

Call to order: Chair Najarian called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Attendance: Council members present were Mike Najarian, Fred Folmer, Daphne Meyer and Marthe Olesh. Supervisor liaison Jake Meyer was also in attendance. There were no other persons present.

Election of Officers: Secretary Folmer conducted the election for the office of Chairperson. On a motion by Folmer and a second by Olesh, Mike Najarian was unanimously elected Chairperson. Chair Najarian then conducted the elections for the remaining offices. On a motion by Folmer and a second by D. Meyer, Ken Norton was unanimously elected Vice-chairperson. On a motion by D. Meyer and a second by Olesh, Fred Folmer was unanimously elected Secretary.

Approval of Minutes: Najarian made a motion to approve the minutes from December 3, 2018 as submitted. Olesh seconded and the motion carried.

Old Business:

Chesapeake Bay Drainage Awareness: There was no new report.

Municipal Building Wetland: There was no new report.

Recreation Board/Airport Road Property: Folmer reported on a Rec Bd. meeting he had attended on December 20, 2018. He informed Council the Rec Bd., in conjunction with Township Engineer Gary Kraft, had developed a "Scope of Work" sheet to go along with the already approved development plan drawings. Also, surveyor DeVonn Henne had established the property boundary perimeter. The board moved and approved two motions: 1). to apply for the Erosion/Sedimentation Limited Disturbance Permit, and 2). that Kraft should develop the initial development plan bid for contractors and post it on the internet as well as advertise said plan. Finally, a tentative workday, dependent on suitable weather, was set for Saturday, January 19, 2019 at 9:00 a.m. to remove small trees and brush from the property's perimeter.

Spotted Lanternfly: Folmer circulated several recent news articles from the Reading Eagle: "State Announces Grants for Spotted Lanternfly Research" (from Dec. 27, 2018); "The Top Stories From 2018: #1 - Spotted Lanternfly Shows No Signs of Going Away" (from Dec. 30, 2018); "The Unwelcome Guest" (from Jan. 6, 2019).

Township Recycling: Folmer presented some information gathered from his discussion with Brent McFeaters, manager for Union Township (Lebanon County) about their up-and-running recycling program. Union is a mostly rural, agricultural and wooded township very similar to Bethel. He informed Council that McFeaters estimated their recycling program cost that township about \$1,000 per month to operate and advised not to start up a program at the present time or until the problem with the problem of recycling plastics is resolved.

Land Conservation: Folmer reported that on December 21, 2018 he sent an email to the chairperson of the Camp Swatara Property Committee inquiring as to whether or not the camp's Board of Directors is considering the establishment of a preservation easement for any part of Camp Swatara. As of the meeting date he had not received a reply.

New Business: Plan Reviews

1. Reber Estate Subdivision: At 281 Midway Road, the submitted plan requested permission to subdivide 26 acres +/- on the north side of Interstate 78 from 60 acres +/- on the south side of I-78. A party wishes to continue farming the northern parcel but wishes to own that portion instead of continuing to rent it. There were no provisions to develop or change either tract from their current conditions. There were no adverse environmental impact concerns voiced by any EAC member and no objections to the request.
2. Frystown School: The submitted plan requested permission to construct an Amish school, about 30 ft. x 44 ft., on a 1 acre tract +/- at 110 Deck Road. All variances for a stable, privies, handicap facilities etc had been granted. There were no negative environmental impact concerns expressed by any EAC members nor did any feel the construction would adversely affect the current character of the immediate area. No EAC member objected to the request.
3. Daub Road Warehouse: The submitted plan requested permission to build a 567,000 +/- sq. ft. warehouse on 67 acres +/- at 81 Daub Road. All EAC members expressed concerns about the disruptive negative impact the construction would have on a stream which flows through the proposed development as well as the wetlands contained therein. It was also noted that approximately one-half mile to the south there is a very large warehouse equal to, or larger than, the proposed one and is currently unoccupied but illuminated at night. Immediately adjacent to the property to be developed is a very large used heavy commercial truck sales business. There is also the very large, very highly illuminated Flying J Truck Stop. All of those operations contribute to light pollution of the nighttime sky as would the proposed warehouse. The proposed warehouse and the current empty one would both contribute to more air and noise pollution and greatly increased vehicular traffic as well as deterioration of the paving surface of Route 645 from the attendant diesel trucks if, or when, they become operational. All of the above would contribute to a general lowering of the quality of life in the vicinity. No EAC members supported this development plan and all felt it should be denied.
4. Subdivision & Land Development for Bethel Business Park: The submitted plan requested permission to build a 700,000 +/- sq. ft. warehouse on the east side of Route 645 just south of Interstate 78 and immediately adjacent to an existing, and currently unoccupied, warehouse which is equal in size or larger. It was noted that Bethel Township already has the existing Berks 78 Business Park. That business park, as well as other recently constructed large warehouses in the township have taken hundreds of acres out of agricultural production and necessitated the drilling of commercial sized wells to supply them with the necessary water. It was also pointed out there are wetlands and an existing stream in the proposed development area which could be disrupted and adversely affected.

Additionally it was felt that increased operation of diesel trucks would exacerbate the already compromised air quality caused by the commercial truck traffic in and out of the Flying J Truck Stop just opposite the proposed development on the west side of Route 645. It would also cause more rapid destruction of the paving surface of Route 645. EAC members expressed concern that the lighting from the proposed warehouse, the empty warehouse next to it, the other proposed warehouse (See #3 above), the Flying J Truck Stop and nearby Best Trucks (just to the north on I-78) and all the truck parking areas associated with them would together be a significant, and increased, cause of nighttime light pollution. Increased heavy truck traffic would also produce more noise pollution. No EAC members were in favor of allowing this submitted plan and urged its denial.

*Note - The developments submitted for #3 & #4 above are both in the viewshed of the Appalachian Trail and are both contrary to the PA Appalachian Trail Act.

Ongoing Tabled Business: Folmer shared a news article from the Reading Eagle from January 6, 2019: "Chester DA Appoints Attorney for Pipeline Probe" wherein a lawyer with environmental law expertise was named to investigate the construction practices of the Sunoco Mariner EAst 1, 2 & 2x pipelines.

Adjournment: At 8:50 p.m. Folmer made a motion to adjourn. D. Meyer seconded and the motion carried. The next meeting was scheduled for Monday, February 4, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in the Bethel Township Municipal Building.

(Minutes submitted by Fred Folmer, Secretary to Council)