Members Present: Robert Corman, Chairman; Freddie Persic, Vice Chairman; Kevin Abbey, Secretary; Bob Dannaker and Mimi Wutz

Members Absent: Tom Poorman; Cecil Irvin; Jack Shannon and Tom Hoover

Staff Present: Bob Jacobs; Sue Hannegan; Anson Burwell; Chris Schnure; Mike Bloom and Mary Wheeler

Others Present: Jon Eich, Commissioner; Jason Mackovyak, Hayes Large Engineers; Daniel Fisher, Superintendent - Bald Eagle Area High School; Rick Vilello, Bald Eagle Area High School Project Manager and Donald Snyder, Bald Eagle High School Facilities Director

1. Call to Order – Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Corman called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

2. Citizen Comment Period

None

3. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Persic to approve the minutes of January 20, 2009, seconded by Mr. Dannaker. Motion carried.

4. Planning Commission Member Updates

Commissioner Eich stated that the Commissioners were in Washington, DC on February 4, 2009 to request funds from our Congressional Representatives for 2009 local project funding. The projects presented included the following:
- $8.7m of financial assistance for the U.S. 322 Improvements at the Taylor Hill Road Intersection and the Church Hill Road Intersection;
- Field radios for the 911 System Upgrade;
- Funds for the Millheim / Aaronsburg Water System Interconnect which has been discussed for about ten years and studied by staff as a Small Water System Regionalization System; and
- The Central Pennsylvania Institute of Technology (CPI) for an Energy Center to train folks to work in the natural gas industry, wind energy field, and as water and sewer plant operators.

The commissioners also reminded the congressional representatives that there are four projects that await funding from last year: Fraser Street; 911 Upgrade; Philipsburg Sewer System Project and the Dental Program at CPI.
Chairman Corman stated that he received a note from Karen Michael, PennDOT, stating that left over monies from PennDOT will be directed to starting the Taylor Hill bank excavation project.

Vice-Chairman Abbey noted that he recently saw a presentation by the consulting forester for the Gamesa Energy USA -- Allegheny Ridge Wind Farm. This forester is starting the Allegheny Ridge Wind Environmental Education Center in Northern Cambria and he volunteered to either give us a presentation or a tour of Blue Knob. He has worked with Gamesa, Energy USA on 3 or 4 big wind farm turbine projects. This may be a great opportunity.

Mr. Burwell noted that he had contact from Josh Fravel, Gamesa Energy USA who is now looking seriously at a project partially in Snyder Township, Blair County adjacent to that portion in Taylor Township, Centre County. Once a decision is made, staff will need to sit down for a pre-submission conference with the Developer, the Agent that is going to prepare the plan and Snyder Township representatives. Mr. Burwell also agreed with Vice-Chairman Abbey regarding having the consulting forester give us a tour of the site. Staff heard the Save Our Allegheny Ridge (SOAR'S) perspective and this would be a different perspective, hopefully factual and informative.

Chairman Eich stated that the whole issue of forest fragmentation has changed dramatically in the last year with the natural gas well drilling industry.

5. Old Business

None

6. Review of Subdivision and Land Development Plans – Anson Burwell & Chris Schnure

Subdivisions: None Submitted for this Planning Cycle

Land Developments:

1. Bald Eagle Area School District Additions and Alterations Land Development Final Plan
   5-Units (5 - Building Additions to the Wingate Elementary & Bald Eagle Area Middle School / High School Campus)
   Boggs Township

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Abbey questioned the status of the traffic signal at the Route 220 / 150 intersections?

Mr. Bloom noted that PennDOT, per the Betterment Project will be installing a traffic signal at that intersection of Route 144 / Route 220. Weather permitting it will be done shortly.

Superintendent Fisher wanted it noted that one of the School District’s concerns is really about litigation; it’s about the 1/4 mile (+) required sidewalk to be placed parallel to PA Route 144 / 220. He is opposed to the sidewalk mainly due to bicyclists, as he feels there will be liability to the School District. Even when PennDOT was planning to widen the road and offered to install the sidewalk at no cost to the school district, the School District as well as Boggs Township was opposed to it.

“I do think that bicyclers will run on that sidewalk and there are four entrances to be concerned about, and I think that I know what is going to happen and I think what we are doing is paving the sidewalk for that to happen. I don’t think that the School District should assume that liability if we are required
to put the sidewalk in. I would ask that if that requirement goes through as stated that it is entered into the minutes this evening that the School District did provide an objection to the sidewalk, because at some point if that happens, and I hope it never does, then the School District would like some help with representation. In addition, that length of sidewalk will probably cost $200,000, and at one point there was a suggestion if not a mandate that we put in a crosswalk. I understand that PennDOT said no crosswalk. I don’t think that PennDOT would allow the sidewalk within their right-of-way. So it is not in the right-of-way, it is probably 8’-10’ inside the right-of-way. A high speed PennDOT plow would plow the sidewalk shut and we would then need to follow the plow around to maintain it. We are being asked to sign an Affidavit this evening to maintain a sidewalk that won’t be used, but not to maintain the parking lots and other sidewalks that will be used. We did ask Jason Mackovyak, Hayes Large Engineer to prepare a plan with what we think will be a likely walking route, but it did not meet with a lot of traction. I spoke with people at PSU who said that they waited to see where the students were going to walk before putting in a sidewalk. Essentially where we think the kids will walk is on the alternate proposal and I would ask the Board if it is possible for them to look at this alternate proposal.” (Statements as provided by Superintendent Fisher)

Mimi Wutz, Commission member questioned the reasoning for the sidewalk that is required from the Mobile Home Park west towards Sheetz Convenience Store?

