MEETING MINUTES
CENTRE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
September 15, 2009

Members Present: Robert Corman, Chairman; Kevin Abbey, Secretary; Bob Dannaker; Mimi Wutz and Cecil Irvin

Members Absent: Freddie Persic, Vice Chairman; Tom Hoover; Tom Poorman; Jack Shannon

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

Others Present: Joshua Framel, Project Developer -- Sandy Ridge Wind Farm; Gary Osnick, Engineer; Richard Beckwith and Luke Moore--Taylor Township Supervisors; Don Franson, County Engineer; and Jon Eich, County Commissioner

1. Call to Order – Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Corman called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

2. Citizen Comment Period

None

3. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Irvin to approve the minutes of August 18, 2009 seconded by Ms. Wutz. Motion carried.

4. Planning Commission Member Updates

Mr. Dannaker noted that the Bellefonte Borough Council recently approved an Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to allow higher density housing in the R-4 district thus permitting further development on the Beaver Farms property. The new construction will be in the form of town homes which will be a different type of housing than the existing Beaver Farms. Also, a steering committee met last week to review a development plan process for the Waterfront District between High Street and Lamb Street. There will be a series of public meetings for this effort, starting September 29th.

Chairman Corman stated that he attended a meeting regarding highway safety improvements on State Route 322 at Taylor Hill. Sight visibility is to be improved and heavy equipment will be on site shortly. Taylor Hill Road will be closed which will then force traffic onto other roads. Some people will drive on Church Hill Road instead which is 10 times more dangerous thereby increasing the potential for accidents. Budd Brooks, Potter Township Road Superintendent, has been asked to direct residents to use other roads instead of Church Hill. PennDOT will lend the township electronic signs to instruct people to use alternate routes into Colyer.
5. **Old Business**

None

6. **New Business**

- **MPO Update – Mike Bloom**

Mr. Bloom presented the MPO Update (Attachment #1) and a PowerPoint presentation (Attachment #2) to the Planning Commission members re:

*2011-2014 Centre County Transportation Improvement Program*

*I-80 / I-99 High Speed & Local Access Interchanges*

*MPO Technical Committee*

The Growth Forecasting Project for the Long Range Transportation Project (LRTP) is nearing completion. CCPCDO staff, responsible for meeting with 25 municipalities, has completed all but five. Maps are being prepared showing the location and timing of residential, commercial and industrial growth in each municipality. Once completed, staff can move forward with other aspects of the LRTP.

- **Land Use Planning Technical Assistance Program (LUPTAP) and an Update and Educational Event Update – Linda Marshall**

Ms. Marshall presented information (Attachments # 3 & 4) regarding the following to the Planning Commission members

*Land Use Planning Technical Assistance Program Grant* - is being worked on at this time to develop inclusionary regulations and policies to promote affordable housing development. Staff has conducted two-thirds of the interviews. This is a complex issue and there is no such thing as “a one size fits all” solution.

The Steering Committee for the LUPTAP project has been the Housing Cabinet – a great group of individuals who have provided valuable input. Membership is comprised of a commercial lender, a representative of the Centre County Housing and Land Trust, and several non-profits. Ms. Marshall has contacted many counties and municipalities throughout the State to compile examples of regulations either adopted or drafted; and has written the “Legal Basis for Inclusionary Zoning” based on the research. This document is now being reviewed by the county’s Solicitor. Planning Commission members were provided with a Newsletter providing additional information on the issues that are being discussed.

*Lessons Learned – Creating Affordable Housing* - October 1, 2009, - 1:00 – 4:30 p.m. at Centre County Visitors Center Auditorium

*2nd Annual Housing Summit* - October 29, 2009 - 8:30 – 4:00 p.m. at Foxdale Auditorium

Last year the Centre County Affordable Housing Coalition held its first Affordable Housing Summit. It was a very successful, one day effort. Attendees took away useful information and others gained a better understanding as to the different populations that would be served by this housing. This year “The Summit” focuses on barriers (in the morning) for both owner-occupied
and rental housing and topics to be discussed include: cost barriers, the nimbyism (not in my back yard-ism), development barriers; and access to public transportation. In the afternoon, the program will focus on solutions. Part of this program will be to address different opportunities available such as First Time Home Buyers (FTHB), development partnerships with landlords, and how to break down perceptions. Final details of the program are still being developed. It should be a very worthwhile educational opportunity and all planning commission members were encouraged to attend.

