

**Hamiltonban Township Joint Workshop Meeting
Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission
23 Carrolls Tract Road, Fairfield, PA 17320
December 8, 2005**

Board of Supervisors: Chairman Stephen Jacobs, Vice-Chairman William Eckert, Sr., Road Master Jay Edward Deardorff, Supervisor James Benner, Supervisor Barbara Nicks, Secretary/Treasure LuAnn Dille

Planning Commission Members Present: Planning Commission Chairman Curtis Musselman, Vice-chairman of Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors Chairman Stephen Jacobs, Secretary and Planning Commission member Pamela Wiehagen and Jason Watson William Shriner was unable to attend.

Others: Hamiltonban Township's Engineer Tim Cormany from Martin and Martin, Inc., Solicitor Henry O. Heiser, III, Zoning Officer Milton Nicks

Public Attendees: Mark Cummins from Cornerstone, Barry Fitz, Josh George from Morris and Ritchie Associates, Inc., Robert Gordon, Alex Hayes from the Gettysburg Times, John Hoenke, Rick Kline, Dale and Doreen Premo, David and Barbara Prophet, Coleen Reamer, Doug Woerner

At 6:30 PM Chairman Musselman called the meeting to order and welcome those who attended the meeting.

Planning Commission Chairman Musselman made an opening statement that as in the past; zoning ordinances changes do not take effect immediately. Tonight is a workshop to begin discussions on some changes particularly related to the land conservation district overlay concept. There are many overlays. Present zoning will shape the future of the Township for the next 10, 20 or more years.

Public Comment

Mrs. Reamer requested that several different overlays be considered to include historical, wetlands, water availability and sewer.

Tim Cormany's Presentation

Engineer Cormany stated tonight's presentation is not specific to any certain development but to provide an overview of a concept as a whole for the Township. Some people call it "Growing Greener Conservation by Design". There is group called the Natural Land Trust. This group has been refining this concept for a number of years but now more people agree with the concept from a legal and development standpoint. "Growing Greener" is a term, which is used loosely to mean a number of things. At tonight's workshop Engineer Cormany presented the land conservation district overlay concept. Engineer Cormany distributed a small booklet "Growing Greener Conservation by Design" which was the condensed version of a larger program by the Natural Lands

Trust and DCNR. There are many ways to approach incorporating this concept into Township's ordinances. A quick fix could be a few pages to a more wide-ranging design to include zoning ordinances, subdivision and land development ordinances (SALDO) and the Township's comprehensive plan. Presently Martin and Martin Inc. is working with a township in Franklin County to incorporate a wide-ranging design. These kinds of plans are not designed to slow or to stop development on a single property or save funds on infrastructure or to save some open space. These kinds of plans are to create and maintain the environment of the Township as a whole.

Municipalities should want to provide an inter-connective network of permanent green space. An inter-connective network of open space should be made functional for people, and for the environment. This space must be permanently preserved. This space could be farmland, orchard land, left natural, provide walking paths or woodlands. Engineer Cormany has completed training with the Natural Lands Trust. The Natural Land Trust believes in a three-way plan to include comprehensive plan, zoning ordinances and SALDO. The plan could be a separate stand alone plan, a special section or incorporated into the Township's comprehensive plan, zoning and SALDO.

Zoning ordinances are districts, dimensional bounties, setbacks, lot sizes and buildings. It will be important to decide what will be developed and what will be in the open space. The open space should be functional. It could be a golf course, recreation trails, farmland, orchards, or stables. There could be a simple plan or an interim plan to get started while allowing time to develop a complete plan.

Engineer Cormany had a minimum overlay of Hamiltonban Township. There are small areas of wetland and flood plains in the Township. The Township has a large area of state forest plus a lot of other forest areas. Some areas in the Township are very steep. There are many interesting items in the Township to include high quality streams-Toms Creek and Middle Creek, historical features-Thaddeus Stevens Railroad, the viaduct, civil wars battlefields and other Civil War important buildings, old churches and schools. The overlay can include any and all unique items to Hamiltonban Township. Existing parks and trails should be marked. Natural habitat should not be disturbed. The Township's agriculture security areas should be an overlay as well as the farmland soils. Water protection areas could be a part of an overlay. The Township may someday have to consider which is more important culture or environmental resources.

The land conservation district overlay maps would be very important for future development in the Township. Special features on overlay map(s) should be supported with text and other language on how to implement the goals and objective on the overlay map in zoning ordinances, comprehensive plan and SALDO.

SALDO is a procedural document. It tells how the Hamiltonban Township wants plans submitted, time limits. These kinds of things are described in SALDO. Presently when subdivision plans are submitted most of the planning is done. With this new concept there would need to be substantial changes. The Township becomes a major planner, who could interact with the developer. This new type of planning is administrative heavy. The Township would help decide what important land features to preserve or ascent. The developer and the Township would create a site sketch plan. The sketch plan map would show general environmental mapping of the property, house sites not lots, infrastructures needed, showing percs and/or sewer plant. The last item to be decided would be the lot lines. Preliminary plans would be the very beginning stages to

allow for plenty of input from the Township and the developer. Final Plans would be the final phrase of all reviews and state how to permanently preserve the open space and/or special features of the property. Special features may need to be protective by special clauses or designs. There may be a need to insure heavy equipment stays away from a particular stand of tree by placing protective fencing around them. Topsoil in another issue. Enough topsoil must be preserved. Road Master Deardorff stated topsoil must be kept separated from subsoil. There are many options to develop properties to incorporate the above concepts.

