



**FORKS TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
1606 Sullivan Trail, Easton, PA 18040**

The Forks Township Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors joint work session was held at the Forks Township Municipal Building, 1606 Sullivan Trail, Easton, Pennsylvania on Tuesday, August 22, 2023. The meeting was opened at 7:04 p.m. by Chairperson Ian Heck followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairperson Heck stated that Mr. McIntosh, Alternate will be a voting member at this meeting.

Planning Commission members present:

Ian Heck, Chairperson
Eric Konecke, Vice Chairperson
Matt Menkowski, Secretary
Matt Sprung
Anthony Klapatch
Robert Rusnak
Hunter Keim, Alternate
Jeremy McIntosh, Alternate

Planning Commission members absent:

Kevin Jiorle

Board of Supervisors present:

John O'Neil, Chairperson
Ty Corallo, Vice-Chairperson
Tim Hughes, Secretary/Treasurer
Dean Turner, Member
Kelley Keegan, Member

Others Present:

Sean Policelli, Gilmore & Associates
Scott Muller, Gilmore & Associates
Donna M. Asure, Township Manager



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PUBLIC COMMENT – none

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

June 8, 2023 – Mr. Sprung made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rusnak to approve the minutes presented, Mr. Koneck abstained, motion carried 6-0-1.

June 27, 2023 – Mr. Klapatch made a motion, seconded by Mr. Konecke to approve the minutes presented, Mr. Sprung, Mr. McIntosh and Mr. Rusnak abstained, motion carried 4-0-3.

July 13, 2023 – Mr. Konecke made a motion, seconded by Mr. Sprung to approve the minutes presented. Mr. Heck made a correction to the motion made regarding the May 23, 2023 minutes approval from 5-4-0 to 5-0-4. The minutes were approved with this correction 7-0-0.

July 25, 2023 – Mr. Konecke made a motion with a correction to the Adjournment section of the minutes, which stated that Mr. Konecke seconded the motion, changing this to Robert Rusnak seconding the motion. Motion seconded by Mr. Klapatch to approve the minutes with this correction. Mr. Meck, Mr. Menkowski, and Mr. McIntosh abstained. Motion carried 4-0-3.

REPORTS – None.

CORRESPONDENCE – Mr. Menkowski announced that he received emails from the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, he read each one for the Commission and stated that he will forward the emails to them.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Country Meadows Phase 2 and 3 – Sketch Plan
175 Newlins Road, Easton, PA 18040
J9-21-5-0311
Northampton County, Forks Township

Thomas Ludgate, P.E. of Ludgate Engineering Corporation appeared before the Planning Commission with Bill D'Andrea, Vice President of Operations at Country Meadows and Patti Ackell Executive Director at Country Meadows. The Planning Commission is in receipt of an application, checklist and a (20) twenty page set of 11"



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x 17" sketch plans. Mr. Ludgate provided an overview of their proposed project explaining that the (2) two new structures will be independent living facilities with (31) thirty one units per building, with a similar

building design of the existing facility at this location, providing the residents with meal service and housekeeping. There will be public water and sewer at this location, they will need to upgrade the stormwater. He stated that the frontage of this property will remain the same, but the new buildings will have their own entrances, with a circle drop off, they have been working on a parking analysis. Discussion ensued regarding landscaping, sidewalks, resident parking, and Emergency responder vehicle access. There being no public comment, no action was taken.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Flooding in Forks Township

Scott Muller, P.E. and Sean Policelli, P.E. of Gilmore and Associates, Inc. reviewed the Forks Township Drainage Area Map with the Planning Commission and discussed in detail the history of flood prone locations in the Township and repairs the Township has made in the past. They have met in the past with various outside agencies, including PennDOT. They explained that the piping is undersized, they discussed alterations that could be made to raise the roadways, increase the size of the culvert, possible upstream corrections, installing basins to slow the flow of water, and the challenges and restrictions of what changes can be made in a floodway. They recommend scheduling a meeting with the Township and PennDOT, which they feel would be beneficial. Mr. Sprung recommends improving road signage for detours. Mr. Rusnak stated that the completion of Ben Jon Road will improve detoured vehicle travel. Mr. Policelli stated that when considering changes, we must also make sure that we do not cause flooding on properties that have not experienced flooding in the past. Mr. Corallo inquired about the possibility of making the basins larger to capture and hold larger quantities of water. Mrs. Keegan inquired about raising the Zucksville roadway. Mr. Turner and Mrs. Keegan both stated that this is an ongoing problem and feel we should come up with a plan and take action. Mr. Policelli stated that the first step would be to set up a meeting with PennDOT. Mr. Turner inquired as to why PennDOT wouldn't be responsible for fixing this issue because these are State Roads, Mr. Policelli explained that stormwater is the Township's responsibility. Mr. Policelli referred everyone to his Memorandum dated December 22, 2022, where he recommends a funding strategy such as applying for grants to assist the Township in these improvements. Ms. Keegan discussed karst topography, erosion, and sinkhole concerns with Mr. Policelli. Mr. Sprung stated that a small percentage of homes in the Township are directly affected by flooding, this is the natural environment, he suggested increasing detour signage to assist motorists' navigation around the closed roadways, and to work closely with future developers to address these issues if the opportunity arises. Mr. Heck stated that most residents are familiar with the roadways that typically flood, and agrees that we should think preventatively utilizing proper signage. Mr. McIntosh suggests



