



WEST EARL TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION

Dean Weinhold, Chairman · Jennifer Prunoske, Vice Chairwoman
Janell Frazier, Secretary · Craig Miller, Member · Cameron Renehan
Ben Craddock, Township Engineer

Meeting Minutes November 16, 2021

The West Earl Planning Commission held their scheduled monthly meeting on Tuesday, November 16, 2021. Chairman Weinhold called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Those members in attendance were:

Dean Weinhold, Chairman
Jennifer Prunoske, Vice Chairwoman
Janell Frazier, Secretary
Craig Miller, Member

Cameron Renehan, Member
Ben Craddock, Township Engineer
Jenna Seesholtz, Township Manager

Attendees: Rebecca Liz Fisher, Rebecca Kissinger, Delilah Yoder, Shantell Weaver, Elsie Mae Lapp, Samuel S. Beiler, Steve Lapp, Emanuel Fisher, Daniel King, Jay David Stauffer, Daniel Beiler, Jeriah Belier, Matthew Mack, Barbie Fisher, Aaron Fisher, Mervin Beiler, Jonah Beiler, Jopheth Beiler, Emma Yoder, David Lapp, Fannie Lapp, Jacob Lapp, Elvin Hoover, Matt Creme, Chris Gregor, Edith Lorah, Dave Thornton, Benjamin Fisher, Rhoda Kissinger, Steve King, Naomi King, Dwight Yoder Richard Lorah, Raymond Horst, Sallie Horst, Brenda Brown, Eli High, Harold Martin, Jean Hoover, Anthony Petersheim, Douglas Wenger, Mary Lapp, Martha Kinsinger, Elizabeth Lapp, Elsie Lapp, Moses Fisher, Karen Stauffer, John Stauffer, Nancy Lapp, Fannie Beiler, Ed Shirk, Jane Shirk, Alvin Lapp, David M. Lapp, Kay Martin

Minutes

October 19, 2020 Minutes: A motion by Miller second by Frazier to approve the Planning Commission minutes of October 19, 2021 as submitted. Motion carried.

Public Comments

There was no public comment.

New Business

2021-10 John M. Beiler – Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan: 216 Locust Street, Leola, 3.63 acres. Zoned Ag. Proposes a 42'x56' shop for applicant and his children to manufacture furniture.

WAIVERS/DEFERMENTS: The developer is requesting the following waivers or deferments:

SALDO

- Waiver of §155-9 – Preliminary Plan §155-21.B – Final Plan Scale
- Waiver of §155-21.B – Final Plan Scale
- Deferral of §155-23.C(1) – Road Improvements

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- Deferral of §155-32.A(1) – Monuments and Markers
- Waiver of §155-32.C(2) – Curb within parking compound
- Deferral of §155-32.D(1) – Sidewalk
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STORMWATER

- Waiver of §149-37.C(1)(a)([4] – Pipe Diameter

ACTION ON PLAN – WAIVERS AND DEFERMENTS

Waiver of §155-9 – Preliminary Plan: A motion by Prunoske second by Renehan to recommend a waiver of §155-9 – Preliminary Plan to the Board of Supervisors. Motion carried.

Waiver of §155-21.B – Final Plan Scale: A motion by Prunoske second by Frazier to recommend a waiver of §155-21.B – Final Plan Scale to the Board of Supervisors. Motion carried.

Deferral of §155-23.C(1) – Road Improvements: A motion by Prunoske second by Miller to recommend deferral of §155-23.C(1) – Road Improvements to the Board of Supervisors. Motion carried.

Deferral of §155-32.A(1) – Monuments and Markers: A motion by Prunoske second by Renehan to recommend Deferral of §155-32.A(1) – Monuments and Markers to the Board of Supervisors. Motion carried.

Waiver of §155-32.C(2) – Curb within parking compound: A motion by Prunoske second by Miller to recommend waiver of §155-23.C(1) – Road Improvements to the Board of Supervisors. Motion carried.

Deferral of §155-32.D(1) – Sidewalk: A motion by Prunoske second by Miller to recommend deferral of §155-32.D(1) – Sidewalks to the Board of Supervisors. Motion carried.

STORMWATER

Waiver of §149-37.C(1)(a)([4] – Pipe Diameter: A motion by Renehan second by Prunoske to recommend waiver of §149-37.C(1)(a)([4] – Pipe Diameter to the Board of Supervisors. Motion carried.

ACTION ON PLAN –

2021-10 John M. Beiler – Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan: A motion by Weinhold second by Prunoske to recommend approval of 2021-10 John M. Beiler – Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan to the Board of Supervisors conditioned upon the Township Engineer's review letter date November 8, 2021. Motion carried.

