

**MINUTES
NORTH LEBANON TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
JANUARY 10, 2005**

The regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting of North Lebanon Township was held at the North Lebanon Township Municipal Building, at 725 Kimmerlings Road, Lebanon PA, at 7:00 PM. The following Commission members were present:

Darlene Martin	Member
William Smeltzer	Member
William Tice	Member
John Scheer	Member
Mike Ulrich	Member
Cheri F. Grumbine	Twp Manager

Also in attendance at this meeting were representatives of the proposed Spring Creek Development and 2 members of the public.

7:00 PM -- CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE TO FLAG

REORGANIZATION OF COMMISSION OFFICERS

Commission member Darlene Martin told the public the Commission's first item on the Agenda is to reorganize officers. She looked to her Commission members for a MOTION. Some discussion followed before a MOTION was made.

MOTION: Was made and seconded to maintain the officers the same as last year: Chairperson-Darlene Martin and Vice-Chairperson – William Smeltzer. Unanimously carried.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no Comments from the Public this evening.

MOTION TO APPROVE MEETING MINUTES

The December 13, 2004 minutes were available for approval.

MOTION: Was made and seconded to approve the minutes from December 13, 2004. Unanimously carried.

PLANNING MODULE INFORMATION

There are no Planning Modules for review this evening.

ACTIVE PLANS FOR REVIEW, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

There are no plans for review or recommendation this evening.

ACTIVE PLANS ON HOLD WITH LEBANON COUNTY PLANNING DEPT

The following plans are still on hold with Lebanon County Planning:

A.) Countryside M H Park Land Dev Plan **Location/ Zoned:** Carol Ann Dr/ R-R.
Office Submission Date: 06-15-00

ACTIVE PLANS ON HOLD (con't)

Revised plans for the park expansion had been received in the Twp office on 11-22-04. Communications between Twp Solicitor Fred Wolf and Attorney John Feather was exchanged in reference to outlining various issues and agreements, which must be accomplished before any plan approvals begin.

B.) Harold/Barbara Kreider Land Dev Plan **Location/ Zoned:** Tunnel Hill Rd/ Ag
Office Submission Date: 12-26-02

There has been no new information on this plan for some time. The problem still seems to be access from a PADOT road (Tunnel Hill Rd).

C.) Brohnwood Prelim Subd/Land Dev Plan **Location/Zoned:** Narrows Dr/ R-1
Office Submission Date: 11-21-03

After a conversation with Lebanon County Planning, it was learned there has been no communication with the Engineer for this plan since October of 2004. County is waiting for the revisions that had been requested at that time.

D.) Living Waters Chapel Land Dev Plan **Location/Zoned:** Jay St/C2-A
Office Submission Date: 12-09-03

According to Lebanon County Planning, Earl Meyer had communications with Blue Marsh about a month ago regarding the remaining few minor items regarding this stormwater plan. Neither County Planning nor NL Twp has had any contact from Blue Marsh since that time.

E.) Ketchum Minor Subd Plan **Location/Zoned:** Miller St/R-1
Office Submission Date: 8-13-04

Revised plans for this minor subdivision plan have been received and the County Engineer is currently reviewing the revisions. Once that review is completed this plan should be available for next month's meeting.

F.) Final Subd Plan for Woodlea Phase 3 **Location/Zoned:** Gary Ave/Watson St
Office Submission Date: 10-28-04

After the initial review of this plan, a request for additional stormwater piping was made. A letter from their Attorney was received requesting additional information in regards to this request from the Twp. After these questions are dealt with and the revised plans are received, planning process will begin with this plan.

