

WELLSBORO PLANNING COMMISSION

July 27, 2011

**CALL TO ORDER:** Planning Commission Chairman Ron Comstock called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the conference room of the John E. Dugan Fire Station-Municipal Building at 28 Crafton Street, Wellsboro, PA. 16901.

**ROLL CALL:** Planning Commission Members present were Ron Comstock, Kevin Connelly, Katie Mader, Jim Prevost, Lou Prevost, Sue Trescott and Gus Vargas and Assistant Secretary-Florence Martino.

**VISITORS-** Bill Niles, Council President-Joan Hart

**PLEDGE TO FLAG:** The pledge of allegiance to the flag was given by all present.

**MINUTES:** Lou Prevost made a motion to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Katie Mader motion carried 7-0.

**NEW BUSINESS:** LAND DEVELOPMENT- NILES OFFICE TRAILER AT 111WEST AVENUE- Bill Niles explained to the members of the Planning Commission, he has leased the warehouse building located down back of the former Niles Lumber Company store, since August. Now he would like to have an office space available to rent to a business or company. He said he does not want to build an office building and pay taxes; he would like to lease an office trailer. Bill Niles said Scott Williams has 8'Scotties that would work for an office. Bill Niles said there is an existing water and sewer already located behind the building and he has approval from the borough to hook-up to the sewer line. Bill Niles said he didn't know who would be renting the office space at this time; however he came tonight to ask for a variance to move in a temporary office trailer.

Katie Mader said this would set a back precedent. Katie Mader said a trailer would look like a trailer 10 years from now. She said we have a trailer lot on the other side of town. Bill Niles said it would be an office trailer and would be temporary and would not be there for ten years. Bill Niles said the trailer would be an office not a residence. Lou Prevost asked what type of business office the trailer would be used for. Bill Niles said he did not know what type of business would rent it. Lou Prevost said an office trailer could easily become overnight lodging by just bringing a cot in to the building. Lou Prevost said the Borough should be careful what is approved, and consider what would greet people coming into town from Route 660. The Borough needs to have well defined landscape around the building. Gus Vargas said he should present a plan and have some landscaping or lattice around the trailer. Bill Niles said the trailer would not be up front on the roadway it would be down by the warehouse and the area is zoned commercial /industrial. Bill Niles said there are two access roads at this time and could have a third access road off from Greenwood Street. Katie Mader said the area has been developed as residential and we need to set a precedent.

Lou Prevost asked if he had a lease for the four acres. Bill Niles said he wanted to have an office space if someone would need a space. Lou Prevost said an office trailer could become overnight accommodations. Lou Prevost asked if it would be a mobile office

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trailer or a commercial construction trailer. Bill Niles said the Borough has commercial trailers at the hospital construction site. Lou Prevost said a mobile office trailer could be in town for 2 years to 30 years. Lou Prevost asked why Bill did not build an office building and advertise for tenants. Bill Niles said he pays the borough enough money in taxes, if he built another building he would have more taxes.

Kevin Connelly said the Planning Commission should have more information about what would be on the site before they could approve the plan. Lou Prevost said if it would be a positive business the borough could issue a temporary variance. Lou Prevost said he could bring in a temporary trailer then build on a permanent building and remove the trailer. Lou Prevost said the borough wants to attract long-term businesses. Bill Niles asked if 3 years was considered long term? Lou Prevost said ten years was long-term.

Jim Prevost said he hadn't provided the Planning Commission with a plan, he said the Planning Commission would like to have the site developed however without a plan the Commission is unable to give blanket approval. Bill Niles said DER would allow him to strip the land 1 acre per year. Jim Prevost said the Planning Commission makes recommendations of approval to the Borough Council and we don't have a plan, which we can approve to the Borough Council. Jim Prevost said he would not vote to put a portable trailer in a residential area. Residents have started to build homes in the area and the last thing the residents would want is to have a portable trailer permitted in the area.

Ron Comstock said Osram has the same zoning and they bring in trailers and never ask for permission to park trailers on their lot. Bill Niles said he has a parcel available to lease, he said the store is leased and directly behind the building. Ron Comstock said Bill has leased an area and is starting a subdivision of four acres in one lot and another lot of two or three acres.

Lou Prevost said the Planning Commission has to see a plan for the lot. Jim Prevost said we need a map of the area. Ron Comstock said Secretary Keck should have scheduled a Zoning Hearing Board meeting before having him come to the Planning Commission. Bill Niles said he could strip one acre of grass every year and just stack pipe on the lot or he could strip the land bring in gravel and park trucks on the lot. Ron Comstock said according to the zoning map the lot is zoned Highway Commercial and not Industrial. Kevin Connelly said an accessory use structure is permitted. Bill Niles asked who had changed the zoning from Industrial; he said he had not been notified

Ron Comstock asked if he could return to another meeting and bring a sketch plan of the lot. Ron Comstock recommended Bill Niles meet with Secretary Keck and go to the Zoning Board concerning the Highway Commercial because the area has different uses than the Commercial Manufacturing zone. Bill Niles asked who had changed the zoning. Ron Comstock said the borough updated the code in 2004 and the borough held public hearings and notices in the newspaper, and copies were available for the public to review, during the procedure of updating the ordinance. Ron Comstock said