This is creative development and should be a permitted use in the comprehensive plan, zoning and SALDO. Hamlet/Village concept should be a conditional use because of the size involved. The Township needs to decide where and what uses are best for Hamiltonban Township as a whole. What district, a certain size or a special land feature to connect the open spaces. Public water and sewer issues must be resolved. Department of Environment Protection (DEP) is interested in septic systems in the open areas. All items must be legal and enforceable. Another option is some township will allow for additional lots if the developer creates low to moderate house or age restrictive housing. Zoning ordinances would state or document who owns and maintains the open space/green way. Homeowner association, land conservation organizations, local or national organization, Hamiltonban Township and others could be responsible to maintain the open space. It would be the original farmer to own and use as agriculture land.

There are two methods to decide the number of lots for a property. The first is called a yield plan. With a yield plan the developer decides what is to be preserved and then the maximum number of house can be theatrically place in that amount of space according to current zoning district. The second method is called the adjusted tract area. A property is reviewed as to environmental features-wetlands, trees, steepness of the land, existing trails and structures. After the assessment is completed, the area that is left would be developed at a certain density.

Engineer Cormany stated tonight's presentation was a brief look at many possibilities that can be explored. The land conservation district overlays could be simple to very complex. There is no set correct concept. The Township needs to decide what is best for Hamiltonban Township residents now and in the future. This is a timely process. Engineer Cormany believes in the land conservation district overlay concept. There are many ways to proceed from there. It would be the Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors or a committee involved in the process. The Natural Land Trust could conduct an audit of the Township's zoning ordinances, SALDO, and the comprehensive plan. Overlays would be text changes not zoning district changes. A complete plan should include zoning ordinances, SALDO and the comprehensive plan.

Public Comments

There was a period of public discuss. Adams County is in the process of updating their comprehensive plans. Adams County Planning and Development likes to see cluster developments with more open space. The BB Section in Hamiltonban Township would be an example of an overlay. Some people like smaller yards to maintain. Other people like large lots to several acres. Township staff may need to be increased to handle the administrative details of this kind of plans. There are municipalities that have adopted

this concept. It may be possible to tour some areas to see how these ideas have been implemented. Last Spring Mrs. Wiehagen attended a Growing Greener seminar and received several handouts that she is will to share. There may be grant funding available. Fairfield Regional Comprehensive update and funding may be two years away. Road Master Deardorff stated that the municipalities in the area have very different needs. Carroll Valley has 3,700 homeowners on half acres lots. The Borough of Fairfield is a village now but has the potential to greatly increase. Hamiltonban Township is rural but surrounds the Borough of Fairfield. Highland Township has no zoning. Freedom Township is rapidly being developed by Mason Dixon Country Club. In Franklin Township only 30 % of a property can be developed. The Board of Supervisor will need to take formal action to move forward with this plan. The Natural Land Trust can be contacted to complete an audit and arrange a tour(s) to review how other municipalities have implemented these overlay concepts.

Mr. George stated that the Fitz/Strausbaugh proposed development could have approximately 320 acres that would interconnect with Strawberry Hill and is in close proximity of Camp Eder. This combined open space is approximately 1,350 acres. This development could be Hamiltonban Township's test case. An interim plans was presented to the Township concerning this property. The developer will not wait two to three years before he starts construction. Two plans have been presented, one is a yield plan and the second is a conservation plan/adjusted tract area. Mr. Cummins would like to implement the conservation plan. MRA would like the Township to consider adopting an interim phrase of a land conservation district overlay. Mr. Cummins and MRA would like to work with the Township on this property and concept. MRA firm has been involved with land conservation district in previous projects. Mrs. Reamer questioned how the recent logging would affect the site analysis. Mr. Fitz, the property owner, responded that the land has been selectively cut as his land has been in the past on a rotation schedule.

Mr. Prophet stated that in his research the land conservation district was not separate from the development but incorporated into the lot design. Buffers were integrated together, separating the houses. It was stated that clustering of houses could save road construction cost. There can be less driveway entrances onto the roadways. With clustering less land/environment is disturbed. It was stated tonight is a workshop of a concept not a particular development.

Mr. Kline of the Links of Gettysburg stated that he has constructed cluster housing with 50% open space in Mount Joy Township. Mr. Watson believes this is a good concept. The Township needs to realistically look at the Township and design a concept to work with developer and keep the rural atmosphere. Road Master Deardorff stated not everyone wants to maintain six to eight acres of land. Mr. Premo stated he liked Engineer Cormany's presentation. He liked the idea of a Natural Land Trust audit. He would like them to evaluate where the present infrastructures are located. He did not believe a year to update three important documents was a long time.

It was general agreed to have Engineer Cormany contact the Natural Land Trust for information so that the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission could take formal action to proceed with this concept at their next regular meeting.

Adjournment

At 8:41 PM Planning Commission Chairman Musselman made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Planning Commission Secretary Wiehagen. The members agreed and the meeting was adjourned.

LuAnn M. Dille
Secretary/Treasurer

Stephen W. Jacobs
Chairman