RECEIVING OF NEW PLANS**A.) Spring Creek Preliminary Subd Plan****Location/Zoned:** Kimmerlings Rd & N 8th Ave
R-1 & R-2

The plans were made available for review by Commission members. Mgr Grumbine explained the plans were received late Friday afternoon so she has not had the opportunity to prepare any comments as of yet. The plan shows a proposed 71 lots with 40 single-family dwellings and 31 townhouse units. The Commission members referred to some of the issues they had discussed when seeing this plan as a "sketch plan". The major issue is the traffic difficulties in these intersections that already exist. A traffic study will definitely be requested. The members were told there was some traffic study information provided with the plan submission but has not yet been reviewed. Member Scheer said he recalls the issue of "usable land" as opposed to "non-usable" land due to the wetlands in this area. Some discussion was had about the existing farmhouse, which is scheduled to be demolished.

Mgr Grumbine reported to the Commission that the alignment of the proposed road with Josephine Ann Dr was not possible due to wetland areas in that immediate location. Commission members repeated their biggest concern is the traffic problems in this area. Member Scheer mentioned the traffic study should also involve Mt Zion Rd intersection.

MOTION: Was made and seconded to receive the Spring Creek Preliminary Subdivision Plan. Unanimously carried.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION / COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS:

A.) Zoning Amendment Request – Harlan Bross (Evelina Krall) Narrows Drive/Weavertown Rd

Al Crump – Representing the Snyder Development Group

Mr. Crump introduced Dan Errett who is the Engineer for this proposed project. He told the Commission their request is to have the area in question rezoned from Industrial (I) to Residential – 2 (R-2). The Engineer produced some drawings of the area and the 2 different zones contained in that area currently. The area in question contains 34 acres according to the Engineer. All 34 acres are currently zoned I. The request is to re-zone to R-2 (high density residential). Mr. Crump asked Mr. Errett to verify who is the current owner of this property. He answered that the Bross family owns it. Crump then asked Mr. Errett to identify any properties owned by the Bross family that might be adjacent to the existing Industrial zoned property. Errett pointed out, on the map, an area located immediately beside the existing Union Canal Elementary School. He said this area is also owned by the Bross family and is currently zoned R-2. The tract of land is owned by the Bross family but is divided by 2 different zones. Mr. Crump pointed out an area that is currently zoned R-2 and asked Mr. Errett if it is the portion of land located next to the R-2 zone that is being asked to be re-zoned. Errett answered yes that is correct. Mr. Crump next questioned what is proposed for this area should the zoning amendment be approved. Errett responded it is proposed to place a housing development there. Crump next questioned if this is consistent with what is already located in the area. Errett again responded that is correct. Although the area is currently zoned Industrial, the area is currently being used for agricultural purposes. The area is basically a residential area with a school also located there.

Zoning Amendment Request (con't)

Mr. Crump next discussed the logic of using the area for Industrial purposes. The Industrial site actually runs north as far as Weavertown Rd however does not have access to Weavertown Rd. The entrance to the Industrial tract would have to be gained by accessing the residential area.

The next discussion focused on the proposed developing for the Industrial zoned area, only. Mr. Errett said a request had been received to provide some information and pictures of the types of housing that is being considered. He produced a picture of a home that was constructed in one of their other developments. He told the Commission this was similar but he could not say that it would be exactly this style. Two story Colonial type housing is the current trend. Mr. Crump asked Mr. Errett if Residential zoning would create more or less traffic than an Industrial zoning. Errett replied it would generate considerably less traffic than the Industrial zone. Referring to a standard chart used by Engineers, the traffic from Industrial would generate 247 truck trips as opposed to a Residential zone generating 71 trips. Crump mentioned the Union Canal Elementary School. Mr. Errett said the school is located nearby. Mr. Crump asked if Mr. Errett was of the opinion that a Residential district would be more compatible than an Industrial district to which Errett replied, yes of course it is. Mr. Errett told the Commission members it is anticipated there would be open areas to allow for walking paths for children to walk to the school.

Mr. Crump explained to the Commission that after review of all the possibilities, this plan is the one that makes the most sense to them. He told the Commission they are open to any suggestions and /or comments they might have to add.

