

EAST BUFFALO TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
589 Fairground Road, Lewisburg, PA  
August 21, 2019

Chairman Jim Knight called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Those present: Jon Allocca, Curtis Barrick, Christine Buffinton, Jim Knight, Andrew Misener, Jim Murphy, Ernie Romanini, and Makenzie Stover (CKCOG).

Visitors: See List

### **HEARING OF VISITORS**

- Jim Buck said he is interested in the two plans being presented. He emphasized that land development is an important function of local government.
- Stacy Richards said she is running for county commissioner. She is curious about the solar project, as she has experience in this field from running SEDA-COG's Energy Resource Center.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Jon Allocca and seconded by Andrew Misener to approve the July 17, 2019 meeting minutes as distributed. There was some discussion about last month's decision regarding health care facility placement in the Industrial Zone. Commission will discuss this at a later meeting.

Motion passed without exception. Curtis and Jim Murphy abstained from voting.

### **NEW BUSINESS: Bucknell – ER Bison Solar Project**

Jon Allocca presided while Bud Schenck of Mid-Penn Engineering and Chad Nichols of Encore Renewable Energy presented Bucknell's ER Bison Solar Project. Some of the questions and answers from the discussion were:

- Panels are 9-ft high and face due south.
- A pollinator-friendly meadow would be promoted between the panels.
- Did Encore meet with immediate neighbors? It was thought that all immediate neighbors had been contacted, although some in attendance disagreed. Encore and Bucknell will follow up.
- Concerns about shielding plants: how high? Will they grow in compacted shale and clay?
- Where does Encore usually site these installations? Chad: most are in open land and brownfields, although they have done a few in residential areas.
- The project would be developed under a 25-yr lease, with the array owned by an LLC. This will allow a 3<sup>rd</sup> party to take advantage of tax breaks.
- Electrical output will be sent to the unit at the corner of Abbey and Smoketown and then directly to Citizen's Electric. This will offset power that is currently bought directly from Citizen's Electric.
- The installed capacity is about 2 MW, which is 8% of Bucknell's usage.
- Has Bucknell looked at other sites that are more remote? Yes, this site offers the best solar orientation.

- What is the potential effect on wildlife?
- Fencing will be 8-ft maximum agricultural fencing.
- Bucknell will require the company to post a bond to cover potential removal.
- There are panels at the mods installed in approximately 2007 that are rusting and partially inoperable. Jim Knight stated that he is not sure what university entity is responsible for their maintenance, but will look into it.
- Questions were raised about the type of usage and whether it is considered part of the “Industrial Use” definition in Section 201: “A use whose field of economic activity includes ... electric services.” It was noted that Bucknell’s current co-generation power plant for cooling, heating, and electricity is located in East Buffalo Township.
- Makenzie emphasized that her determination is that this is a permitted use in the B-U zone.
- Plan still needs permanent access area and driveway permit, E&S approval, township engineer review, utility line stream crossing permit (GP-5), and improvements guarantee.

Motion by Jim Murphy and seconded by Curtis Barrick to table vote on this matter until the September meeting.

Motion passed without exception. Jim Knight and Christine Buffinton abstained.

#### **NEW BUSINESS: True Story LLC Hotel Project**

Bud Schenck of Mid-Penn Engineering presented the plan. They originally ran into FEMA problems with part of the project situated in the floodway, but the floodway mapping was revised based on intervening buildout since the last mapping, so a potential building on lot 3A is not in the floodway any more.

Written comments from EBT Zoning Administration were noted regarding approvals and agreements still needed.

Written comments from Township Engineer were noted regarding permit authorizations, improvement guarantee, sewage facilities planning exemption, pipe size waiver and potential replacement, and review for compliance with EBT floodplain ordinance.

Plan should be revised to indicate change of adjacent lot ownership.

Motion by Andrew Misener and seconded by Jim Murphy to table action until the September meeting.

Motion passed without exception.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Curtis Barrick and seconded by Andrew Misener to adjourn at 7:27 PM.

Submitted by Christine Buffinton, Secretary