

**MIDDLESEX TOWNSHIP
WORKSHOP MEETING
November 22, 2024
7:30 AM**

OFFICIALS PRESENT:	SUPERVISORS:	Chairman Donald S. Geistwhite, Jr. Vice-Chairman Steven Larson William H. Goodhart
	SOLICITOR:	Keith O. Brenneman
	ENGINEER:	Bud Grove
	DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SAFETY:	Chief Steve Kingsborough
	ZONING/CODES ENFORCEMENT:	Mark D. Carpenter
	ASST. CODES/MS4 CO-ORDINATOR:	Gerald Steigleman
	ROADMASTER:	Zachary L. Zook
	MANAGER:	Eileen M. Gault

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Geistwhite called the meeting to order at 7:40 a.m. in the Middlesex Township Municipal Building.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Request by Pinnacle Realty Development Company to amend the Middlesex Township Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map to Reclassify from Open Space conservation and Rural Area Category to Mixed Use Category and to Rezone eight parcels of land at 151 Wolfs Bridge Road and 106 Wolfs Bridge Road from RF-Residential Farm to VC-Village Center Zoning:

Chairman Geistwhite then turned the meeting over to the Township Solicitor Mr. Brenneman. Mr. Brenneman stated that this was the time scheduled for public hearings on two matters requested by Pinnacle Realty Development Company. The first matter is for the purpose of a proposed amendment to the Middlesex Township Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map to reclassify from Open Space Conservation and Rural Area Category to Mixed Use Category. The second matter is a proposed Ordinance amending Middlesex Township Zoning Ordinance to rezone one parcel of land at 151 Wolfs Bridge Road and seven parcels at 106 Wolfs Bridge Road from RF-Residential Farm to VC-Village Center Zoning. Mr. Brenneman reviewed the procedures followed up to the time of the public hearing. He then stated that the purpose of the hearing on the two matters for the proposed Resolution and the Zoning Ordinance requests will be held under one hearing at which time the Supervisors can consider decisions on the Resolution first and then the Zoning Ordinance requests. The hearing was then turned over to Charlie Suhr, Attorney with Stevens & Lee, representing the applicant, Pinnacle Realty Development Company. Mr. Suhr stated that the proposal is to consider two changes to amend the comprehensive plan and a zoning ordinance map amendment for a possible mixed residential development to include single family homes, townhomes, and garden homes. Both the Township Planning Commission and the County Planning Commission voted in favor of the changes. Mr. Suhr then introduced Tony Maras, who is representing the developer, and Keith Ottis, professional engineer from Langan. At this time, Mr. Maras explained that one of the parcels is zoned VC and they are looking to extend that zoning line to the western side and across to the Eagles parcel. The housing proposed is not luxury housing, but attainable housing to consist of approximately 879 total units with 379 on the east side and five hundred on the western side. Mr. Maras stated that they have committed to work and

make a contribution and pay towards the realignment of Wolfs Bridge Road and Route 11, if the Township were to acquire the Right of Way. There will be traffic impacts, but this project is within the township public sewer service area and is adjacent to major roadways and transportation. Mr. Maras commented that this is not a prime agricultural area and is not an area that needs to be preserved. He is asking for permission for the rezoning requests to allow them to move forward with the next step in this process. Mr. Keith Ottis then briefly outlined and reviewed on the map the properties in question for rezoning and the proposed development. He discussed the access points off of Wolfs Bridge Road that would come into the development, the series of internal roads and the potential stormwater management areas. These are just preliminary conceptual plans but generally in line with what the intent of the development is. Mr. Brenneman then asked the Supervisors if they had any questions or comments. Chairman Geistwhite expressed his concern about the impact on the school district that is already struggling with growth, in addition to the three developments already happening in the township. There being no further questions or comments from the Supervisors at this time, Mr. Brenneman then asked the public to state their name and address if they had any questions or comments.

Mr. John Manta, 255 Wolfs Bridge Road, expressed his concern about the environmental impact this would have on the community. He is concerned about the farmland, animals, increase of traffic and the population at the schools. He is also concerned about the noise and light pollution.