Member Smeltzer questioned if he understands that all the proposed homes are single-family dwellings. He was told that is correct. Nelson Ebersole introduced himself as the agent for the current owners. Smeltzer said he wanted to verify that the zoning being requested was for R-2 and not R-1. The talk of single-family houses is usually indicative of an R-1 zone. Crump verified the zoning being sought was an R-2 zoning. Member Smeltzer said a smaller lot area is required for an R-2 zone, which would allow for more homes to be constructed. Crump said the R-2 zoning is consistent with the other tracts. He repeated they are not proposing any multi-family units. The R-2 regulations require 9,000 square feet with public water and sewer. The proposed lots are basically 10,000 square feet with public water and sewer. Crump said he had received a verbal from Scott Rights, Municipal Authority Engineer, that there is sewer and water capacity available for this proposed development. Member Martin said the sewer is not available on Weavertown Rd, only on Narrows Dr. Mr. Crump agreed with Martin's remark.

Chp Martin questioned the boundary line along Weavertown Rd. The parcel in question does not abut Weavertown Rd where the road curves. Why is that, she asked? Crump responded he does not know why the Industrial area was designed that way. She is correct that Weavertown Rd does not abut the property where Weavertown Rd curves. Chp Martin questioned what the property on the other side of Weavertown Rd is being used for. She was told it is zoned Industrial but is also being used for Agricultural purposes. Chp Martin then asked if the east side of Narrows Dr was R-1 or R-2? She was told it is R-1 and the area bordering the R-1 zone is an R-R (Rural Residential) district. Member Smeltzer questioned Mgr Grumbine about the Penny Lane area. He wanted to know if the original zoning had been R-2 and was it changed at some point in time? She replied she did not remember re-zoning just for Penny Ln, so she is thinking it had been originally zoned R-2. Smeltzer continued on to say he was wondering if there might have any restrictions placed on the rest of the area when the school property was re-zoned.

Zoning Amendment Request (con't)

Mr. Crump stated there was some soil testing performed. The results were that it is mostly Berks type of soil. There was some discussion about the easement through this area. There are electric power lines and a gas pipeline that runs along Narrows Dr. Chp Martin told Crump and Errett that the Twp would not permit a cul-de-sac. Errett said the drawing was just to show the possibilities. However he would make a note of the cul-de-sac issue. She told them they would also expect a traffic study. This area is already saturated in traffic difficulties.

Mr. Crump said there would be 2 different owners/developers. There would be 2 different plans submitted, jointly, on behalf of the different owners. The idea is to work jointly while developing the area. Chp Martin wanted to clarify that the developing is not going to be completed by one owner. There would be 2 different owners working, at the same time, to develop this 1 tract of land, according to Crump. He explained the current owner would be developing the portion that is already an R-2 zone (14 acres) and The Snyder Developers Group would be developing the area that is being requested for re-zoning (34 acres). Chp Martin said she felt it would be wise to present the planning information together. Crump announced that when the plans get submitted, it would be submitted together as one submission. The Engineer will be working on both plans. The re-Zoning issue must be dealt with first. He told the Commission the Supervisors would be hearing the presentation during a Public Hearing on February 21st. Chp Martin stated that the public on the west side of the Twp have been very vocal and outspoken. She does not know what to expect from the east side. There was some discussion about a parcel of land owned by Arnold Acres. Chp Martin said she would like to know how many acres the Industrial zones contain in the Twp. If re-zoning starts taking place there would not be any area for industry. That is something the Commission would have to review, the acreage of available Industrial land. Mr. Crump responded that unfortunately there is not much of a market for industry right now. The residential market is what is in demand currently. A remark was made about "out sourcing" and the trend for industry to be completed overseas.

Member John Scheer asked if anyone would know a dollar amount for every tax dollar that the Twp takes in, how much extra does a new development cost the Twp. Member Scheer stated that he has learned recently, by sitting on this Commission, that with every house or development that is built, the taxpayer is paying out more and more with the completion of these developments. By changing the Zoning and allowing even more residential development, the taxpayer is the one bearing the brunt of those decisions. The Twp has existing R-2 available for development of homes. Why rezone an area for even more R-2 housing?