▪ Fiber-Optic System Update – Robert Jacobs

Mr. Jacobs noted that information came to his attention in July regarding the installation of a fiber-optic line along Route 45 in Penns Valley. This line is proposed to extend from Cleveland to New Jersey, with 61 miles traversing Centre County. Staff received notice via a permit application to the County; and the title is “Proposed Wilderness Fiber Optic Installation Project”. A map illustrating the Centre County route is shown on (Attachment #6). In Centre County it enters from Clearfield County to the west, extending through Philipsburg, down S.R. 322 into Port Matilda. Then it will follow Old 220 to Martha’s Furnace and south into Patton Township; down Circleville Road and ties into Science Park Road – providing service opportunity for many high-tech office type development activities located there. From Science Park Road it follows S.R. 26 to S.R.45 following that route all the way to Union County and eastward towards New Jersey. This is the only information available to date. The line will contain 3 small conduit lines, placed 3’ deep along road rights-of-way so it is anticipated that there will be little impact to private properties. We are hopeful that this activity will encourage economic development in the more rural areas.

Ms. Hannegan noted that recent research has substantiated that more businesses develop in areas with broadband service. “The Economic Benefit from Broadband Service in Rural America”, a recently published article will be forwarded to planning commission members, as requested.

Hazard Mitigation Plans - Mr. Jacobs noted that for the last month the Planning Office has been involved with the Hazard Mitigation Plan along with the County’s Emergency Management Office. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is requiring updates to these plans. Staff will be sending information out to the municipalities requesting information regarding any known areas that are a potential problem with continued flooding. Once this information is compiled it will constitute an updated plan and hopefully there will be money available in the future from the Federal Government.

Marcellus Gas Well - Mr. Jacobs noted that he had been called to the Emergency Management Office because some of the Marcellus Gas well drillers are concerned about safety response to their well sites. Staff will coordinate with them to be sure that 911 is tied in with access to the facilities that are being constructed for gas exploration. Ms. Hannegan has been doing a lot of work on this project for the last year. Staff will pull resources together and try to get that issue worked out with Emergency Management.

Benner Commerce Park Plan - Mr. Jacobs noted that the Chamber of Business and Industry of Centre County (CBICC) wants to do a modification to the Phase 1 plan to include 2 additional lots (#14 & #15). There are a couple of reasons for doing this: 1) they have an interested party that wants to develop a facility on Lot #14; and, 2) the alteration of a plan for a non-substantial change to a conditionally approved preliminary plan to include 2 additional lots is an easy fix via
a letter of request. Staff would acknowledge receipt of the request and bring it before the planning commission for concurrence at the next regularly scheduled public meeting. With nothing changing on the Conditionally Approved Plan for Phase 1, save the addition of 2 lots, they will be required to produce a second approval letter from the zoning officer and the local municipal engineer saying that the expansion of the street system and utilities to service those 2 lots meets the municipal requirements. The temporary turnaround that now ends at a point prior to Lot 14 & 15 will be extended an additional number of lineal feet to a new temporary turnaround to include the 2 new lots as part of Phase 1 instead of Phase 2. All of the other conditions pending final plan approval will remain the same. Staff received a letter today requesting same.

Mr. Jacobs noted that Members of the Chamber and Heritage One met with the Commissioners and two of our staff members to express concerns about the Subdivision and Land Development process and how this process can be improved.

Commissioner Eich noted that the Chamber and Heritage One list was small for example shifting some items from final plan approval to preliminary approval, etc. They indicated that these approvals were done this way in Centre Region. Mr. Eich requested them to produce examples. The Chamber and Heritage One now have some information to gather and will get back to us in October.

Mr. Jacobs stated that once staff receives the information it will be passed on to the Planning Commission and a response will be sent.

Ms. Hannegan noted that since the Benner Commerce Park has requested and received Economic Development Association money, they are required by the National Historic Preservation Act to comply with an environmental review process. Two phases of field work have been done and have resulted in the exposure of stone foundations, presumed to be the foundations of an iron ore washing facility operated by the Valentine family in the mid-nineteenth century. Phase III work is required to complete the field work, produce a summary of the findings, and identify mitigation options. Staff has visited the site and taken photographs. Projects of this nature usually have a public review component.