Mr. Chris Bado, 229 Wolfs Bridge Road, opposes the re-zoning. The fundamental process is a concern as the Township is nearing the completion of a zoning ordinance rewrite. The County Planning Commission recommended adopting the Zoning Ordinance before considering this amendment. Mr. Bados stated that this does not represent the best interests of the residents of this township. Mr. Bado asked that the Supervisors carefully consider the impact on the township before moving forward. If Pinnacle Realty Development's goal is to provide residential housing, why are they proposing rezoning to VC (Village Center) or Multi-use II, why not a residential classification. A VC district opens the door to other types of commercial facilities in this area.

Mr. Mike Hurley, 430 Wolfs Bridge Road, concurs with the last two gentlemen's comments, however, the push to the North has already been established. It has not been started, but the board had approved an overlay for a development to the North. Mr. Hurley would like to know what the plans are for continuously building on Wolfs Bridge Road and stated there is no reason to continue to bring more development in and the Board should do what is best for this community. He stated that the Board has done their best to take care of things so let us not ruin this with more people in a small area without resources to manage it when it is a great place to live.

Mr. Jim Gehr, 3351 Spring Road, a lifetime resident of this area, agreed that this is a tremendous place to live. He stated that a comprehensive plan is well thought out, yet the level of growth in Middlesex Township is astonishing and where is the 20-year plan. We choose to live in Middlesex because of the lifestyle. There was mention of the Route 11 intersection, what about the turnpike underpass which is not very friendly to get through and now we are talking about adding more heavy traffic. The traffic on Route 11 and N Middlesex Road, at the medical marijuana facility, is designed all wrong. The number of residences being built lately has doubled the number of residencies in Middlesex Township and now this would add another 25%. Mr. Gehr encouraged the board to truly consider what is good for the community. He then thanked the Supervisors for the time this morning and for the energy they put in all the time.

Mr. Matthew Barrick, 410 Hollowbrook Drive, stated that everywhere is growing but that does not mean that it needs to be here. There are three (3) high density developments currently going on and I am concerned about what that means for the capacity of our schools as well. Looking at Middlesex

elementary we are looking at a 75% growth of our schools that are looking at budget issues as it is. This tract may be developed one day, but it is not the time.

Mr. Robert Eppley, Jr., 63 Beagle Club Road, was running some numbers and mentioned that there is a possibility of seven hundred proposed new homes with this development, there is currently 1300 at the Grange Development, Cumberland Preserve 150, McNaughton Homes 390 and the Frey/Phillips property at potentially 400. This will double the 2010 census and will have a big impact on the community. This has to be controlled and handled.

Mrs. Robyn Eppley, 63 Beagle Club Road, resident for 36 years and serves on the Middlesex Township Planning Commission. On behalf of Larry Claycomb, who could not be present the last time the PC met, the minutes had not been approved and there were corrections that needed to be made. Mrs. Eppley then stated that there were two oppositions to moving forward with this project from the PC and that was based on the fact that the Township has not codified what the plan is going to be in the Zoning Ordinance. There has been another group coming forward wanting to make a zoning change with their property of interest and they have been turned away until the zoning ordinance changes and if you do that to one you should do that to all.

Mr. Eric Fairchild, 1224 McCormick Road, Mechanicsburg, is an Upper Allen Township Commissioner. Mr. Fairchild faced this same issue in Upper Allen Township and stated that there is a real disconnect on the impact on the school districts with developments. The people that live here now are ones that are paying for any new development and the impacts. There is a burden on teachers, the facilities, and the finances. Historically developers would pay their way in with providing schools and we have gotten away from that. He then thanked the Supervisors.

Mr. Tracy Gleim, 450 Sherwood Drive, is a lifelong farmer in Middlesex Township and serves on the Planning Commission. Mr. Gleim is not against development but is against wrong development. The particular tract should be developed for housing because it has water and sewer and is close to the Harrisburg Pike, however, it should be developed with single family homes like what is already in the area or like the Meadows Development. What is being proposed is too dense.

