



**Township of Northampton**  
**55 Township Road**  
**Richboro, PA 18954**

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING OF  
MAY 10, 2016  
MINUTES**

**Members Present**

Evan Stone  
Gail Foley  
Edward Ingle  
Steve Saddlemire  
Dr. Arthur Friedman

**Excused**

Andrew Gannon

**Others Present**

Mary Stover, PE, Township Engineer  
Craig Bryson, RLA, Township Planner  
Mike Solomon, Director of Planning and Zoning  
Larry Weinstein, BOS Liaison

Mr. Stone called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance. There was also a moment of silence for those in our armed forces.

Mr. Stone noted that the Rails-to-Trails matter is not on the agenda and will not be discussed tonight.

### **Minutes**

A motion (Friedman/Ingle) was made to approve the minutes from the March 8, 2016 meeting.

### **Approved - 4-0 (Stone abstained)**

In response to Mr. Johnston from 41 Grant Drive, Mr. Stone stated that public comment is for agenda items.

### **Sketch Plan Discussion – Gilmour Tract, Sketch 16-2, Old Jacksonville Road**

Ed Murphy, Esq. was present along with the applicant Matt DeLuca and project engineer Justin Geonnotti, PE.

Mr. Murphy stated that the subject site is located at Old Jacksonville and Grenoble Roads. He stated that site is approximately 50 acres in the AR district. As a result of the subdivision, 15 new lots are proposed.

Mr. Stone reiterated that this is a sketch plan and no vote will take place.

Mr. Geonnotti stated that the existing house will be maintained and there will be a cul-de-sac design. A portion of the property will transfer acreage to the adjoining lot. He noted that natural resources were intended to be preserved. A single point of access on Old Jacksonville Road is proposed.

Building envelopes on the plan were also shown. All lots will be on-lot systems. Stormwater management is proposed in the open space area.

In response to Mr. Stone, the applicant stated that the initial testing has been done on the soils. Mr. Murphy added that they are proposing a reduced cartway width. Mr. Stone stated that he it make sense to reduce impervious surface and use other best management practices.

Mr. Ingle stated that parking should be limited to one side of the street. Mr. Bryson added that a possible link for future development should be considered. He added that an access road to the basin should also be considered.

Dr. Friedman inquired about the driveway length and fire truck access. Regarding sidewalks, Mr. Murphy noted that sidewalks were proposed on one side internally and sidewalk location was discussed.

Mr. Weinstein stated that sidewalks internally make the most sense. Mr. Murphy inquired about the exterior of the site. There was discussion about bus stop locations as well.

Discussion took place about potential improvements along Old Jacksonville Road. Mr. Geonnotti reviewed the roadway based on pictures that were shown. He noted that there are pretty substantial trees and a bank. Existing dwelling were also identified. In response to Ms. Foley, it was not known if the building is historical.

Constraints of any potential widening were also evaluated. Improvements at the throat to the access were also discussed for safety purposes. Mr. Bryson also discussed sidewalks and the rural nature of the roadway.

There was considerable discussion on bus traffic and pedestrian safety in the area. The applicant added that the proposed road will have the appropriate radius and meet other specifications.

It was noted that the traffic engineer's review is not opposed to granting a waiver for widening. It was also added that the County Planning Commission letter doesn't add anything further. Mr. Bryson stated that more detailed information, including tree caliper, should be shown during land development.

There was consensus that no widening take place on Grenoble Road. In response to Mr. Saddlemire, it was noted that improvements will be made at the entrance. Mr. Stone added that the traffic engineer's letter should lend direction on potential waiver requests.

At this point, Mr. Weinstein stated that there should be public comment. Mr. Stone stated he will open up the meeting to public comment after the 537 Plan presentation.

**Consider Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan Update**

Ms. Stover provided an overview of the DEP sewage planning requirements. DEP is requiring an updated 537 Plan due to an overload of the Neshaminy Interceptor. She added that the plan was updated for the entire township.

She provided an overview on the system and the process regarding corrective measures and sewage flows. Future development was projected and provided to the Bucks County Water and Sewer Authority, which was analyzed for potential improvements.

Lining and a relief sewer are proposed. Municipalities are also required to evaluate infiltration, which the township's municipal authority has done. As a result, sewage flow needs should be addressed for a period of ten years.