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you are subdividing the property with the different uses on the property. Ron Comstock said the Planning Commission has never approved a concept. Katie Mader said we did a lot of work on the new plan and the borough even put water and sewer lines out in that section to develop a residential area and now he wants to have a construction site. Gus Vargas said he could see a truck lot on the site like the same as on Route 6 East. Jim Prevost said his father had been notified. Kevin Connelly said we should know what is going in there and how it would be set on the lot. Also he said he could store pipe on the lot, we need to keep on top of this issue. Jim Prevost said someone in the borough needs to give him permission to store pipe on the lot and that is there it will be stopped. Ron Comstock said he needs Sue Keck to explain when the zoning changed, and the commission needs more information on the existing lease and a map or sketch plan of the area.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN- Lou Prevost asked Ron Comstock if the letter to the Borough Council, and the Local and Regional Objectives had been sent to the council. Ron Comstock said he had not signed any letter. Council President Hart said she had received two pages however the Council meeting will be on August 8<sup>th</sup>. Lou Prevost said he would like the next comprehensive plan meeting to be held on August 19<sup>th</sup>. Lou Prevost said he has a meeting scheduled with Superintendent Dieffenbach tomorrow.

Lou Prevost passed out handouts on the water waste and Marcellus Shale  
Lou Prevost requested the Planning Commission recommend to the Wellsboro Municipal Authority they schedule a presentation by GeoServices. The handout shows what GeoServices could provide to the borough. Lou Prevost said he would talk to Mark tomorrow and request he ask Bob DeCamp to have GeoServices on the next agenda for the Wellsboro Municipal Authority meeting.

Lou Prevost informed the Commission members he is going to speak with Mark Dieffenbach tomorrow about the borough selling water at the borough garage and also the situation at the Willis Run, Banik Well site that is a key water source for the borough. The picture shows the drillers had broken the pipeline and had repaired it. Another concern is Shell has plans to have pads on both sides of the water source. The borough's water source is an open system. The borough could have the Banik well enclosed in a pipe, which would put less stress on the sand filters and give the borough pristine water. Lou Prevost said he saw 12" to 18" of water pouring out of the pipe the other and we are in the middle of a drought. Lou Prevost said the borough should consult Shell at the Maple Hill Road and Steam Mill Road encases the waterline. Council President Hart said the borough did the repair on the water line. She said the borough has a certain procedure to follow and only the borough makes repairs to the water system. Council President Hart said the borough is also working on having the repaired paid by the drilling company. Council President Hart said this is surface water and the borough is looking for another water source.

Lou Prevost asked about the \$60,000.00 membrane pilot program this is another system GE put out as an alternative, which the Authority could consider. Council President Hart said the borough could not negotiate; we need to go out for bid. Ron

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Comstock said this is for Marcellus shale; they go on site with portable systems and treat frack water. Lou Prevost said they do more than frack water they help municipalities maintain safe water. Lou Prevost said this could be a second bid for the Authority. Council President Hart said Scott Bray has three bids. Ron Comstock asked if they could set up a meeting for a presentation with the Planning Commission and the Wellsboro Municipal Authority. Council President Hart said the Wellsboro Municipal Authority is the group that approves changes to the water system. Lou Prevost said he would like to go to the Authority as a representative of the Planning Commission. He said this is part of the comprehensive plan to present goals and objectives for safe water. Lou Prevost said the Planning Commission should present safe goals and objectives to the Water Authority to decide if they will act on the recommendations. The nine members Planning Commission need to do our duty to safeguard the water supply of Wellsboro. The Pennsylvania State has safe water in their guideline for the state comprehensive plans.

Lou Prevost made a motion for the Planning Commission to recommend to the Wellsboro Municipal Authority they listen to a presentation by two entities, one being the Advanced GeoServices Group and also the GE Water Process Technology group to protect the Wellsboro water source, seconded by Kevin Connelly for discussion. Kevin Connelly said under the advisory functions of a planning board the State authorizes the planning commission to make any investigations, and maps, reports and recommendations in connection with the development of the municipality. Kevin Connelly said he agrees with Lou on the report however he isn't sure these two groups are any better than the groups the Authority is already working with. Kevin Connelly said he wasn't sure the two groups wouldn't come to two and give a sales presentation for their companies. Lou Prevost said Wellsboro has had two boil water orders; clearly having resources available to Wellsboro is needed. Lou Prevost said the pilot program will cost the borough \$60,000.00 for a system we may never need however if it is needed this company was the one who created the system and have systems around the world. Council Member Hart said the Authority has spoken with Siemens, GE, and the Pall Filter Company. Ron Comstock called for a roll call vote Jim Prevost- Yes, Sue Trescott -Yes, Gus Vargas-Yes, Ron Comstock-Yes, Kevin Connelly-No, Lou Prevost-Yes, Katie Mader-Yes. Motion carried 6-1.

Lou Prevost the next workshop would be August 19<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m.

**ADJOURNED 8:15 p.m.**