Mr. Chris Bado, 229 Wolfs Bridge Road, wanted clarification on what he thought was said, that no written notices were sent out to the property owners adjacent. Mr. Brenneman responded that written notices were sent out to the properties subject to rezoning, but no written notices were provided to property owners adjoining the property that is the subject of the rezoning because that is not required by law. Mr. Bado commented that one of the issues for him is the long delay in approving minutes from the Supervisor meetings and Planning Commission meeting and minutes not available.

Supervisor Goodhart then stated that the minutes get done as soon as they can. That the Manager and Staff are busy and do the best they can. Mr. Tracy Gleim stated that sometimes the Planning Commission meetings are cancelled therefore the minutes will not be approved until later.

Mr. John Manta, 255 Wolfs Bridge Road, growing number of homeless people living near Wolf Bridge and the Conodoguinet Creek.

Mr. Brad Filipovich, 12 Teaberry Road, stated that not too long ago there was a developer here proposing the Overlay District on part of Wolfs Bridge Road. That was denied and now there is another proposal to change the zoning. Let us just leave things the way they are.

Mr. Chris Lewis, 375 Hollowbrook Drive, wanted to know if this was a binary decision that must be made today or can it be tabled for a future time, because the Village Community was a catch all for areas that didn't conform to a lot of the available zonings. There are many issues that need to be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan before pushing this through. Township Solicitor Mr. Brenneman stated that he is not the Board, he works for the Board and it is his recommendation that a decision is made, with everyone here, all the notice has been given that is required by law, the developer wants an answer and Mr. Brenneman would expect that everyone present would want an answer. He then stated that a number of the residents present had talked about the age of the Comprehensive Plan which is true and is one of the things the County Planning has recommended that the Board review because it has been that long. Mr. Lewis then stated that if you look at the Village Community and the rezoning the developer is asking for, the type of garden housing and apartment complex falls under exceptional use so to rezone this area with the plan that is proposed are not really conforming.

Mr. Justin Welch, 61 Gasoline Alley, stated that his parents have twelve acres and this development being proposed will be right behind his parents' and this will change the view, create light pollution and whatever else. This will have a major impact on the other homes near the Eagles.

Mr. Chris Lewis, 375 Hollowbrook Drive, pointed out that under the RF (Residential Farm), if public sewer and water are available, there is language that allow for this tract of land to be broken down into $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$ acre lots which would fall under the current zoning and allow for development without rezoning it to make an exception for an exception for an exception.

Mr. Tony Maras stated that every citizen here has raised a point that is raised at every zoning/rezoning hearing, every conditional use, every special exception. There are other standards that this Township has imposed that if this rezoning is approved the developer will still have to meet. Whether this property gets developed at all still remains to be determined because there are other things that must happen. Mr. Maras stated that one thing the Board has to understand is that the average cost of construction of a residential home since COVID is \$122 per foot. We have committed to improvements to Route 11 and Wolfs Bridge Road. We are not proposing commercial properties, and these are not the final plans. Mr. Maras is asking for a decision today.

At this time Township Solicitor Mr. Brenneman stated that the Supervisors could declare the hearing closed. Chairman Geistwhite declared the hearing closed. Mr. Brenneman then stated that the next item the Supervisors need to consider is whether or not to adopt Resolution 2024 – 8 amending the Comprehensive Plan as noted on the agenda.

Discussion and possible action to adopt Resolution 2024 – 8 to amend the Comprehensive Plan to Reclassify from the Open Space Conservation Category to the Mixed use Commercial Residential Category: On the motion of Chairman Geistwhite, seconded by Supervisor Goodhart, it was unanimously agreed to adopt Resolution 2024 – 8 to amend the Comprehensive Plan to Reclassify from the Open Space Conservation Category to the Mixed use Commercial Residential Category.