Between this area on Narrows Dr and Mt Zion Rd, which is about ½ mile, with what is already on the books as proposed development and considering the current request, would amount to an additional 185 dwellings. You can figure at least 2 cars a piece for each dwelling. This in an area that already has the worst traffic condition you can imagine, said Member Scheer. Even without considering the traffic complications, the taxes will be raised through the roof said Scheer. Mr. Crump mentioned that he thought the school taxes would already have to be adjusted. Member Scheer repeated there is R-2 land already available for development. The whole school issue is another problem. Chp Martin stated that the schools are already at the max. Another school would probably have to be built. Crump came back by commenting that this proposal makes perfect sense to them. They think this is a good project. If this housing development saturates the market, the current R-2 districts would not get developed. Chp Martin remarked the houses seem to be sold before they are even completed. Crump agreed saying the demand is there.

Zoning Amendment Request (con't)

Member Scheer stated sure there is the demand and Crump's job is to fill the demand. It's his job! The only problem is that the NL Twp taxpayers are the ones paying for it. Crump remarked that by providing businesses you do not have to worry about school issues. But, in his opinion, by providing more homes (people) you will be generating more tax dollars. Member Scheer disagreed saying the taxpayers will, in the end, pay for all the homes that are being created. Crump laughed and said he does not disagree with him. Everyone is paying school taxes that are out of sight. Member Scheer agreed saying this is one of the reasons why. Crump rebutted saying the real reason is the withdrawing of funding from the local government by both the Federal and State governments. Crump insisted that more people would help the situation. The discussion continued about the increase of demands for service from all these developments that are being constructed. Member Scheer repeated there is zoning already labeled R-2 and are available for developing. Crump said what does it matter if the R-2 area is developed or this area is developed. Member Scheer stated this changing of zoning would make the problem worse. We would then have additional high density instead of what is already available. Member Ulrich asked Mr. Crump if the school district had been contacted at all. Both Ebenezer and Union Canal are at their capacity already.

Chp Martin asked about the Ag use of the lands. Her question is in reference to the type of soil. Is it "prime soil" for Agriculture? Mr. Crump said it is "gravel" fill, probably not "prime soil". Mgr Grumbine stated that the Conservation District could probably answer that question. Chp Martin questioned the existing homes and the area that is already zoned R-2, how many acres does that entail? Crump replied it is about 14 acres. Chp Martin said she would like to check on the acreage question and the Industrial zoning requirements. She said the traffic problems are a given and the people will attend to comment on the existing traffic problems. Mgr Grumbine asked if the area in question is 2 different tracts. Crump agreed it is one property but 2 different "zones". Mgr Grumbine asked if the intent is to request for re-zoning and then sub divide the land for 2 different developers? There seemed to be a difference of opinion about the planning process for the 2 different developers.

Member Smeltzer asked if during the subdivision process a piece of the 14 acre tract, the corner access to Weavertown Rd, would be aligned with the currently zoned Industrial tract. That would then provide access to the larger tract from Weavertown Rd. Crump said the 34-acre tract already owns that small piece. Member Smeltzer said then there is access to Weavertown Rd from the Industrial tract. As the Industrial tract now stands there is access to the Weavertown Rd. Crump agreed saying but it would have to access across the Residential zone. The Commission members thanked the Development Group for their presentation.

A general conversation about the information presented tonight followed. The Commission members were in agreement it would be up to the neighbors to attend the Public Hearing and make their opinions known to the Supervisors. With all the traffic problems already existing in this area, the members indicated they felt sure the Public would be attending the Public Hearing scheduled for 2-21-05.

B.) Decision of ZHB – 1717 Quarry Rd

Included just for information was the decision on a hearing heard by the Zoning Hearing Board about 1717 Quarry Rd. The rear of the property is being used to store business equipment and a variance was sought to allow this practice to continue.

As there was not any other items to discuss the members were in agreement to adjourn.

MOTION MADE SECONDED AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED TO ADJOURN.

Respectfully submitted,

Theresa L. George
Recording Secretary