

**HALFMOON TOWNSHIP**  
**Planning Commission Meeting**  
**November 16, 2010**                      **7:00 pm**

Present:                      Danelle Del Corso, Bob Eberhart; Larry Fennessey, Lorin Nauman, John Stevens  
Absent:                      Jordan Finkelstein, Joe Tylka  
Others present:            Jim May, CRPA; D. J. Liggett, CRPA; Susan Steele, Township Manager; Dave Piper, Zoning Officer; Ryan Cox, Tyrone Boy Scout Troop #20; Kevin Cox, Ryan's father; Mark Maloney, Half Moon Land Company; Eric Casenave, PennTerra Engineering; Melissa Gartner, recording secretary

**1. Call To Order**

Chair Lorin Nauman called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

**2. Citizen Comments**

Mr. Ryan Cox, Tyrone Boy Scout Troop #20, attended tonight's meeting as a requirement for his Communications badge.

**3. Approval of October 19, 2010 Minutes**

Motion. Mr. Fennessey moved to approve the minutes of October 19, 2010 with one change requested by Mr. May. Mr. Stevens seconded. Vote: 5-0.

**4. Reports**

a. BOS Update

[At the time, Ms. Steele was attending a concurrent Park Board meeting and was not present to give a report.]

b. Zoning Officer's Report

Mr. Piper issued a permit for a new home!

**5. Progress Report and Discussion – Land Acquisition for Township Parks**

Letters were sent to the owners of property adjacent to Halfmoon Park and Autumn Meadow Park, requesting responses by November 16. Ms. Steele said that she did get a response from the local owner, but not the out-of-state owner, so she may have more to report at the next meeting. The next step would be to send a follow-up letter. At that time, the PC could decide on future action. One property owner was local, while the other resided in New York. Mr. Fennessey suggested a phone call might be more effective, and Mr. Nauman suggested that Mr. Fennessey, as secretary, should make the calls. Discussion continued and Mr. May said his staff would send out any necessary follow-up letters.

## **6. Progress Report and Discussion – Township Trail Planning**

Mr. May and Mr. Finkelstein recently went on a trail walk to check a potential route. The tentative trail plan was to go from Marengo Road toward Smith Road, along an intermittent stream. Mr. Finkelstein suggested an informal old logging road trail that he had previously hiked, and that's the path they traveled from the end of Tom's Lane to the Gummo property. This route would affect three to five property owners. The topography was decent, and the trail was wooded. It seemed like a jeep trail, with some grading and a fairly wide path. It also made a good connection up to Marengo Road. The final connection to Silver Gray Lane still needed to be planned. Mr. May said this was a good first start. He also said it would be good to inquire with the property owners and gauge their feeling about participating in a trail.

Mr. May then handed out a Generalized Unit Costs – Trail Construction spreadsheet so members could see the approximate costs of a trail project. This was calculated from the 1.17 mile Gray's Woods Boulevard-Circleville Park trail project, which is estimated at a total cost of \$382,063.

Ms. Del Corso asked if there were intermediate phases on a trail project, i.e., start with a generic dirt trail and then, as funds became available, make the trail construction more elaborate. Mr. May said that was possible, but if the Township receives funding from an outside source, then the project may have to achieve a certain level of construction standards. Mr. Fennessey suggested calling the trail a "hiking trail," as opposed to a "bike path," for liability reasons. He also suggested contacting the owners about right-of-way, and asking if this informal trail could be made official. Ms. Del Corso said that perhaps the trail should be established at minimal cost and then determine if people actually use it. Mr. May will work with Ms. Steele to send letters to the property owners affected and will communicate back to the PC.

## **7. Initial Review – Halfmoon Acres Sewage Planning Module and Sketch Plan**

### *a. Sketch Plot Plan*

Ms. Liggett stated that she thought this Sketch Plot Plan does not meet the requirements for full land development submission. She then presented the plot plan stretched over a map of the environmental features of the property, made by the CRPA GIS mapper. This shows steep slopes, stream locations, and identified open spaces. The intent was to show how lots were laid out over the topography of the land and see if open space and sensitive environmental features were protected. The map proved the open space areas were not contiguous on this plan. Mr. Eberhart asked what the developer's intention was for the open space areas. Mr. Maloney handed out a color master plan, which he felt showed the open space usage better.

