

# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of

Meeting

GOVERNMENT FORMS & SUPPLIES 644-224-3338 FORM NO. 10148

Etna Township Board of Trustees Special Meeting

Held June 26, 20 2024

The Etna Township Board of Trustees met on Wednesday, June 26, 2024, in the Etna Township Hall, 81 Liberty Street, Etna, Ohio 43018 for the purpose of conducting a special meeting. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Gary Burkholder.

Trustees Present

Gary Burkholder, Mark Evans

Trustee Absent

Rozland McKee-Flax

Others in Attendance

Jim Lenner, Jackie Cotugno, Drishya Dhital, Holly Palumbo

Opening

a. Call to Order

b. Roll Call

Mark Evans present, Gary Burkholder present, Rozland McKee absent.

c. Pledge of Allegiance

Gary Burkholder led the pledge of allegiance

2. Adoption of Agenda

Motion to adopt the agenda as presented.

*Moved by:* Mark Evans

*Seconded by:* Gary Burkholder

Yes Gary Burkholder, Mark Evans Carried 2-0

3. Comprehensive Plan Presentation

a. **Introduction:**

• **Speaker:** Jim Lenner, Principal Planner from Neighborhood Strategies.

○ Jim has worked on the township's comprehensive plan for the last two years. His background includes roles as city manager in Johnstown and city planner, with experience working at the County Planning Commission. He also contributed to the township's 2009-2011 comprehensive plan.

○ Recently obtained certification from the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP).

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- Neighborhood Strategies has been involved in updating comprehensive plans and zoning resolutions for various townships and municipalities, especially in regions affected by the development around Intel in southeast Ohio.
- b. **Comprehensive Plan Overview:**
  - The comprehensive plan is broken into several sections, covering key areas such as transportation and land use.
  - The document serves as a policy guide for decision-making but is not legally binding like a zoning resolution.
  - Trustees and the zoning commission are encouraged to follow the recommendations in the comprehensive plan, but it is not mandatory to do so.
  - **Plan Development Process:**
    - Worked with the planning committee over the course of two years.
    - Multiple committee members present at the meeting were involved in drafting the plan.
    - Trustees were encouraged to ask questions and seek clarifications on any part of the plan.
  - **Planning Committee Meetings:**
    - Worked with the planning committee over the course of two years.
    - Multiple committee members present at the meeting were involved in drafting the plan.
    - Trustees were encouraged to ask questions and seek clarifications on any part of the plan.
    - Held 14 meetings with a total of 15 committee members.
    - Started the planning process in June 2022.
    - Approximately 280 hours of volunteer time from community members.
  - **Survey and Feedback Process:**
    - A survey was sent to all property owners in the township (not just registered voters).
    - Received 693 responses with an 11.5% response rate, exceeding the target of 10%.
    - Emphasized that the survey is just one data point and that most communities tend to indicate a preference for maintaining rural character.
    - Feedback from the survey and committee was continuously reviewed by the planning team to ensure alignment with the community's needs and preferences.
  - **Community Involvement:**
    - Website postings and meeting streams were made available to ensure transparency and public engagement.
    - Various districts (school, fire, water, and sewer) provided input but did not have voting power.

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c. Active Transportation Plan:

• Map Overview:

- Identified areas/corridors for non-motorized transportation (sidewalks, bike paths, shared-use paths).

- The purpose is to connect neighborhoods, schools, and parks to promote active transportation.

- The dashed lines on the map represent these proposed connections.

• Implementation:

- The plan is a long-term vision; it is not expected to be completed immediately.

- The township is encouraged to consider incorporating active transportation when rebuilding roads or applying for grants/financing through programs like the TTD (Transportation Improvement District) or other funding sources

• Existing Land Use Analysis:

- At the time of analysis, 42% of the township's land use was agricultural.

- Other land uses included 33%, 11%, 8%, and 7% for various categories.

- The data was based on information from the county auditor and reflects the best available data at the time.

- Discrepancies in numbers not totaling 100% were noted due to factors like right of way and minor data variances.

- The data provides a snapshot of land use at that point in time.