Mr. Burwell presented General Sidewalk History as noted on (Attachment #1) which clarifies the developer’s rights and responsibilities per the County’s Land Development requirements.

Jason Mackovyak, Hayes Large Engineers questioned if Gertrude Davidson the owner of the small parcel of ground between Sheetz and the BEA Elementary School will be required to put in a sidewalk, so a connection will be made between Sheetz and the Elementary School. What do we do from a construction stand point?

Mr. Burwell stated that issue is part of the engineering process.

Superintendent Fisher questioned if the Board would be willing to look at an alternative proposal for pedestrians as well? It involves a route where the pedestrians will walk, as opposed to where we think they won’t walk, and also it doesn’t involve putting bicyclists racing across our driveways.

Mr. Burwell noted that the sub-committee already looked at that plan.

Ms. Wutz noted that she agrees with Mr. Fisher that the sidewalk doesn’t make any sense, due to the location and it would not be the path that people would generally take. I think they would take the shorter route; they would not walk down to the sidewalk then over to Sheetz.

Ms. Persic noted that there are ballparks there that are used by the general public.

Mr. Jacobs questioned how the ballparks are used?

Superintendent Fisher stated that they are used as practice fields -- the little league practices there. This place stays open except for Sunday mornings. There are people there all the time.

Mr. Jacobs stated that he understands the concerns of the School District, but obviously when PennDOT offers a sidewalk you know there has got to be a safety issue that needs to be addressed, because rarely does PennDOT do that.

Mr. Abbey questioned if the grant application mentioned by Mr. Burwell was part of the Safe Routes to Schools program?
Mr. Bloom responded and clarified that this grant request was submitted under the Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiative. PennDOT Secretary Biehler took $60m off of the top of Spike Funding and allocated it to this program. The BEA sidewalk project was one of 12 submitted in Centre County, and one of approximately 380 applications submitted statewide. Competition is stiff for this money. Staff is hopeful, but there is no guarantee that we will get any money at this point.

Superintendent Fisher noted that one of the problems he had filling out the application was answering the question regarding the estimated usage per day of the sidewalk and if that number were high enough to merit submission. Mr. Bloom stated that he was advised that item of concern was not a make or break issue with this type of application for funding.

A motion was made by Mr. Abbey and seconded by Ms. Persic to approve staff’s recommendation of Conditional Final Approval (as presented with the required sidewalk parallel to PA Route 144 / 220) of the above-mentioned Plan. Motion carried.

7. New Business

☐ MPO Update – Mike Bloom

Mr. Bloom presented information as noted on (Attachment #2) to the Planning Commission members which included:

- Long Range Transportation Plan
- Proposed Economic Stimulus Package
- Surface Transportation Board

Mr. Abbey made a motion to urge staff to move in the direction of digital plan submission, seconded by Mr. Dannaker. Motion carried.

Time Extension Requests:

- Matthew E. Nixdorf Subdivision (CFA) Walker & Marion Townships……………………………………………………………..2nd Request (No Fee Required)
- Zion Manor Subdivision (CPA) Walker Township………………………………………………………………………………………………………2nd Request (No Fee Required)
- Kenny R. & Martha E. Stoltzfoos Land Development (CFA) Miles Township………………………………………………………………………………….2nd Request (No Fee Required)
- Self-Storage For Yu Land Development (CFA) Benner Township………………………………………………………………………………………………………3rd Request (No Fee Required)
- U Design Construction Land Development (CFA) Marion Township………………………………………………………………………………………………………3rd Request (No Fee Required)
- Fox Ridge Subdivision (CPA) Benner Township………………………………………………………………………………………………………5th Request ($100.00 Fee Required)
A motion was made by Ms. Persic and seconded by Mr. Dannaker to approve the above-mentioned Time-Extensions. Motion carried.

The February 26, 2009 Major Subdivision and Land Development Plan Sub-Committee Meeting will be attended by Ms. Persic, Mr. Abbey and Mr. Dannaker.

8. Director’s Report and Other Matters to Come Before the Commission

Mr. Jacobs passed out the Monthly Report (Attachment #3) and the County and Municipal Planning Land Use Control Chart (Attachment #4) to the members. He also noted that the State through Senator Wozniak’s office awarded $1,000,000 to the Philips Hotel in Philipsburg for rehabilitation. The County will administer this Grant which supports revitalization efforts in Downtown Philipsburg. Staff continues to attend municipal meetings providing support, working with zoning ordinances, and talking about trail systems. Next month, Gregg Township will discuss an Official Map Ordinance. At the present time a Zoning Ordinance is being developed for Worth Township. It is a stripped down model of the first try of some years ago. Copies will be sent to residents who live in that township for their review upon request.

Ms. Hannegan noted that Benner Township’s Public Hearing for their new zoning ordinance is still open and they are taking comments. Mr. Jacobs stated that this ordinance is going to be very heavy on administration. One of the initial problems appears to be inconsistency across municipal boundaries, like in the Shiloh Road area.

Chairman Corman noted that Walker Township was a leader in the rural communities for a while, but they stepped back. Ms. Hannegan noted that they adopted their Zoning Ordinance right before Nittany Valley started on the Comprehensive Plan process. It is on the back burner at this time.

Mr. Jacobs stated that Haines Township is also working on their Zoning Ordinance. At a meeting with Haines Township a few weeks ago they requested that the Planning Office develop regulations for private water wells and the new geo-thermal wells that are being developed throughout the County.

With no further business to come before the Commission, a motion was made by Ms. Persic and seconded by Mr. Dannaker to adjourn at 7:57 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert B. Jacobs

rbj

THESE MINUTES WERE APPROVED AT THE CENTRE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING ON MARCH 17, 2009