In response to Mr. Stone, Ms. Stover stated that most of the Township is under the 1970 plan although DEP would like to see the plan every five to ten years. Dr. Friedman inquired and it was stated that DEP is requiring the plan to be updated. Flow ultimately goes to the Northeast Philadelphia treatment plant.

Ms. Stover stated that land was evaluated to anticipate future growth. Redevelopment potential was also evaluated. It was noted that treatment has improved over the years. In response to Mr. Weinstein, excessive rain infiltrates the pipes and overloads the system, which is a major problem.

Mr. Saddlemire discussed proposed improvements. Ms. Stover stated that this predominantly involves lining the pipes.

Don George, 158 Watergate Drive, stated that he is glad to see the plan being updated. He stated that the interceptor has been a problem from some time and that there are capacity problem. He added that the Northampton residents have already contributed to the project and shouldn't be burdened with improvements. He also added that the chair should recuse himself due to his role on the County Planning Commission.

There being no comment from the public, the Planning Commission made the following motion:

**I move that we recommend to the Board of Supervisors approval of the Act 537**

**Sewage Facilities Plan Update as prepared by CKS Engineers, Inc. dated April 2016.**

**Approved - 5-0 (Gannon absent)  
Motion – Friedman Second – Ingle**

**Public Comment**

At this point, Public Comment was opened on the proposed Rails to Trails project.

Mike Reitz, 15 Jefferson Court, stated that he is opposed to Rails to Trails, primarily because the trail goes right near the homes of residents. He noted that existing recreational amenities should be utilized.

Mr. Weinstein stated that this project will likely not be anytime soon, if ever.

Ralph Sarne, 50 Jericho Road, stated that the Jordan Corner's Homeowner's Association will be adversely impacted. He added that the cons outweigh the pros on this project. He added that every question needs to be answered before any survey is done.

Don George, 158 Watergate Drive, stated that the chair should recuse himself because he is also on the County Planning Commission. He added that the trail is close to existing dwellings. He stated that crime and funding is an issue.

Brig Massone, 72 Nelson Drive, stated that she is a supporter of the project. She added that everyone should get the facts about it.

Ann VanEerden, 84 Bustleton Pike, stated that the matter was discussed without being on the agenda, including at the Board of Supervisors meeting. She reviewed the township park and recreation plan and noted the benefits of the trail system.

Joe Johnston, 41 Grant Drive, provided a history of Rails to Trails. He added the close proximity of the trail to the homes and noted the existing recreational amenities in the area. He spoke against outside residents being involved in the process and noted the benefits of the wildlife in the area. He reiterated the adverse impact of the trail being in close proximity to the houses.

Benjamin Sussman, 51 Jericho Road, stated that the project is a want, not a need. He stated that crime, taxes, and impact on wildlife is a concern.

Bruce Stamm, 14 Jericho Road, stated that it is the right of residents to speak and that it shouldn't have been denied in the beginning of the meeting. He added that crime is an issue along with the impact on wildlife. He added that the trail is wrong for so many reasons and stated that nonresident interest groups shouldn't impact the process.

Jeff Gold, 57 Grant Drive, raised concerns about the proximity of the homes to the trail as well as the concerns for water runoff. He also stated that the cost is an issue as well as the loss of home value.

Barbara Rodgers, 83 Spring Avenue, stated that her home is very close to the proposed trail. She added that there is also a water problem at her property. She added that security is an issue with the proposed trail.

Steve Kravitz, 43 Steeplechase Drive, stated that he paid a lot premium for his property. He stated that crime is an issue and the project will adversely impact properties.

Dr. Friedman stated that he is strongly against the trail and there is no compelling reason for it. He said that Northampton has Tyler Park and there is a plan to combine the recreation center with Tyler. He added that a parking lot is also needed and reiterated that there are other alternatives.

Mr. Weinstein stated that the civic center will ultimately connect to Tyler Park and thanked Dr. Friedman for the outstanding park system that he was a part of creating. He added that the Supervisors want to hear from the residents and that they should also be heard at County meetings.

Mr. Stone added that the County wants to have an open dialogue. Dr. Friedman stated that in defense of Mr. Stone, there would have been an advertised meeting on this issue had all the information been available from the County. Ms. Foley agreed.

Mr. Stone stated that an advocacy group should not be the face of the project. That was the reason the original meeting was cancelled.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted:

Michael T. Solomon  
Director of Planning and Zoning