• Roadway Network and Development:

- Emphasized the importance of ensuring that the roadway network is connected to facilitate development.

○ Flexible Development Approach:

- The goal is to design buildings that can be repurposed easily if land use changes in the future.

- Used the example of a Pizza Hut, which is difficult to repurpose due to its specific design, versus a more flexible building like a bank, which could serve multiple purposes.

• Transect Zone Concept:

- Introduced the idea of using a transect zone, a planning concept that promotes diverse, adaptable development.

- This would allow the township to mold development in a way that buildings could be reused or adapted more easily in the future.

• Form-Based Code:

- Suggested that the township consider moving toward form-based code for future development.

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- The planning committee agreed that the idea should be explored, and it was included in the plan to spark further discussion.

d. **Future Land Use Map:**

- This map is one of the most scrutinized components of the comprehensive plan.
- Higher Density Allowances:
  - Higher density allowances were proposed for the west side of the township.
  - The purpose is to prevent annexation by the City of Reynoldsburg.
  - The reasoning behind this approach is to offer density options to developers that are competitive with the city, reducing the likelihood of annexation.
- Comparison with Other Townships:
  - This strategy has been considered in other townships, like Hanover and Perry Township, where similar considerations for higher density are being discussed.
- Developer Perspective:
  - If developers cannot obtain the desired density from the township, they may seek opportunities from the city of Reynoldsburg, where water and sewer services might be available.
  - By increasing allowable densities along specific corridors, such as Taylor Road, the township aims to retain development interest without losing land to annexation.
- Higher Density Strategy:
  - Proposed allowing higher density in parts of the township to discourage annexation by the City of Reynoldsburg.
  - By building higher-density housing, the township can create a buffer to prevent Reynoldsburg from expanding further eastward into the township.
  - The tactic aims to entice residents to stay in the township, rather than moving into city developments.
- Manufacturing and Zoning:
  - No additional manufacturing or warehousing/logistics areas were added beyond what already exists.
  - The committee discussed a specific area currently zoned for light manufacturing but considered whether it could remain agricultural.
  - It was determined that changing this area back to agriculture might not be feasible due to the higher profitability of its current zoning.
- Village Center and Retail Development:
  - Village center development was designed to keep higher density uses near areas with better road infrastructure, such as 310 and other major corridors.
  - Retail areas were marked in light pink on the map, and mixed-use areas (marked in magenta) were based on existing township-approved plans.
- Recommended Densities and Open Space:



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- The committee proposed a recommended density of three units per acre with 40% open space for planned residential developments (correction from a previously mentioned 50%).
- Emphasized that these recommendations are part of the comprehensive plan and should be considered when implementing zoning changes.
- **Mixed-Use and Agricultural Zoning:**
  - The committee voted on and recommended zoning designations, including mixed-use and agricultural zones.
  - Mixed-use areas have a 30% open space requirement, while agricultural zones do not have specific open space requirements.
  - Many village centers and mixed-use developments propose residential units above commercial spaces, concentrating development within the township core and along 310, avoiding rural agricultural areas.
- **Traffic and Buffering:**
  - The township aims to minimize high-density development outside core areas to reduce traffic impact on less capable road networks.
  - Buffer zones were discussed, with suggestions that they may need to be expanded. The committee is open to adjusting these buffers, depending on further feedback.
- e. **Implementation Committee:**
  - emphasized the importance of ensuring the comprehensive plan is actively implemented rather than sitting on the shelf.
  - An implementation committee is recommended to regularly meet and advise trustees on regional development trends, potential plan adjustments, and other considerations affecting the township.
  - The implementation committee would work alongside trustees and the zoning commission, keeping the comprehensive plan up to date as development occurs.
  - The township may need to establish this new committee to ensure continued monitoring and adaptation of the plan, despite the challenges of adding more responsibilities to already busy boards (e.g., park board, fire board).
- **Survey Data and Edits:**
  - The plan includes all survey results gathered during the planning process. Vulgar or inappropriate language in the survey comments was removed, but the unedited data will still be archived by the township.
  - Edited comments were marked to note any changes, ensuring transparency in the process while maintaining a professional document for public review.
- f. **Conclusion:**
  - Jim Lenner invited questions and comments from the trustees and public, noting that feedback is welcomed and appreciated.
  - Emphasized that the comprehensive plan should be a living document, with continued updates as development progresses.

