

**PLANNING COMMISSION  
BELLEFONTE BOROUGH  
MEETING MINUTES  
September 25, 2017 – 5 p.m.  
236 West Lamb Street, Bellefonte, PA 16823  
[www.bellefonte.net](http://www.bellefonte.net)**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The regular meeting of the Bellefonte Borough Planning Commission was called to order by Mr. Mills at the Bellefonte Borough Municipal Building at 5 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** James Mills, Secretary  
Mark Edwards  
Nathaniel Day

**EXCUSED:** Robert Dannaker  
Dallas Gallo

**STAFF MEMBERS:** Shannon Wright

**OTHER:** Joanne Tosti-Vasey, Council

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**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:**

The August 28, 2017 meeting minutes were presented for approval.

**Mr. Edwards moved to approve the minutes of the August 28, 2017 Planning Commission meeting;  
Mr. Day seconded the motion;  
Motion carried.**

**LAND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY:**

None.

**PLANNING AND ZONING ISSUES:**

None.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Evaluation of Centre Crest Zoning -**

This discussion was decided to be moved to the next meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Solar Ordinance Review and Comment**

Ms. Tosti-Vasey gave a brief background of the history of this ordinance. The Planning Commission was asked by Borough Council to review and comment on the draft ordinance.

She explained that the ordinance contained special restrictions for homes in the historic district. Other than that, the ordinance is comparative to State College Borough and College Township. She explained that there is currently one residence with solar panels and one of the schools has solar panels. There is also a very small installation behind the high school. The ordinance covers all types of powered solar.

Easements were discussed. Depending on the available sunlight, easements may need to be obtained prior to the installation of the solar panels. Ms. Wright opined that she would find it helpful to add language regarding enforcement of this section from a zoning standpoint. The language should make it clear that easements would need to be obtained from a lawyer and the Borough cannot remedy issues with easements. The language of the easement section was discussed and it was suggested to make more laymen friendly. It was also suggested for Section 3.8 to have verbiage included on the zoning permit that will encompass this point as to not require additional paperwork.

Mr. Mills inquired about abandoned solar panels section and devices and the property owner's duty to provide the Borough with figures on how efficient the panels are. Ms. Tosti-Vasey explained that the property owner should receive an email showing the details. Glare was omitted from the ordinance as glare is covered under code enforcement.

Ms. Wright mentioned the maintenance/hazard free section of the ordinance and stated that perhaps that section should be in the nuisance code section as typically the zoning officer does not enforce this, but the nuisance officer. This will be clarified.

Ms. Tosti-Vasey asked that changes between PC and HARB are made and another draft sent back to Council. Council will need to advertise the ordinance for two weeks. The Planning Commission members would like a week to review and comment. They will send their comments to Ms. Wright and she will compile and send to Ms. Tosti-Vasey.

### **Monopole Ordinance Need?**

#### **(Examples: State College Borough and College Township)**

Ms. Tosti-Vasey stated that private companies are trying to place monopoles in the right of ways. There is particular concern about this in the historic district. The monopoles feed off of Verizon and other big company cell service. There have been some problems in other historic districts around the state relative to this.

She explained further that there is a house bill on the table currently that would take away a municipalities' right to make independent decisions regarding the monopoles. The Borough sent a letter to Korman and Benninghoff asking them to oppose this legislation.

It was noted that there are a few on College Avenue.

Ms. Wright opined that since the downtown area is historic and would be noticeable downtown, an ordinance is something that should be considered. SCB only allows the poles in their commercially zoned areas. The value of the poles was discussed briefly, i.e. restricting cell service downtown?

Ms. Wright is going to do research for the next meeting on what exactly a monopole is, how they help with cell or internet service, and if they are either beneficial or a detriment to have.

### **Drone Ordinance Need?**

Ms. Wright indicated that some municipalities have begun writing drone ordinances and it was questioned if Bellefonte should write one. She did some brief research on the issue. It is ambiguous whether or not drones can be enforced via zoning. There are some ordinances restricting drones. She asked PC to consider if this is something that the Borough would need. Ms. Wright has not heard of any complaints or issues. Privacy is an issue, but is also not governed by zoning. The FAA has recently set regulations for drones, i.e. licensing. Drones are used for all types of things, i.e. real estate, roof inspections, photography, etc.

Other methods of recourse were discussed to drone flying i.e. invading space and privacy.

This topic will be discussed further at the October meeting.

**INFORMATION ITEMS:**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Mr. Edwards moved to adjourn the September 25, 2017 Planning  
Commission Meeting;**

**Mr. Day seconded the motion;**

**Motion carried.**

**Meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.**