POSTED ON AUGUST 28, 2020 BY GARY BUDZAK

Berkshire Twp. zoning board, BZA active in 2020

NEWS, TOP STORIES

By Gary Budzak - gbudzak@aimmediamidwest.com

Maintenance work takes place near the silo in the Berkshire Community Park next to township hall.

Berkshire Township's Zoning Commission has approved some recreational and residential projects on properties with Sunbury addresses this year.

Residents voted down a park levy and bond issues last year that would have added 56 acres to the Berkshire Community Park next to township hall. However, improvements continue to be made at the park, which opened in 2017.

On May 7, the zoning board considered the following measures:

• A final development plan was approved for an archery facility on five acres at Carters Corners Road. The targets will be inside the building, the board was told. The parking lot will be gravel for the time being. No competitions will be held at the building.

• An amendment to the Final Development Plan was approved for NorthStar Residential Development, LLC for the Wiltshire Development south of the intersection of North Galena and Wilson roads. There will be 52 lots on 21 acres, selling for up to $500,000. The area is said to be similar to the Bluestem development.

• The board declined a rezoning application for a nearly seven-acre property on Blayney Road from Agricultural to Farm Residential in order to build a home. The vote was 2-2, which constituted a denial due to a lack of majority, said Zoning Inspector Dave Weade.

• A rezoning of 12.6 acres on Rome Corners Road from Agriculture to Farm Residential was also approved.

All four measures were later approved by the Berkshire Township Board of Trustees.

In June, the Berkshire Township Zoning Commission approved rezoning 12.3 acres on Domigan Road from Agricultural to a Planned Recreational Commercial District for two soccer fields from the North Columbus Athletic Association. The plans call for a gravel parking lot (which will be paved) and two portable restrooms, but no bleachers. Phil Nickels of the NCAA said in the meeting minutes that the group is "a small nonprofit organization for recreational soccer for a youth league and eventually an adult league. One field will be turf." The teams will be from Westerville and surrounding areas.

Although there were concerns about traffic and parking on Domigan Road, which has two housing projects in the works, the rezoning was unanimously approved. However, the application was later denied by township trustees by a 2-1 vote.

Earlier in March, the Berkshire Township Zoning Board approved rezoning a little over three acres at the southeast corner of state Route 37 East and Domigan Road from Farm Residential to Planned Commercial District for 9944 Partners LLC. Neighboring businesses Joni Stanton and First Impressions gave their approval to the rezoning, as did members of the public. Included was a divergence to the side set back to 50 feet. There was also an informal discussion regarding the Northlake Summit single-family homes.

The zoning board consists of Matthew Allen, Eric Johnson, Andy Kerr, Chair Jon Kerr, Damita Peery and Austin Slattery.

Weade also told the board that a lawsuit regarding Wilcox Apartments had been settled in favor of Berkshire Township.

The Sept. 3 zoning commission meeting is canceled due to lack of items brought before the board.

In other township news, Dorothy Kerr remains Berkshire Township Board of Zoning Appeals chair, and James Spurrier is vice chairman. Also on the BZA are Bruce Denton, Phil Gardner and Alicia Robson.

In February, the BZA approved the continued use of a sign at Northlake by the Schottenstein Real Estate Group. The sign has been in place since 2018 and was permitted until the middle of 2021, but applicant Wes Smith of Schottenstein wanted a two-year extension. The board did request the arrow on the sign be removed, which was agreed to. The extension is good until Feb. 12, 2022.