#### 4. Trustee Questions and Comments

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a) **Mark Evans:** Noted that the future land use map is missing from the current draft provided to the board. Page 29, which shows the current zoning map, is identical to the map on page 92, which is referenced as the future map for 2024. However, both maps are the current map. The future map that was discussed in the presentation is not included in the printed document, and this issue had been raised at previous meetings.

**Jim Lenner** mentioned that the link provided should have the correct map, including the future land use map.

**Holly Polumbo** confirmed that the link sent by Jim is what she printed for the board, but it contained the old maps.

**Jim Lenner:** Acknowledge the mistake of pulling in the wrong map when updating the documents.

b) **Mark Evans:** Raised a question about the strategy of increasing density on the west side to stave off annexation. Due to the existing annexation agreement, increasing density may not be necessary for that purpose. The parcels allowed for annexation are already identified, with only large areas in the northeastern corner of Taylor and Main being subject to annexation. Increasing density should not be a consideration based solely on the goal of preventing annexation.

**Jim Lenner:** Agreements can be broken, especially if new township leadership or administration comes in. The township may currently feel comfortable with the agreement, it's still something to keep in mind for future considerations.

c) **Mark Evans:** Discussed the eastern side of the township and referred to previous conversations with Jim about the area being already zoned. The future land use map represents a "Wishlist" or vision for future development, which can guide decisions, especially when considering economic incentives for developers. Mentioned the Pataskala area, noting it was zoned Planned Mixed-Use Development (PMUD), but clarified that on the west side of 3-10, the development is strictly single-family housing, with the commercial component located on the east side of 3-10, north of the park.

d) **Mark Evans:** Concerns about buffering trees, issues with light pollution during the winter when deciduous trees lose their leaves. Suggested incorporating more evergreens into buffer zones to mitigate light pollution, using the example of Scannell where lights shine through more after the leaves fall.

**Jim Lenner:** Agreed with the concern and confirmed that the current plan includes both canopy and evergreen trees in buffer requirements. In smaller buffers, the requirement is eight trees, with five being canopy trees, but adjustments could be made to increase winter coverage with more evergreens if needed. Buffer widths could also be extended, currently ranging from 30 to 50 feet, and mentioned the possibility of increasing the width to 100 feet depending on conflicting land uses.

e) **Mark Evans:** Page 32, certain roads are missing from the Maintained Road Network section:

- Carpenter Way off Tollgate connection
- Heritage Drive between Schuster and Etna Parkway

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• Extension of Global Way to Refugee Road  
Requested clarification on these roads and mentioned that these roads are already planned and may have been overlooked in the document.

**D) Mark Evans:** Page 40 lists anticipated road improvements such as:

- Refugee Road roundabouts, which are set to open in July, not anticipated.
- Schuster Way extension, which is intended to allow trucks to bypass, possibly connecting to Etna Parkway and I-70.

A potential discrepancy where the Zoning Commission may have recommended against or not encouraged the Schuster Way extension.

If these updates and recommendations were incorporated into the draft forwarded to the board, as there may be outdated information.

**Jim Lenner:** The maps should have been updated, outdated information might still be present in the draft due to recent updates and feedback.

g. **Mark Evans:** Page 52 (Current Open Space) was noted to be missing some areas:

- Western section of the Etna Park is not included. This park is located northeast of I-310.
- Langle middle connector and the connector on I-310 purchased from JBW are not listed.
- Open space on the east side of the Planned Residential Conservation District (PRCD) in the southwest corner, which includes a walking path and is owned and maintained by the township, is not shown.

h. **Mark Evans:** Page 79, concerns about rural residential open space requirements:

- The document states that at least 50% of the site should be preserved, but the map shows zero open space for rural residential areas.
- The discrepancy needs to be clarified, especially given the 0.4 units per acre density and two-acre minimum lot size typically associated with rural residential areas.

i. **Mark Evans:** Page 91, residential densities and open space requirements, issues with maintaining open space in developments like Heth Farms, where it was handed over to the HOA and is now challenging and costly to manage. Suggestion to consider centralized open spaces or mini parks to reduce maintenance burden, rather than extensive open spaces scattered throughout.

**Jim Lenner:** Some townships, like Harrison Township, avoid requiring open spaces due to maintenance concerns, preferring larger private yards instead. If open space is included, it should be more centralized and easier to maintain. The plan can include guidance on this to ensure practicality in future developments.

j. **Mark Evans:** The density calculations, especially comparing the previous plan's gross density (which would have allowed near 700 homes) with the current density of 170 homes. The process of determining a density of three units per acre versus four units per



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acre and whether real-world examples were used to justify this decision. Confirmed that net density considers site area minus right-of-way, drainage, wetlands, and open space. The specific case of the former HAE property (155 acres), noting that after accounting for retention, right-of-way, and open space, the net developable area would allow for about 186 units under a three units per acre density. Suggested recalculating densities to ensure fairness for developers and alignment with community expectations.

**Jim Lenner:** Acknowledged that calculations were done for densities but did not include specific neighborhood examples.

**k) Mark Evans:** Proper buffering could improve harmony between residential and commercial developments. The Scannell property for having a 30-foot buffer that may not be sufficient, especially since trucks are visible over the sound wall. Pointed out issues with tree planting locations at Uline (formerly Ashley Furniture), noting that trees on Mink Road are planted inside the fence, while trees on Refugee Road are outside the fence. This discrepancy makes no sense and affects the effectiveness of the buffer. Recommended improving buffering requirements to align better with neighboring communities like Pataskala, which has more trees and better buffering.

**l) Mark Evans:** High Point may have more apartment units than shown on page 134 of the draft and noted that Drayton Hall (approximately 200 units) was missing from the list of developments.

**Gary Burkholder:** Confirmed Drayton Hall has 240 units (10 buildings with 24 apartments each).

**a) Gary Burkholder:** Current zoning regulations are weak on buffering. Issues include poor spacing of deciduous trees and inadequate light screening for storage units. Emphasized the need for improved buffering standards, possibly including more evergreen trees. Developers have been using detention ponds and floodplains as open space, which is not considered usable open space. Stricter standards for what constitute usable open space, to prevent developers from including non-usable areas. Past issues with the county's subdivision regulations, where floodplains were used as part of residential backyards with restrictions on development. The county had placed monuments to prevent construction in floodplain areas.

**m) Mark Evans:** County has some requirements for usable open space, such as a minimum percentage and specific types of usable space. Recent variance request was denied because the developer wanted to reduce the amount of usable open space below the required 2.1 acres. Concerns were raised about developers using minimal maintenance (like brush hogging twice a year) as a substitute for adequate open space. Concerns about potential annexation and development pressures from neighboring areas like Kirksville, which could impact future zoning and land use. Community concerns about placing industrial developments (like warehouses) close to residential areas, including issues with noise and other impacts.

**b) Gary Burkholder:** emphasized the importance of having an implementation committee to ensure that plans are not only composed and adopted but also effectively implemented. Past issue where architectural review components were discussed but never implemented. Regular reviews of the plan, suggesting an annual review due to ongoing developments in the township. The township has contracted with Lance Schultz, a professional planner and zoning expert, who will work three days a week. The goal is to improve planning efforts and ensure orderly development aligned with the township's vision.

**n) Mark Evans:** Inquired about including the history of the referendum to provide context about the community's intent.



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**Jim Lenner:** It was intended to be included to show historical context, but Mark Evans could not find it in the current document.

5. Closing Comment from Jim Lenner

- Expressed gratitude for the committee's efforts, acknowledging the critical discussions and the committee's unanimous decision to advance the project to the trustees. Also appreciated Laura's assistance with administrative tasks and highlighted the significant time commitment of the committee, estimating at least 280 hours spent on the project.

