

**REGULAR MEETING PLANNING COMMISSION  
2400 BYBERRY ROAD, BENSALEM, PA 19020**

July 17, 2019

Members Present: Harry Kramer, Tom Risich, Pete Krieger, Joe Domzalski, Ed Devenney, Michael Gabrieli, Bensalem City Solicitor, Joseph Pizzo, and Ron Gans, Township Engineer.

Members Absent: Ed Tockmajian

The meeting came to order at 7:06 pm with approximately 57 people present in the audience.

1. Harry Kramer opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. Harry Kramer suggests a Motion to Approve the May 15, 2019 minutes. Tom Risich approved the minutes and Michael Gabrieli seconded. Minutes were approved 6-0.

**3. Announcement**

Harry Kramer introduces Bensalem Township Solicitor, Joseph Pizzo. Bensalem Township Solicitor, Joseph Pizzo announces his presence to discuss items 1, 2 & 3 on the agenda.

**4. Preliminary and Final Land Development for The Bensalem Masjid**

Location: 3743, 3805, 3825 Hulmeville Road

Tax Parcel: 02-040-029, 02-040-030, 02-040-031

Request: House of Worship

Bensalem Township Solicitor, Joseph Pizzo states that communication between his office and the Masjid's Attorney, requests to table this item to the next agenda meeting. Harry Kramer suggests a motion from the board to table to the August 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, Michael Gabrieli seconds. Motion carries 6-0.

**5. Blighted Property Report**

Location: 2748 Colmar Avenue

Tax Parcel: 02-036-076

Bensalem Township Solicitor, Joseph Pizzo introduces Jeff Darlock, The Executive Director of the Bucks County Redevelopment Authority. This property has been the source of several years of action by the township, through the building and planning department, code enforcement officials resulting in litigation against the owners in Bucks County Common Pleas Court. This property meets 6 of the criteria to be blighted.

Harry Kramer opens public comment:

Joanne Cotton

2762 Colmar Ave

I live next door. There are people living in tents. Cat feces everywhere. There is a colony of cats on the property that are sick, hurt and dying. The property smells. The lawn is high. The building has broken windows, is green and toxic. I'm concerned what will be floating in the air when this house is demolished.

Pat Riffe

2774 Colmar Ave

I have lived here fifty years and they have never done any renovations. The interior is unlivable. When the boy's parents died the property went downhill. The building should come down for everyone's sake.

Zack Seneca

2734 Colmar Ave

I just bought my house. My family & friends come over and the smell and sight is embarrassing. This is causing me to have allergies. When I bought the house, I didn't know there was a cat problem. I can't even enjoy my pool in my backyard because of the cat smell and cat hair all over my patio furniture.

Harry Kramer closes public portion.

Jeff Darlock states the Township Administration is sympathetic to the neighbors. The township, public works, contractors go out to cut lawns, board up windows, set traps for cats or raccoons. It's now to a point where we are concerned for the safety of these workers.

Harry Kramer reads the resolution into the record. Certified as blighted.

Harry Kramer suggests making a motion to that resolution. Ed Devenney makes a Motion to Adopt this Resolution, Peter Krieger seconds. Motion carries 6-0.

#### **4. Preliminary Land Development for Mar Mar Builders**

Location: 1186 Byberry Rd

Tax Parcel: 02-074-110

Request: Sober Living Environment

Edward F. Murphy Esquires presents. The proposed development parcel is a 3.62 acre tract located on the southerly side of Byberry Road approximately 1,100' west of the intersection with Bensalem Boulevard. The site was previously occupied by single family dwelling that has been raised. The plan proposes the construction of a three-story, L-shaped Sober Living Environment facility with 120 rooms that will serve 240 residents. Parking for 44 vehicles has been provided, as well as an underground stormwater facility to control the increase runoff resulting from the development of the site. The site is located and an R-A-1 Residential District and will be served by Public Sanitary Sewer and Water. There are storm water collection facilities along a Byberry Road Frontage.

Harry Kramer opens public portion:

#### Joe Punk

1113 Albert Ave

A 240 bed sober living establishment does not belong in Bensalem Township. Approval is also need for licensing. We ask that you turn it down. We don't need addicts roaming the streets of Bensalem.

#### Sean Burgess

397 Rutgers Court

I work with substance abuse patients, you do not want residents having a relapses. They're not driving they will be on foot walking around our schools, our children. I do not want a facility next to the peace and serenity where I live. I'm against this and I'm not happy about this.