Mr. Bloom noted that what has been found is quite intriguing and there are opportunities for interpretation. Mr. Bloom also noted that if the Planning Commission would like to see what has been found, it could be arranged. Mr. Bloom will set a tour up for the Planning Commission.

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

Subdivisions:

1. Nittany Farm Subdivision, Marion Township  
   Final Plan  
   12-Lots (Residential)

A motion was made by Mr. Abbey and seconded by Ms. Wutz to approve staff’s recommendation of Conditional Final Approval of the above-mentioned plan. Motion carried.
Land Developments:

A motion was made by Mr. Dannaker and seconded by Mr. Irvin to remove the Sandy Ridge Wind Farm Land Development proposal from the table for discussion. Motion carried.

2. Sandy Ridge Wind Farm Land Development, Taylor Township
   Preliminary Plan
   9-Units (Wind Turbines)

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Jacobs noted that he attended the Taylor Township meeting September 14, 2009 and the Supervisors want assurance that Road Bonding would be taken care of as part of this process.

Mr. Beckwith stated that Mr. Framel has already approached the Township about Road Bonding and suggested that they will improve the road in some areas before they start moving equipment and materials. So anything that he does for us we will appreciate.

Mr. Burwell stated that in fairness to both parties Gardner Lane is in pretty good shape at this time. Mr. Beckwith stated that Gardner Lane was due for improvement this year but has been deferred due to the windmills. Mr. Framel stated that he could see improving the road beforehand and afterwards as well.

In another non-related matter,

Mr. Beckwith stated that Taylor Township does have a definite problem on Stahl’s Lane Extension where the trees are on the bank and there is a waterline underneath that bank and it is undermined near the trees. If two tractor trailers try to pass on that road there is a blind spot and the second tractor trailer doesn’t stand a chance if someone is sitting there trying to make a left hand turn. Mr. Jacobs said that he would look into it.

Mr. Jacobs stated that projects of this type can be considered by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), upon request by the township. This problem is in the vicinity of the windmill project right off of Route 350. It could also be identified as a safety project.

A motion was made by Mr. Abbey and seconded by Mr. Irvin to approve staff’s recommendation of Conditional Preliminary Approval of the above-mentioned Plan. Motion carried.

Time Extension Requests:

- Benner Commerce Park Subdivision, Phase 1 (CFA) ................................................................. File No. 248-09
  Benner Township.......................................................... 2nd Request (No Fee Required)

- Randall S. Moyer (Land Disposition) Land Development (CFA) .... File No. 71-08
  Boggs Township.......................................................... 4th Request ($50.00 Fee Required)

- The Woods at Sand Ridge Subdivision, Phase 6R (CFA) .......... File No. 172-07
  Walker & Marion Townships........................................... 6th Request ($150.00 Fee Required)
This office acknowledges receipt of written requests from the above-referenced applicants asking the Commission to favorably consider the granting of ninety (90) day time extensions for the completion of the remaining conditions pending plan approval.

Accordingly, we recommend the granting of ninety (90) day time extensions.

Note: CPA = Conditional Preliminary Plan Approval  
CFA = Conditional Final Plan Approval

A motion was made by Ms. Wutz and seconded by Mr. Dannaker to approve the above-mentioned Time Extensions. Motion carried.

The September 24, 2009 Major Subdivision and Land Development Plan Sub-Committee meeting will be attended by Chairman Corman and Vice-Chairman Persic.

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

The Centre County Commissioners appointed the Centre County Industrial Development Authority to serve as their designated agency to administer economic stimulus bond funds. Two new bond programs, the Recovery Zone Facility Bonds and the Recovery Zone Economic Development Bonds, will provide approximately $2.3 million to the county with the requirement that the funds must be spent by December 2010. Economic Development bonds may be used for public infrastructure and construction of public facilities. The county has expressed interest in using these funds for a roofing project at Centre Crest. Facility Bonds may be used to finance private activity projects including retail, commercial, office, manufacturing, entertainment, and warehouse facilities.

With no further business to come before the Commission, a motion was made by Mr. Irvin and seconded by Ms. Wutz adjourn at 8:19 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert B. Jacobs

THESE MINUTES WERE APPROVED AT THE OCTOBER 20, 2009

CENTRE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING.