

BERKS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
BERKS COUNTY SERVICES CENTER  
633 COURT STREET, 14<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR.  
READING, PA 19601-4309

February 12, 2025

## MINUTES

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair, Glenn R. Knoblauch called the monthly meeting of the Berks County Planning Commission to order at 3:00 p.m. The meeting was held on Wednesday, February 12, 2025, in person at the Berks County Planning Commission's Library Conference Room.

### 2. ROLL CALL

#### **The following members were present:**

Glenn R. Knoblauch, Chair  
Lisa Weaver-Gonzalez, Vice Chair, *via telephone*  
Lee C. Olsen, AIA, NCARB, Secretary, *via telephone*  
Jodi L. Gauker, *via telephone*  
Thomas C. McKeon, AICP, CEcD, *via telephone*  
David Mattes  
Kevin Lerch  
Sarah Phillips

#### **Also Attending:**

David N. Hunter, Sr., AICP, Executive Director  
David Peris, Berks County Assistant Solicitor  
Ashley Showers, Assistant Director  
Matthew McGough, Transportation Planner III  
Alan Piper, Transportation Planner III  
Michelle Franklin, Planner III  
Devon Hain, Transportation Planner II  
Taylor Lawrence, Planner III  
Michael Golembiewski, Transportation Modeler  
Laura Mursch, Intergovernmental Planner III  
Beth Burkovich, GIS Analyst  
Rick Royer, Design Planner I  
Amanda Timochenko, Planner II  
Jeremy Zaborowski, Director of Industrial Development Authority  
Pamela Menet, Director of Economic Development  
Derek Harris, Economic Development Coordinator

### 3. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

### 4. REPORTS OF STAFF

A. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Hunter began his report by announcing the passing of Doug Rauch and giving some background of the years he served as a member of the Berks County Planning Commission. He then asked for a moment of silence in his name to honor his time of service on the Board. Mr. Hunter then announced that Miguel Herrera has officially resigned and will no longer continue to serve as a member of the Board. Mr. Hunter extended invitations to the board and attendees to a couple upcoming events. These events are the Municipal Officials Dinner on March 13<sup>th</sup>, the PA Land Institute happening on April 5<sup>th</sup> where staff will be doing a presentation on the County Comprehensive Plan kickoff. Executive Director Hunter ended his report by sharing the roles and duties of the board members in the Planning Commission. One of the new duties as a member will be to share what information is important for the Planning Commission to know. He then went on to give an example on how sharing information and ideas can create positive changes.

Discussions ensued on the new duties and roles of the Board members and how there is great information to be shared. Chair, Glenn Knoblauch went on to share some information on attending some PMPEI courses at CELG Albright College to dive a little deeper on gaining knowledge about planning.

B. Solicitor's Report

a. **By Laws Update**

Solicitor David Peris began his report by giving everyone a handout of the proposed changes for their review. Mr. Peris went on to summarize each of the proposed changes by line item. Some of the articles being changed in the By Laws are Article III – Membership, Article IV – Officers, Article V – Election of Officers, Article VI – Meetings, Article VII – Meeting Agendas and Minutes, Article IX - Committees, and Article X – Employees.

Discussion ensued on the timeline of the review process for the Board members. The Board members agreed on having a week to review the drafted changes to the By Laws to then be discussed at the next Planning Commission Board Meeting.

C. Staff Reports and Recommendations

a. **Michelle Franklin – Alden on Sixth – Marion Township**

The proposed plan was submitted as a preliminary/final plan for review. The site is located along the south side of William Penn Boulevard approximately 500-feet west of 6th Street and at the west end of Cherry Drive. The proposal is for 61 single-family dwelling units with public water and sewer service and associated site improvements. The proposal also includes open space areas with a trail and dog park. It is proposed that a homeowner's association will take care of the open space areas. The site is in a Future Growth area and therefore is consistent with the Berks County Comprehensive Plan 2030 Update.

Discussion ensued on the specifications of the proposal and the location of the site. There was also a discussion on the type of homes and which municipality is providing sewer for the site.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. January 08, 2025 Meeting Minutes
- B. Land Development & Subdivision Activity Report/Summary
- C. Endorsed Land Development & Subdivision Activity

MOTION: David Mattes made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Sarah Phillips and passed unanimously.

5. STAFF, STAKEHOLDER AND BOARD MEMBERS REPORTS

**A. David Hunter – Utility Scale Solar Advice**

David Hunter began his presentation on the Utility Scale Solar Advice by going through the updated sections and explaining the changes. The wording was updated in sections 1, 2, 4, 5, 8. Sections 12, and 13 were added to the advice and in the middle paragraph on the left a hyperlink was added to the PA Climate Action Plan. Mr. Hunter ended his presentation by announcing a bill that was introduced in 2023 that was not voted on and it is now being reintroduced. The bill consists of dealing with solar rays and the proliferation of solar farms across the state.

Discussion ensued on the review process of the Utility Scale Solar Advice updates for the Board members. There was also a discussion on the reach of the advice and if it can be shared with other counties' planning commissions across the state and to developers.

**B. Beth Burkovich – Subdivision Dashboard**

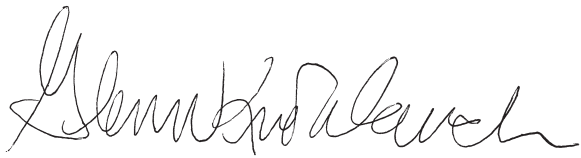
Ashley Showers led the presentation on the Subdivision Dashboard by giving background information on the vision for the project and the reasons why the change is beneficial. Then Beth Burkovich started her presentation by explaining the background in the making of the dashboard. She went on to explain the layout of the dashboard and the different categories. Beth Burkovich gave an overall lesson on how to use the dashboard and all its interactive choices you have. She explained how the map is interactive and when you click on a parcel it will give you all the information about the plan. It was explained that this is the same information given to the Board members in the Land Development & Subdivision Activity Report/Summary. The dashboard will be a new way of viewing the information given and will also allow for the public to view collective information over the years.

Discussion ensued on how nice the dashboard looks and how it works with the way technology is advancing. Questions arose as discussion continued about the appearance of the dashboard and where it will be available, when will it be live for the public and Board members, where will it show multi-family homes, and finally will there be an addition on the types of properties? Ashley Showers then clarified on how the dashboard will be publicized it will be and how it is still a work in progress. There are still additions to be made for example, a splash screen pop-up where it will give instructions on how to navigate and use the dashboard. Discussion continued with concerns of the dashboard replacing the existing written reports and how the Board still wishes

for the reports to remain as part of the consent agenda. This is due to the written reports being more convenient since it narrows down the data by the month in which the Board must review to vote on the consent agenda. While they love the idea of the dashboard and agreed it is a great asset for the public, the written reports should remain as part of the consent agenda and for their review.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Kevin Lerch made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:04p.m. The motion was seconded by David Mattes-.



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Glenn R. Knoblauch, Chair



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Lee C. Olsen, AIA, NCARB, Secretary