with trespassing and could bring in child molesters. He will also not be able to use his target range if people are walking in the park land that is behind his house.

Susan Kostalas of 5843 River Drive was at the last Board of Supervisors meeting to express her concerns with the park land. She has the same concerns as Mr. Leahy but knows these problems already exist. There are people in the land getting drunk and sometimes hunting.

Lee Stoltzfus of 591 N. Front Street asked if people can have concession stands throughout the park. Mr. Winand feels it could be a possibility but it is a discussion to have with Lancaster Conservancy or Susquehanna Heritage. They are just beginning the development stages for the park.

There were additional discussion regarding putting out surveys to the residents for their input. They also discussed how the preserved land is taxed. There is fear that having all this preserved land will greatly decrease the tax base but it was pointed out that the tax income from these properties before they were purchased by preservation was very low. It was agreed that everyone would put their vision in writing and submit it to Mr. Winand who will present it to the Board of Supervisors.

Correspondence/Reports

Ms. Vega presented the January Zoning Report.

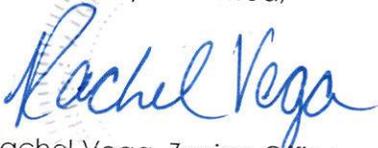
Supervisor Conaway provided the Planning Commission with an article regarding the cost of community services and a status of the land in Hellam Township. The cost of community services is generally consistent throughout. The average estimated cost for residential uses is \$1.15-1.50 per \$1.00; \$0.35-0.65 per \$1.00 for commercial/industrial uses and; \$0.30-0.50 per \$1.00 for agricultural uses. The document outlining the status of the land in Hellam Township shows what is available in each zone. All of this information should be looked at in the regional comprehensive plan process. It can help with the tax base issue by looking at places to promote business. Once we get a map of the public sewer line, we can use that as well since businesses should be connected to public sewer.

Ongoing Business

The list of ongoing business does not have a timeline. At the next Planning Commission meeting we will discuss short-term rentals and accessory dwelling units. Mr. Winand and Mr. Fetrow will be the liaisons for this item. Mr. Shillott and Mr. Cooper volunteered to head the solar issue. Mrs. Milsom and Mr. Eifert volunteered to lead the fee-in-lieu of curbing and sidewalks issue. Once the Planning Commission makes it through these items, we will look at liaisons for the Riverland Zone.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Rachel Vega, Zoning Officer