



Memo

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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: October 12th, 2016
Re: Planning, Zoning and Construction Departmental Report

Departmental Activities:

-The Bethlehem Township Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee convened October 6th 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 a full Open House Session to meet with residents and other interested parties as the Draft Plan to date is unveiled. The Open House is scheduled for October 19th beginning at 6:30 PM at the Township Municipal Building. All members of the public are invited to attend and participate! Refreshments will be served.

Recent Submissions:

-Please note: the Planning Commission shall meet on October 24th at 7PM.

-Hope Road Commercial Development/ Chrin V7 has submitted a Sketch Plan for review by the Township. The proposal is a modification of the original sketch presented over 2 years ago. The concept still includes a movie theater concept as well as a convenience market/ gas station, bank and other retail/ service spaces. The project is within the Smart Growth Overlay zoning districts and has multiple requirements regarding architecture, development layout, landscaping and streetscapes. Additionally, the development will require traffic infrastructure improvements on William Penn Highway which has been an area of study by the Township Engineer for some time.

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 as plans for the phase are recorded. The other recent approval of the West Village MOB and restaurant modification is under 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 will be proposed.

-**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 12th 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 is commencing streetscape enhancement construction.

-**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.

-**8030 William Penn Highway/ Gerber Collision** has begun construction at the new facility location. Inquiries are being made about the adaptive reuse of the existing structure in a future phase.

-**Old Dominion Freight** remains under construction on Brodhead Road. The developer improved the temporary paving on Brodhead Road per the instruction of the Township several weeks ago and complainants have noted their satisfaction.

-**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 was protected under the Governor's Permit Extension Act and has now commenced 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 have been addressed by the School District and their contractors under the supervision of the County Conservation District.

-**Traditions of America** remains tabled under Administrative Review with the Planning Commission while addressing stormwater matters.

-**Nancy Run Estates Phases 7-10** remains tabled under Administrative Review with the Planning Commission while addressing stormwater matters.

-**The Greek Orthodox Church** proposed on Church Road remains tabled under Administrative Review with the Planning Commission while addressing traffic and stormwater matters.

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