#### Pete Lance

5156 Merganser Way

I lived in Philadelphia dealing with crime as a police officer. This will infect the community. I used to work down at 8th and Girard and there were Narcan overdoses all the time. They will rob you. I love it here. Put something else there like a retirement home. I don't want to come home to people overdosing.

#### Helene Maloney

23 Nottingham Dr

I own a recovery house for 20 years. There's no way to control 240 people, it's impossible. Is it really sober living...they are really needing treatment? I wouldn't put more than 12 residents together. 240 is a rehab, not sober living, is it a facility? Is there Insurance? They will put them through the treatment phase and then insurance drops.

#### Chris Jones

1039 Byberry

I moved out of Philadelphia to escape this. I worked hard, I saved my money, I bought a home in Bensalem. I love where I live. I don't want my children being curious about a place like this, going near it or them coming near my children. I do not want to have to move again.

Anthony Steskal

5167 Mallard Dr

I have 7 and 8 year old children. I moved out of Philadelphia to avoid this type of situation. This will destroy the neighborhood. I'm concerned for the children. The community will go downhill and we will have to watch people overdosing. I don't want to have to move.

Victor Wisniewski

1114 Byberry Rd

I am also from Philadelphia. My driveway did not get a letter. These people will be roaming, going through cars, trying to steal anything they can get, to make money. I rented to three people with addiction problems that couldn't stay straight and hold jobs to pay rent. There are no fences to keep them from roaming. Put them in a commercial area, don't put them in our residential area. Put them in the Nifty Fifties lots.

Frank Goldstein

4419 East Gates Rd

I reside for over 45 years. I am here as a VP of the Advocates for the Homeless and those in need and also as a member of the Lower Bucks Addictions Task Force. I am here to speak on behalf of the addicts and the people who need these services. They don't need a facility with over 100 people. We need a service area servicing smaller groups. We must find ways to take care of this epidemic. This will be a Wholesale location for drug distribution. These facilities will need police officers 24/7 because there will be someone who will bring drugs in and out. This is not the way.

Rick Diviano

1200 Byberry Rd

I live directly next to the property. We have been fighting the development for over 10 years. I have a 14 year old Daughter and I'm not really comfortable with the thought of this facility any time of the day.

Joe Kamanar

1005 Justin Circle

This is about the quality of life. This is not a gated community or prison they are free to roam. This will produce crime. I don't want any of us living in fear. This will impact the quality of our lives. This facility doesn't need to be on this street.

Alan Windsor

3232 Azealia Ave

Concerned with where they put the building where they put it. If they put 240 beds in there they will put more in the back. A sober living facility should not be put in this area. Please do not allow this

Brian Kennedy

6250 Valady Rd

I am a sober living facility owner. I have police, EMT, firefighters, military veterans with post-traumatic stress, get injured in war, get addicted to pain killers, seek treatment like Livengrin, going back home may not be conducive so they come to a home like mine. I never had an overdose. Residents get tested on a regular basis, we have a curfew, we are a structured setting. For the average of 10-12 residents, we are a family. This does not sound like a Sober living Facility it sounds like a treatment Center. 120 people roaming the streets in my back yard... it scares the heck out of me. Definitely against it.

David Blank

CEO Livengrin Foundation

I operate 119 bed licensed program, step down to recovery. Our beds are on 44 Acres, not 240 beds on 3.5 acres. We are quiet facility of Physicians and nurses. There is one counselor to eight patients. I do not understand the idea of 240 beds.

Wayne Lewis

1780 Bensalem Blvd

Lifetime resident. I haven't heard anything of the licensing. I haven't heard anything of the program & how this facility is going to be operated. You can't approve a building that's not going to be approved that's not licensed.

Harry Kramer closed public portion.

Bensalem City Solicitor, Joseph Pizzo states there are some legal issues that need to be addressed. Applicant has an open ended extension with the processes of this application. His engineers will make any revisions or changes to the plan to the legality of this use. It's the Township Administrations position that this building as shown on this plan cannot be built on that property. Something smaller or something different may come back.

Harry Kramer states Applicant requests a continuance to Wednesday, October 16<sup>th</sup> meeting, Bensalem Township Solicitor, Joseph Pizzo agreed.

Harry suggests making a Motion, Michael Gabrieli Motions to continue application, Joe Domzalski seconds. All in favor, Application Continuance approved 6-0.

**6. Adjournment**

Harry Kramer requests a Motion from the board. Tom Risich made a Motion to Adjourn. Joe Domzalski seconded. Motion approved 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Harry Kramer, Chairperson

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Date

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Pete Krieger, Secretary

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Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bonnie Martin, Recording Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date