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Text Amendment Petition – Blessings of Hope:

Attorney Dwight Yoder: Atty. Yoder spoke on behalf of his client, Blessings of Hope. Atty. Yoder noted that it was implied at the last meeting that the text amendment request that Blessings of Hope submitted could be viewed at spot zoning. Atty. Yoder submitted a handout that depicted the properties located near Blessings of Hope's property and pointed out the types of business that are currently located in the area. Property adjoining this property is currently zoned commercial. He also noted that it is not illegal to change a property that has been identified as containing prime agricultural soils to another zoning designation.

Brenda Brown of 2002 W. Main Street, Ephrata: Ms. Brown noted that everyone has heard the logistical side of Blessings of Hope but wanted to make the Planning Commission members to hear about the impact that Blessings of Hope has on the community. Ms. Brown is a representative of the Akron Brethren Church which held a food box give away. They gave away 100 boxes of food which was only advertised on Facebook and word of mouth. They next food event, they gave away 500 boxes.

Jane Shirk of 157 Ebersole Road, Ephrata: Ms. Shirk has been a volunteer for Blessings of Hope longer than any other volunteer. Aaron Fisher of Blessings of Hope requested Shirk assist with the distribution of food boxes. She has been able to get to know the recipients of the food boxes. She noted that Blessings of Hope is great for the community.

Elizabeth Lapp of 521 S. Farmersville Road, Ephrata: Ms. Lapp has been with Blessings of Hope since the beginning and seen so much growth which is being driven by need. She would like to see Blessings of Hope be able to develop this property as they are requesting.

Attorney Matt Creme: Atty. Matt Creme spoke on behalf of his clients, the Stauffer's. He did not mean to suggest at the last Planning Commission meeting that it was illegal to change the zoning of the property in question. He stated that private interest is not a good reason to allow a change in zoning.

Elvin Hoover of 222 Conestoga Creek Road, Ephrata: Mr. Hoover was involved in creating the comprehensive plan. He stated that this does appear to be spot zoning. The township should look at the future to see if this is something that the township really wants.

Moses Fisher of 105 Brethren Church Road, Leola: Mr. Fisher stated that Blessings of Hope is a wonderful mission. He does not know of an alternate location that would fit the needs of Blessings of Hope as well as this property does. He noted that the proposed plan does not have a driveway located on Diamon Station Road. He noted that in the past the Stauffer's subdivided the property in the past even though it was designated as prime agricultural soil.

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Karen Stauffer of 151 Pleasant Valley Road, Ephrata: Ms. Stauffer did clarify that the Stauffer's that previously subdivided the original Stauffer property were distant relatives of the Stauffer's that are located in the area of the proposed Blessings of Hope plan. She has major concerns about traffic in the area. She has already seen a tremendous change on the area and would not like to see it compounded any further. She said there were no shortage of farmers looking for property, but they were unable to bid against Blessings of Hope. She said that Blessings of Hope has noted on their website that they have been in their current location since 2019 and by March 2021 they were looking for an alternate location because they outgrew it. If the outgrow this location, what will be able to move into it.

David Lapp of 41 Mt. Pleasant Road, Paradise: Mr. Lapp understands that prime ag land would be utilized by Blessing of Hope if this text amendment is approved. He said that this proposed use would give a place for food that was destined for the landfill to feed people instead.

David King of 6112 Wanner Road, Narvon: Mr. King is a member of the Salisbury Township Planning Commission. Salisbury Township took an area of about 5 miles and created places that residents can work but can also take on the traffic.

Janell Frazier, Secretary: Frazier reviewed the Blessings of Hope website and noted that the amount of food distributed in the last year has drastically decreased. David Lapp of Blessings of Hope clarified that they had more volume last year because of the USDA food boxes that were made available during the pandemic. This year they are focusing on sustained growth.

Jennifer Prunoske, Vice Chairwoman:

Dean Weinhold, Chairman: Chairman Weinhold would like to see the retail, fueling station and mechanic shop removed from the proposed text amendment. He will not be able to support these items because he feels it would be too easy for Blessing of Hope to allow other individuals and entities to utilize those services without the Township being aware. He is also bothered that Blessings of Hope purchased the property with the knowledge that it was not zoned correctly for their intended use.

Craig Miller, Member: Member Miller wanted to know what impact this would have on the residents of the area. He sees many people and children walking or biking on this road.

ACTION ON TEXT AMENDMENT PETITION – BLESSINGS OF HOPE:

A motion by Weinhold second by Frazier to recommend the Board of Supervisors deny the text amendment petition as filed by Blessings of Hope which would also allow for the fueling station, mechanics repair shop and retail, and not just the food processing. Motion carried.

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Adjournment: There being no other business before the Planning Commission, a motion by Prunoske second by Miller to adjourn the meeting at 8:19 PM. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenna Seesholtz, Township Manager