

**UPPER ALLEN TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
March 27, 2023
7:00 P.M.**

PC MEMBERS

R. Wayne Willey, Chairperson
Robert Siodlowski, Vice-Chairperson
Amanda Parrish, Secretary
Scott Steffan
Barbara Roddin (absent)
Garth Wales
Eric Clancy

TOWNSHIP OFFICIALS - PRESENT

Jennifer Boyer, Comm. Dev. Director
Scott Finkenbiner, Planning Technician

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Ginnie M. Anderson, Commissioner
Jim Cochran, Commissioner

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Willey called the Planning Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all. Roll Call was taken by Mr. Finkenbiner. Ms. Roddin was noted as absent.

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 27, 2023 MINUTES

No action was taken.

REVIEW OF BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MINUTES

Chair Willey noted the copies of the Board of Commissioners Minutes from the February 1st and February 15th, 2023 meetings. Chair Willey accepted these minutes.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Consideration of Agricultural Security Area (ASA) 7-Year Update

Ms. Boyer provided an overview of what an ASA is and does, explaining that the ASA was established in the Township in 2002 to protect agricultural lands and strengthen farming communities.

It is an overlay provided by the State that allows farmers to voluntarily join so long as they own property at least 10 acres in size or have a yearly gross income of \$2,000.00 or more from agricultural production, and the Township must maintain a minimum of 250 acres in the ASA. It provides additional protection from nuisance challenges, laws that would restrict or inhibit agricultural farming, provides restrictions on the state taking farmland for public use. It is a prerequisite to County and State preservation programs. Every 7 years the ASA is required to be renewed, this allows the Township the opportunity to contact the property owners in the ASA

and ensure they would like to keep participating or stop participating, also, property owners who are not in the ASA can be included. Once approved, the ASA is recorded at the Cumberland County Courthouse.

The Township ASA was created in 2002 and residents signed up to join on a handwritten sign-up sheet, this allowed for some residents to incorrectly list their owned acreage (likely due to rounding, or not knowing the exact number). With this update, the tax records were used to obtain the deeded acreage and bring those numbers into alignment. 1340 East Lisburn Road, which is owned by the Township, has been removed from the ASA as it is becoming Generations Park. A 20-acre lot on Williams Grove Road, which was subdivided from another property in the ASA, was automatically included in the ASA due to its historical inclusion. The owner of this property has been contacted and given the option to remain in the ASA or be removed but has yet to respond. The County recommended removing 2 properties, one on Rider Lane, and one on Williams Grove Road, due to their zoning of R-2 which does not allow farming by right. However, the property owners would like to remain in the ASA therefore staff recommended they not be removed.

Mr. Clancy asked if participants could get out of the ASA at any point or were they required to wait for a 7-year update. Ms. Boyer stated that if the property had been in for an initial 7-year period they could get out at any point through a review and public hearing.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Caleb Bruner of Messiah University asked how often the zoning of an area within the Township changes and how difficult the process is. Ms. Boyer explained that the zoning is not changing, rather, this is similar to an overlay district and is a separate volunteer program. Also, changing zoning is a lengthy process that can sometimes be difficult.

Chair Willey called for a **MOTION** on the update. Vice-Chair Siodlowski made a **MOTION** to forward the 7-year update of the Agricultural Security Area to the Board of Commissioners. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Mr. Steffan. The motion carried unanimously (6-0).

No public comment.

BUILDING INSPECTOR'S REPORTS

Chair Willey noted the Building Inspector's Report for February 2023.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business Mr. Steffan made a **MOTION** to adjourn. The **MOTION** was **SECONDED** by Vice-Chair Siodlowski. Chair Willey adjourned the meeting at 7:43 P.M.