

**THE TOWNSHIP OF MAXATAWNY
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MONDAY, JANUARY 29, 2024 - 6:30pm**

MINUTES

CALL MEETING TO ORDER: Chairman Bucci called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance. Members present: Michael Berger, Rob Reynolds, Dave Sobotka, and Laurel Burkhardt. Professionals present: Engineer, Chris Falencki; Solicitor, Chris Muvdi; Township Code Enforcement Officer, Chris Paff; and Township Secretary/Treasurer, Jerilyn Wehr

PUBLIC COMMENT: (Agenda items)

REORGANIZATION:

1. Motion to appoint Chairman of the Planning Commission
 - a. Motion made by Berger and seconded by Sobotka to appoint Don Bucci as Chairman. Motion passed (5-0)
2. Motion to appoint Vice-Chairman of the Planning Commission
 - a. Motion made by Bucci and seconded by Reynolds to appoint Michael Berger as Vice-Chairman. Motion passed (5-0)
3. Motion to appoint Secretary of the Planning Commission
 - a. Motion made by Berger and seconded by Sobotka to appoint Rob Reynolds as Secretary. Motion passed (5-0)

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:

1. Motion to approve the December 21, 2023 meeting minutes
 - a. Motion made by Sobotka and seconded by Reynolds to approve the December 21, 2023 meeting minutes. Motion passed (5-0)

PLANS TO REVIEW:

1. Conditional Use application review - Siegfriedale Solar
 - a. Britton Burnworth with Keller Engineering presented the plan. The project will consist of two solar systems at 5 megawatts with a 24 ft. access road that will be paved and curbed, with the plan to keep the slope of the road under the 7% allowed. Stormwater management will be completed with the panels considered impervious surface coverage with all stormwater treated on site. They are avoiding the wetlands on the property which is currently used for agriculture. They will be screening the project with fencing and evergreens. The panel type could not be confirmed but are proposed to be approx. 10ft high, single access tracking with a tilt. They will be leasing the property with a 20-year lease with the option for additional 5-year renewals and doing a parcel consolidation
 - b. The letters of Falencki dated January 16, 2023 and Paff dated January 23, 2023, as well as the fire marshal were reviewed. The developer was provided with copies, as they stated that they did not receive prior to meeting
 - c. There was discussion regarding a decommission bond being provided to the Township, a glare study being conducted, as well as discussion on how maintenance will be handled if panels break. There was also discussion on the type of fencing and screening planned, driveway slope, stormwater issues and the need for both lots to comply with the Township ordinance
 - d. The Conditional Use Hearing is currently scheduled for February 28, 2024 at 6:30pm
 - e. Resident Rob Boyer stated that this project previously came before the Zoning Hearing Board asking for multiple variances, which were denied. He feels that the developer

- does not care about the local community the project will affect and he feels that this does not belong in an agricultural/residential area
- f. Resident Marty Yourkavitch stated that he does not feel that the project works in the area proposed
 - g. Taxpayer Kevin Leiby questioned the required setbacks for the project, soils testing and removal of trees that may be on the property line
 - h. Resident Robert Shade voiced concern about stormwater runoff and his property value
 - i. Resident Peter Karch asked about maintenance of the grass on the site
 - j. Resident Meredith Strausser voiced concern regarding stormwater runoff, the decommission bond and who is responsible for development issues
 - k. The Planning Commission tabled the recommendation and will review again next month
2. Villas of Maxatawny/Lobb property – Preliminary plan acceptance as complete
 - a. Paff stated that the submission was reviewed and is complete
 - b. Burkhardt had some questions about the process of accepting the plan
 - c. Motion made by Reynolds and seconded by Sobotka to accept the plan as complete and to review next meeting. Motion passed (5-0)
 3. Ag Security application review – 261 Quarry Road
 - a. Wehr stated that the application is for a 25-acre property. The Ag Security Committee did review and recommend acceptance of the application
 - b. Motion made by Sobotka and seconded by Reynolds to recommend acceptance of the property into the Ag Security Area. Motion passed (5-0)
 4. Newswanger annexation – Church Road and Topton Road – updated waiver request
 - a. Rob Hain from Berks Surveying presented the plan. Hain stated that the owner would like to do a lot line adjustment. There is currently a barn and manure pit on site that is not permitted. The owner would like to also construct a cattle barn. They are looking for waiver of Land Development with all stormwater management to be completed
 - b. Motion made by Sobotka and seconded by Reynolds to recommend approving the waiver request with all stormwater management completed. Motion passed (5-0)
 5. Comprehensive Plan/SALDO/Zoning Update
 - a. Review of draft zoning ordinance amendment
 - b. Falencki stated that the amendment would remove large warehouses from the Light-Industrial zones and keep them in the Industrial zones within the Township. Warehouses under 25,000sq ft would still be permitted in Light-Industrial, while there would be a cap of 500,000sq ft in Industrial
 - c. Sobotka voiced concerns similar to those expressed in a resident letter submitted to the Planning Commission and was concerned that the Planning Commission was not included in the amendment discussions
 - d. Motion made by Sobotka and seconded by Berger to table the discussion until the next meeting when Township Consultant Jerome Skrincosky could attend to discuss and answer questions. Motion passed (3-2) no – Reynolds and Burkhardt
 - e. Bucci stated that we are still waiting to hear if we received the grant for the joint comprehensive plan and Falencki stated that work has begun on additional SALDO amendments

MONTHLY SUBDIVISION & LAND DEVELOPMENT STATUS REPORT:

1. The Planning Commission reviewed the Status Report for the month.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:

1. Solicitor – Chris Muvdi
 - a. Nothing at this time
2. Engineer – Chris Falencki
 - a. Nothing at this time

HEARING OF THE VISITORS & PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Resident Anne Franke recommended meeting with Jerome Skrincosky sooner than the regular February meeting and also read a statement regarding the importance of the draft amendment
2. Resident Meredith Strausser recommended native plants for updated landscape requirements
3. Resident Drew Silfies voiced concern regarding stormwater runoff along Siegfriedale Road

ADJOURNMENT: Motion was made by Sobotka and seconded by Berger to adjourn at 8:20pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jerilyn Wehr, Secretary/Treasurer