

**Bethel Township**  
**Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission**  
**Joint Zoning Ordinance and Map Amendment Meeting**  
**February 12, 2019**

The Bethel Township Joint meeting was called to order by Chairman Jake Meyer at 6:33 p.m. in the Bethel Township Meeting Room, Bethel PA.

Attending the meeting were Lee Groff, Michael Graby, Jacob Meyer, Bill Straw, Brian Bauer, Michael Orendo, Corey Houser and George Shollenberger. Also, in attendance were Solicitor Eugene Orlando Jr., Engineer Gary Kraft, Zoning Officer Robin Royer and Township Sec Treas. Jayne Seifrit.

Bill Straw stated the hope is to come to a recommendation for the Board of Supervisors for the zoning and zoning map amendments. Bill Straw turned the meeting over to Gary Kraft. Gary Kraft stated the members have been given a handout that is partly a result of the Township Zoning Officer, Solicitor and Engineer meeting to go over Agriculture Zoning from the state and what if anything needs to be changed. Gary Kraft stated the first section comes from Richmond Township as it has already been vetted and is acceptable as it relates to state statutes. Gary Kraft noted Highly Intensive Agriculture use is no longer. The members decided to start with Richmond Township's Ag Provisions. It was noted the sections would be changed to follow our zoning numbering of sections. Next question raised is there a way to limit Intensive Ag uses on tracts smaller than 10 acres? Eugene Orlando stated there are laws that regulate agricultural operations, those being Act 38 A.C.R.E and the Right to Farm. They protect farming operations from nuisance regulations and restrictions. There is the Right to Farm Act that allows smaller parcels if "anticipate" income from ag production to exceed \$10,000 per year to operate on less than 10 acres. The setbacks in our current zoning ordinance go away. It was noted there are small setbacks but not as they were. The members agreed they would like to protect farming activities in the Township, but would like to be able to strike a happy medium with existing residential areas. It appears the state has drastically limited what a township can do to protect anything that is not Agriculture. Discussion on what if's: example if a property is already used for Agriculture and it gets re-zoned to the Residential Zoning can the Ag use continue and for how long? It was stated it can continue forever as long as the use did not cease at some point in time. That is all part of the zoning review for use request.

Schubert Area Neighborhood/Residential – Request to add Animal Hospitals & Large Animal Veterinary Clinics – Gary Kraft stated there are several ways it could be looked at to achieve what the property owner is desiring. After discussion it was determined to place Animal Hospitals & Large Animal Veterinary Clinics in the definitions and shift the NC line to include the Clements property out of the proposed Residential District.

Residential District - The members were contemplating the zoning changes in the Frystown (645) area and the Airport property and surrounding properties.

Warehouse – There have been comments made about warehouses, positive and negative. Gary Kraft charted the warehouses in the Township, whether they are in use, unoccupied, approved or in planning. Results showed 1.73 square miles of the 42.2 miles (or 4.1%) in Bethel Township are used for warehouses.

Interchange area 645 and I-78 westside – Discussion on the many houses already existing, and the transitional idea. The acreage was discussed and the uses that exist on the properties currently were also mentioned. It was decided to come back to this area.

Airport Property and area at Deck Dr – Discussion on the fact there are farms currently enrolled in the Agriculture Security Area Program in Bethel Township. It was stated Agriculture use could be added in the Residential District. Come back to this area.

Neighborhood Commercial – Discussion on what to call it, and whatever it is called what does it do to property values. It was decided to call it Commercial District. It was also discussed to add a Light Industrial definition and use; also, to add Sales & Service in Section 520A.22 and modify the definition of Motor Vehicle to include construction vehicles.

Back to making decisions based on all of the discussion:

- NW of the I-78/SR 645 interchange designated to be Residential – keep it in Agriculture Preservation District
- Grimes Airport and surrounding properties designated to be Residential - keep it in Agriculture Preservation District
- Deck Drive area – Designated to be in Residential - keep it in Agriculture Preservation District
- Interchange at 645 and I-78 and along Brown Road to be Neighborhood Commercial – keep it in Industrial Commercial District as it is currently.

Eugene Orlando said where do we go from here; he stated the Zoning Officer, Engineer and if need be, he need time to rework the map and language in the zoning ordinance to reflect the changes that were discussed. They anticipate being able to have it completed in time for a meeting in March. It was decided to hold a meeting March 26, 2019 at 6:30 pm for zoning /map ordinance revisions.

Met-Ed representative asked for a timeline. It was stated may be by May or June.

Steve Burkhart stated he has been here his whole life and feels his property should remain in IC. He has a lot of money invested.

Eugene Orlando encourages the public to come to the Planning Commission Meetings which are held the fourth Tuesday of the month. He also wanted to caution all members from prejudicing themselves so that fair reviews of plans can happen.

Corey Houser made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:57 pm., seconded by Jake Meyer. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jayne K Seifrit  
Township Secretary