

**UPPER NAZARETH TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION
100 NEWPORT AVENUE
NAZARETH, PA 18064**

Minutes of September 8, 2022

The regular meeting of the Upper Nazareth Township Planning Commission was called to order by Vice-Chairwoman Pamela Berlew at 6:50 p.m. on Thursday, September 8, 2022, in the Township Building.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present: Jay Benfield, Pamela Berlew, Kelly-Jo Smith, Zoning Officer John Soloe, and Recording Secretary Deanne Werkheiser. Also present were Township Manager Lisa Klem. James Campana and Scott Sylvainus were absent.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion was made by Jay Benfield, seconded by Kelly-Jo Smith to approve the September 8, 2022, meeting agenda. Motion approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Kelly-Jo Smith, seconded by Jay Benfield to approve the August 11, 2022, meeting minutes. Motion approved unanimously.

PRESENTATION

AJ Schwartz from Environmental Planning & Design (EPD) distributed agendas for this evening's presentation. He will be doing a PowerPoint presentation, which will be sent to the members for reference. AJ gave a recap of what was discussed at the August meeting. He will be giving a homework assignment to the members. AJ reviewed shared districts. Chapman, Lower Nazareth, and Upper Nazareth, through the Multi-municipal Comprehensive Plan, are allowed regional land use sharing. Agreements will be needed, and all uses must be covered per the MPC. Some of this will be part of the homework assignment. Looking for needs and challenges. He does suggest sharing zoning districts for commonality. A comparison map was done with Lower Nazareth. This will be shown and discussed further. EPD did an audit, a technical review of the Zoning Ordinance and definitions.

Zoning Transect- AJ explained how the transect is done, basically a cross section through the landscape. It looks at the actual land- hills, valleys, etc. as well as where development has happened. This gives you a better idea of where it should be based on the actual topography.

AJ reviewed the Transect Districts (TD) one through eleven, with one being fields- low density and eleven being manufacturing, extraction- high density. Of the eleven districts, Upper Nazareth currently has eight- agricultural, low density residential, medium density residential, rural residential, neighborhood, small scale industrial, distribution, and manufacturing and extraction. Your homework assignment will be what you want in the districts. AJ showed areas in the Township that are in the TD. He discussed overlays, rural resource overlay and designated growth overlay. The committee needs to decide where and what you want for the community; what areas to develop and what areas to preserve. John Soloe asked if the definitions will be the same throughout all three municipalities. AJ responded no; they are not required to be but there are a lot of similarities.

AJ showed maps of Upper and Lower Nazareth together with their zoning districts. He showed a map of current non-conforming residential lots. There are 2,442 lots in the Township, 870 are non-conforming residential lots. He showed a map of active agriculture broken down by percentage- 60%+ to 0%.

AJ stated they have looked at the act 557 map for water and sewer. This will help with decide where future growth should go. Industrial growth would go where active industrial is. If areas are zoned correctly, it would greatly reduce non-conforming lots considerably. A brief discussion ensued regarding current areas and possible changes, such as quarries and mineral extraction. AJ stated the land may be owned by a quarry but is being used for farming. May require changes now that will require the owner to ask for zoning use changes at a later time. Overlay areas designate growth and protected areas. Currently there are no growth control mechanisms. Overlays would help institute some. There are no guarantees that uses will stay the same over the years. It could be set up that public financing within growth areas for water and sewer but not in rural areas. The property owner would have to cover the costs.

Currently Upper Nazareth is more residential tax based. Lower Nazareth is more non-residential tax based. The two sides of the Township are quite different. Overlays help to manage the density not the zoning district. Overlays can be as inclusionary or as exclusionary as needed for the area. AJ gave an example of a farmstead area that allowed three homes on a twenty-acre lot without requiring a subdivision. Allows for a family to grow on their property and stay agricultural. To help you decide on density you need to decide what works best for you. Not all areas need overlay districts, they do not need to be consistent with zoning areas. Brian Sayago asked about high-density areas. AJ replied the committee needs to decide which areas work best for that. A brief discussion ensued regarding the old dump area, the Holy Family Cemetery, Eagle's Landing, and Creekside.

AJ stated growth is necessary to maintain what you currently have. That growth needs to be placed properly. A discussion ensued regarding taxes, amenities, and how they get paid for. School taxes far outweigh Municipal taxes. Residents do not want high taxes. EIT needs to be factored into your tax base income. Strategic planning is required for municipalities to stay afloat.

AJ stated that a link will be sent for a portal that will take you to the database. It has all the districts. It will ask what you think should be allowed in each district. All members will need to register. AJ showed examples of what the site looks like and what will be asked. They don't have to be done all at once. This will then be used as a guide for appropriate land uses. He reviewed how to navigate the data base. He would like to see this done in the next two weeks.

AJ gave examples of land uses that can be shared. He suggested that they think of what they have and what they do not want. A brief discussion ensued about the Comprehensive Plan and members versus shared usage between Chapman, Lower Nazareth, and Upper Nazareth. Would be easier if all of the COG was involved. Every community will need group homes. Pamela Berlew responded that we do currently have them.

AJ stated that we may need to have a joint meeting with Chapman and Lower Nazareth in October. An ICA will need to be in place. Gary Asteak should be working on that.

NEW BUSINESS

Pamela Berlew stated there was nothing at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

Pamela Berlew stated there was nothing at this time.

COURTESY OF THE FLOOR

George Polak distributed notices of his status change to American State National, to the members.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Jay Benfield, seconded by Kelly-Jo Smith to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m. Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Deanne Werkheiser,
Recording Secretary