6. Public Comments

**John Hanson, 51 Ridgewood Drive:** Asked about the Reynoldsburg annexation, particularly the distinction between annexation initiated by a landowner versus a city. Why there was a significant legal dispute over annexations if the landowners were willing to be annexed. \? Concerns about servicing new developments with water and sewer, especially given the current infrastructure limitations.

**Jim Lenner:** Annexations are initiated by property owners, not cities. Typically, it's a type two annexation where if 100% of property owners agree, the city must accept the petition.

**Mark Evans:** offered to provide a copy of the current annexation agreement and suggested arranging a meeting for further discussion.

**Shelly Marie, 114 Royalty Drive:** The committee consistently referred to survey results to guide their decisions. Factors considered included existing land topography, neighboring entities' plans (e.g., Reynoldsburg's higher density plans), and aiming for a smoother transition between zones. Despite imperfections, the committee put forth their best efforts using their experiences and knowledge of the township. Suggested keeping agricultural preservation in mind, including smaller scale agritourism and community gardens, due to the shrinking agricultural industry in Ohio. The importance of walkability and mixed-use areas, drawing inspiration from places like Creekside, Grandview Avenue, and Worthington. Expressed gratitude for the trustees' work on the project and appreciation for the collaborative effort.

**Ryan Davis, 8807 Watkins Road:** what actions the township can take to address potential annexations by neighboring entities like Reynoldsburg or Kirksville. What the township can do to prevent unwanted changes due to annexation and emphasize the importance of having a concrete plan for dealing with these issues. Stressed the importance of implementation and ongoing community involvement to ensure that the plan remains effective regardless of future board members. New Albany as an example of successful planning and expressed confidence in the board's efforts to maintain the township's aesthetic but highlighted the need for a robust implementation strategy to prevent future problems.

**Jim Lenner:** The challenge of managing annexation pressures and how townships, being at the bottom of the governmental hierarchy, face difficulties in this area. A tactic of increasing density potential along borders to deter developers from seeking annexation into municipalities, using the example of St. Alban's Township. The importance of strategic density increases in areas most likely to face annexation pressures to make staying within the township more attractive to developers. Mentioned ongoing attacks on township zoning laws at the State House, which could limit the tools available to townships. Emphasized that while density should not be applied

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across the entire township, it can be an effective tool to maintain township boundaries and control growth.

**Mark Evans:** Recent discussions about annexation attempts, specifically west of the Balman community for warehouses, and mentioned that Reynoldsburg initially supported this but later backed off. Past discussions included attempting to annex the old Hagi property into Reynoldsburg for development. Suggested methods to manage annexation pressures, such as implementing a TIF (Tax Increment Financing) on agricultural properties that change to commercial use, to act as a disincentive.

**Gary Burkholder:** Emphasized the importance of maintaining open lines of communication with neighboring communities, like Kirksville, to understand their land use plans and visions. Effective regional collaboration can help ensure smooth transitions between different jurisdictions and avoid conflicts. Past successful partnerships, such as the one with Newark and Reynoldsburg, as examples of how collaborative efforts can benefit all parties involved. Suggested exploring the option of becoming a Home Rule Township, which could provide additional powers and responsibilities, though it also comes with added costs. Raised questions about discrepancies between current zoning and proposed future land uses, specifically mentioning areas along Watkins Road and the intersection of Palmer and Tollgate. The concern was whether these areas should remain agricultural or be rezoned for residential use.

**Manoj Pakala, 13541 Etna Road:** They are working with Albert Homes to build high-density homes on their property and neighboring sites along Palmer Road, with prices ranging from \$325K to \$370K. They emphasized the value of the land due to its availability of all utilities. Inquired about the timeline for the new comprehensive plan to be implemented, as it affects their development plan.