Request by Pinnacle Realty Development Company to Rezone from RF-Residential Farm to VC-Village Center Zoning one parcel at 151 Wolfs Bridge Road and seven parcels collectively identified as 106 Wolfs Bridge Road:

Discussion and possible action to adopt Ordinance No. 2 – 2024 amending the Middlesex Township Zoning Ordinance by rezoning parcels of land at 151 Wolfs Bridge Road and collectively 106 Wolfs Bridge Road from RF-Residential Farm zoning to VC-Village Center zoning: On the motion of Chairman Geistwhite, seconded by Vice-Chairman Larson, it was unanimously agreed to adopt

Ordinance No. 2 – 2024 amending the Middlesex Township Zoning Ordinance by rezoning parcels of land at 151 Wolfs Bridge Road and collectively 106 Wolfs Bridge Road from RF-Residential Farm zoning to VC-Village Center zoning.

Public Comment: There is no public comment.

Discussion and possible action on Cumberland County Small Bridge Program Project: Roadmaster Mr. Zook reported that there was a meeting with the County, and they are moving forward with the Small Bridge Program. The Commissioners have decided that they will fund 50% of the project up to a maximum of \$200,000. That amount is not a lot compared to some of the cost of the projects. There will be some expense for the Township. They are looking at bundling some of the projects. The Supervisors agree to continue with the Cumberland County Small Bridge Program Project.

Discussion and possible action to request an extension for the Cumberland Plans Grant for the Zoning Ordinance Re-write Project: Township Manager Mrs. Gault reported that the Township had obtained a grant through the County for the Zoning Ordinance Re-write Project. The remaining balance of funding would be received from the County once the project is completed. The grant expires on December 31, 2024, so the Township would request an addendum to the agreement to extend it through June 30, 2025. On the motion of Chairman Geistwhite, seconded by Vice-Chairman Larson, it was unanimously agreed to authorize the Township Manager to submit an addendum to request an extension for the Cumberland Plans Grant until June 30, 2025.

Discussion and possible action to purchase Planning, Zoning and Public Works software from iWorQ at the proposed cost of \$31,500: Township Manager Mrs. Gault requested authorization to purchase a new software that would assist with Planning, Zoning and Public Works. After a brief discussion about the software and how it will help in the different departments, on the motion of Chairman Geistwhite, seconded by Vice-Chairman Larson, it was unanimously agreed to authorize the purchase of software from iWorQ for the Planning, Zoning and Public Works Departments at the proposed cost of \$31,500.

Discussion and possible action to approve the minutes of September 27, 2024: On the motion of Chairman Geistwhite, seconded by Vice-Chairman Larson, it was agreed to approve the minutes of September 27, 2024, with Supervisor Goodhart abstaining since he was not at the September 27, 2024, meeting.

Discussion and possible action on the proposed 2025 Draft Budget: On the motion of Chairman Geistwhite, seconded by Vice-Chairman Larson, it was unanimously agreed to advertise for public review the 2025 draft budget.

Supervisor / Staff Comments: Roadmaster Mr. Zook reported that he was at a PennDOT meeting with Mark and Bud to discuss some safety improvements at the intersection of S. Middlesex and Trindle Road. There is a design for a traffic signal or a roundabout.

Zoning Officer Mr. Carpenter reported that the Tiogo Farm zoning had been changed when medical marijuana became legal to allow the medical marijuana facility. The odor and light pollution have created an issue for the residents in that area. In doing the new zoning ordinance the County Planning Commission made a comment that medical marijuana facilities should not be allowed in a Residential Zoning District or an Agricultural District. When the medical marijuana act was created, the state suggested they only be allowed in Industrial Districts because of the issues we are dealing with now. In the new zoning ordinance would the Supervisors want to remove the facility out of the Agricultural District, and it would become a non-conforming use and only allow it in the Industrial District.

Executive Session: On the motion of Chairman Geistwhite, seconded by Supervisor Goodhart, it was unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 a.m. to Executive Session to discuss a matter of possible litigation.

The Board reconvened at 10:15 a.m. On the motion of Chairman Geistwhite, seconded by Vice-Chairman Larson, it was unanimously agreed to authorize the Assistant Codes Enforcement Officer Mr. Steigleman to submit the property located at 1245 Harrisburg Pike to the Cumberland County Blighted Property Reinvestment Board.