Mr. Maloney showed, on his plan, which areas would become an orchard, a community park, a potential tree farm, and a planned retention pond. He also discussed the green corridors connecting the open spaces, and the 130 acres on the cemetery side of Route 550, where the recharge bed, water tank, and a possible nature trail would be located.

Mr. Eberhart asked about the planned orchard and spraying issues. Mr. Maloney said the orchard would be used for residents first, with possible commercial

expansion in the future. The whole orchard project would be organic, building on the success of the existing organic community garden project nearby in Patton Township.

Mr. May and Ms. Liggett asked whether the housing should be moved further away from Route 550 to maintain the agricultural feel of the Township. Mr. Maloney felt that his buildings would already be 150 feet away from the road and would look less intrusive than Trotter Farms. He also said that if the zoning changed in the future to allow mixed use, this module could adapt because it used the same internal road network as the original RVZD plan from six months ago.

Mr. Eberhart asked about the location of the sewage plant. Mr. Maloney said the first choice location would be in an existing barn on the property. This also tied into an existing 1996 Township ordinance encouraging reuse of old agricultural structures. While that looked attractive, Mr. Eberhart said that if the property adjacent to that barn was being sold as a "farmette", they would not have access to a usable barn. Mr. Maloney said it would still look like a farmette.

Ms. Liggett asked about an east-west access way, which was not shown on Mr. Maloney's plan. Mr. Maloney said that there was one road tentatively drawn that would connect to Gray's Woods, but the Gray's Woods residents preferred not to increase through-traffic.

Mr. Nauman asked, and Mr. Maloney said that this plan was for A1 zoning. Mr. Nauman then asked about typical lot size. Mr. Casanave answered from 1/3 to 1/2 acre lots, but some of the more narrow lots could be as small as 1/4 acre. Mr. Nauman asked if this should actually be R1, since it has a much higher density than a typical A1 development? Ms. Steele said Mr. Maloney's development needed to be zoned A1 if it used smaller lots with communal sewage; R1 required on-lot sewage with an alternate site (resulting in larger lots).

Ms. Liggett said Mr. Don Franson reviewed this plan and expressed concerns about stormwater accommodations. Mr. Fennessey said that some of the lots planned on infiltrative Nolin soils would be prone to flooding. Mr. Casanave said that the south side was one of the later phases of the development and adjustments could be made in the future.

Mr. Nauman asked if this plan was still hypothetical. Mr. Maloney said that this was what will be built if the zoning never changed. He said that this plan was Phase 1 in Halfmoon Township, and can not start in Patton until the Halfmoon project begins. Discussion continued about potential changes to the plan if zoning changed to allow higher density housing. Mr. Casanave said that the only thing the PC can recommend and the BOS can approve fits current and existing zoning.

Ms. Liggett said that the concern was that existing sewage technology could support this development, and Mr. Maloney was confident that it could. Mr. Casanave said that DEP could not begin to comment on this until the sewage model was submitted. After that review, further changes might need to be made.

Ms. Steele asked Mr. Casanave what he needed. He asked for the PC's comments on the plot plan. His hope was to have a full module to submit at the next PC meeting. Ms. Steele said that the planning module was requiring that the Township enter a resolution to approve a subdivision. Mr. May said that the plot plan and the planning module should be following concurrent tracks, and while one

part seemed to be complete, the other should be much farther along with more work shown by civil engineers. Discussion then moved on to the sewage facilities planning module.