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improving the education of the public to assist them in navigation around flood prone locations, and proper signage is important, especially for people who do not have a smart phone or internet access. Mr. Keim asked if the Township could partner with Lafayette and install a stormwater basin on property they own to alleviate some of these issues on Sullivan Trail, and install piping as an alternative solution to raising the roadway. Ms. Keegan stated that the Township has experienced flooding problems for decades and would like this meeting to result in a plan to address this issue. Mr. Sprung stated that he feels this meeting has resulted in providing clarity, they have determined flooding isn't a result of overflow of basins, but rather it is a result of the natural topography. He summarized the actions we can take to move forward.

- Mr. Sprung recommended improved signage.
- Mr. Sprung recommended the Township seek funding.
- Mr. Sprung recommended that we focus on the area where homes are directly affected.
- Mr. Keim recommended the Township contact Lafayette College.
- Mr. Policeli recommended scheduling a meeting with PennDOT.

Public comment: Louisa Durkin 205 E. Paxinosa Road asked the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors to take these flooding issues into consideration when reviewing new Land Development projects. Ms. Durkin also expressed support of non-structural solutions to the flooding.

Public comment: Robert Donald who is not a resident of Forks Township and resides at 250 Bushkill Street suggested Forks Township partner with multiple municipalities, working together regionally since the Bushkill travels through multiple communities.

2. Uhler Road to Bushkill Road Recreation Path

Chairman Heck provided an overview of the path location, explained it is depicted on the master plan, and stated that pedestrians, bicyclists, and individuals with electric bikes would be easily able to commute and travel along the path into Easton if it is tied into the Recreation Path. Mr. O'Neil stated that in order to accomplish this, the Township would need to purchase land. There was discussion pertaining to the proposed location of the path, and which properties it would traverse. Mr. Sprung is in favor of contacting those property owners to determine their willingness to donate or allow purchase of their property for this path. Mr. Corallo is open to discussing the creation of this path utilizing the Township's recreation fees but is not willing to exceed the amount set aside. Mr. Policelli stated that if this is their long-term goal, as Land Development projects come before them, they can discuss this with the Developer, and ask them to set aside a portion of their project and dedicate it to the path. There was discussion regarding which properties this path may need to access. There was no public comment, and no action was taken.



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3. Meco Road – Road Diet

Chairperson Heck stated that they have discussed this concern in a previous meeting, there was public comment received with suggestions on improving this area such as painting lines that are faded, adding newly painted lines where they do not currently exist, adding better crosswalk design, and painting bike lanes on Mitman and Shetfield Drive. The Planning Commission would welcome the Board of Supervisors feedback and would like to know if they are interested in implementing these suggestions. Mr. Turner stated that there is an existing bike lane but agrees that it may benefit from adding the bike lane symbol. Mr. Corrallo and Ms. Keegan agree with him. Mr. Klapatch stated that better signage is needed where the trail ends on the east side of Meco Road. Mr. McIntosh suggested adding a crosswalk, stating that there is no clear access on Patriot Lane, and the entrance to the path is not well marked. Mr. Turner stated that they can take a look at it and if it is not marked, we can fix the markings, he does like the piano key crosswalk markings. Mr. Klapatch advised the Board that he has a map and will share it with everyone via email. There was no public comment, and no action was taken.

NON-AGENDA ITEMS: Chairperson Heck reminded the Planning Commission to email him if they anticipate being absent from the meetings.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ADJOURNMENT: There being no other business or comments, a motion was made by Mr. Rusnak to adjourn the meeting, motion seconded by Mr. Klapatch, motion carried 7-0-0 at 9:03 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

Katherine Faubert

Katherine M. Faubert

Matthew Menkowski

Matthew Menkowski
Planning Commission Secretary