*b. Planning Module for the Sewage Facilities*

Ms. Liggett reviewed the planning module on behalf of Halfmoon Township for CRPA, and received Mr. Maloney's comments this morning. Her highest concern was that this sewage facility is a new technology for Halfmoon Township and the region. The planning module process allowed for a municipality to require a developer to provide an evaluation of various options for long-term maintenance and operation of this treatment plant because it would be a non-municipal facility. This submission showed no evaluation of other options for the long-term maintenance of the facility. This module only showed of the options of using this wastewater facility as opposed to other types, but no information on long-term maintenance. She felt this was critically important since it would be the Township's responsibility to guarantee sewage to the future residents if the sewage facility ever failed. Her strong recommendation was for Halfmoon Township staff to meet with the developer and also with Patton Township staff since this would be a joint project. Perhaps it would require a bond or an escrow account. The Township should have expert advice on this subject. Her second strong recommendation was to take no action tonight until the Township received professional advice from a specialist. Mr. Casanave thought there were seven options in the regulations, and he could prepare responses to each so the BOS and PC would have that information to consider.

Mr. May said the Township needed to understand what its responsibilities would be in the event that something catastrophic happened. Mr. Maloney expressed concern that he could not build the plant until an O&M agreement was signed. Ms. Liggett said that before the Township could sign off on the planning module, there must be written coordination with Patton Township. Mr. Maloney asked to have the module forwarded to DEP because an O&M agreement could take months. Mr. Casanave said he would be willing to write a response to Ms. Liggett's memo and start the process.

Ms. Liggett then asked for information on Aquatech, because the module listed Aquatech as the facility operator responsible for operation and maintenance. Mr. Maloney said that he and his associates picked that name and they would form Aquatech to own and run the facility, since Half Moon Land Company was only a land-holding company. According to him, Aquatech would have oversight from American Water Company or UAJA. Ms. Liggett said that the Township needed proof that a certified operator would handle this facility.

Mr. Maloney said his preference was to get this module to DEP sooner, rather than later. DEP would offer many good ongoing comments that may cause Mr. Maloney to update the plant design. Mr. Casanave said one way to move this along was to get comments on the planning module and expand the sections in question. Ms. Steele said that she had not had any formal conversations with the Patton Township manager about this project. Mr. Casanave said his impression was that Patton had conditionally approved the plan, pending Halfmoon's approval.

Ms. Del Corso summarized that the PC needed to review the long-term maintenance options, and Halfmoon Township staff needed the opportunity to meet with Patton Township staff. Mr. Casanave said that he would like a courtesy review of the problems and maintenance issues, and then it should move to the solicitors for review of legal issues.

Mr. Nauman asked Mr. May if the Township could tell DEP the number of units could be supported on the existing property, per Halfmoon subdivision requirements that the open space was met and if there was a place to put the sewage water, that the parcel in question would support the number of units he's proposing? He continued to ask if that would be enough for DEP to review (not approve) this sewage treatment facility to see if it would hypothetically support this number of units? If DEP told Halfmoon this plant was feasible, then Halfmoon and Patton could negotiate an O&M agreement. Mr. Casanave said that was his understanding of what DEP wanted. It would be possible for the Township could approve the module, but not need to approve the actual theory of the treatment.

Ms. Liggitt said she did not recommend approving the module at this time. There was one checkbox for long-term maintenance that she was not comfortable recommending until the Township received an O&M agreement.

Ms. Steele asked Mr. Casanave to review the sewage planning module and contact Mr. Piper; she felt there were certain changes that could be made and then bring this back to the PC. Mr. Piper would like to meet with Ms. Steele, Ms. Liggitt, Mr. May, Mr. Casanave, and someone from Patton Township to see what shortcomings need to be addressed, and then the staff could make a recommendation to the PC. Ms. Steele said that at this time, staff did not have enough information at this point to make recommendations either way. If PC members would like to share other concerns about this sketch plan or planning module, they should e-mail Ms. Liggitt (dliggitt@crcog.net)

## **8. Adjournment**

Motion. Ms Del Corso moved to adjourn. Mr. Nauman seconded. Vote: 5-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Melissa Gartner  
Recording Secretary