**Gary Burkholder:** The corrections and public input are needed before finalizing the comprehensive plan. They estimated that it would likely take a couple of meetings to get to the final version. Concerns about the misuse of the PMUD designation. Gave examples of how it has been used incorrectly in the past for single-use developments like warehouses. Agreed with Mark that any planned developments must be held to detailed standards to ensure they meet the township's goals, particularly in regard to density, mixed uses, and open spaces. Agreed with the timeline and mentioned that the updated version of the comprehensive plan would be posted on the township's website for public access and feedback. They also emphasized the importance of moving forward with the proposal to update the zoning code, specifically referencing McBride Dale's involvement in this process. The comprehensive plan should be adopted within a month to six weeks and that zoning updates should proceed somewhat simultaneously.

**Mark Evans:** Might take a couple of meetings. The need to address zoning changes in conjunction with the comprehensive plan. Discussed the current zoning designations (e.g., PRCD overlay) and questioned how to handle zoning changes, especially in relation to planned mixed-use developments. Brought up the challenge of reconciling open space requirements between the zoning code and the comprehensive plan. Certain overlays like PRCD (Planned Residential Conservation Development) require open space, but regular R1 or R2 zones do not. They questioned how to configure developments to align with the new plan while keeping zoning codes consistent. The importance of preparing for how the township will implement zoning changes while updating the comprehensive plan. Advised working on a parallel process to avoid stalling development once the comprehensive plan is finalized.

**Jim Lenner:** Suggested that instead of creating entirely new zoning districts, the township should review the existing zoning code and modify districts where necessary to align. Explained that there will always be pressure for development, even as zoning resolutions are being updated. Recommended using the comprehensive plan as a guide during this transition period and

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continuing to handle zoning requests and redevelopment as they arise with the comprehensive plan. There may be areas where existing districts can be renamed or redefined to match the new plan's terminology. Committed to making the necessary updates to the comprehensive plan within seven days, noting that the future land use map is complete but not yet included in the document.

**John Hanson, 51 Ridgewood Drive:** Addressed the need for balance when discussing density on the edges of the township. He highlighted the repeated calls for more amenities like restaurants, medical offices, and services during past meetings. However, these types of businesses typically rely on population density, as developers look for enough rooftops to justify their investments. He explained that annexation decisions, such as the Summit Road battle involving the 192 acres annexed to Reynoldsburg, were driven largely by economic factors, particularly the cost of water taps. The cost of water in Reynoldsburg was significantly lower than in Etna, which influenced decisions to annex properties to Reynoldsburg rather than stay in Etna. He shared a personal example, explaining how water costs had affected his own development experience, noting that Etna's water tap fees were about \$12,000 higher than Reynoldsburg's. He pointed out that sometimes geographic configurations and economic concerns drive annexation decisions, rather than a desire to leave Etna. He cited an example on Taylor Road, where condos were built after annexation into Reynoldsburg, driven primarily by water availability and cost. He pointed out that density alone isn't inherently bad, and it's the quality of development that matters.

Question about the delay in a major project behind the Speedway, emphasizing that the issue revolves around sewer infrastructure.

Argued that not all new residents will have children, and higher-density developments with smaller condos could attract retirees. They pointed out that legislation exists for restricting certain developments to residents aged 55 and over.

Expressed frustration with the board, accusing them of dismissing development projects too quickly and relying too heavily on legal action without engaging in discussions with businesspeople and developers.

**Jim Lenner:** Reflected on similar experiences in other communities, noting how residents often want amenities like restaurants or services but resist increased traffic and population growth. For example, in Johnstown, there was a significant desire for a Bob Evans, but people didn't want the associated traffic or new housing that would support such a business. He emphasized that amenities like gas stations or restaurants depend on having a critical mass of people and cars. Without increased density, it's unlikely to attract these businesses. Acknowledged the dilemma townships face: they live on property taxes rather than income taxes, so development can be beneficial, but it requires balancing the township's identity and its residents' desires. Advised against focusing solely on density, urging consideration of other factors like sidewalks, parks, and mixed-use developments. High-value homes and well-designed communities provide benefits beyond just population growth, and he emphasized the importance of a holistic approach rather than just fixating on density.

**Gary Burkholder:** The importance of quality in development projects, referencing past issues like a strip center at Route 40 and Columbia Road, which lacked sidewalks and connectivity. the need for collaboration with neighboring communities, particularly given the upcoming developments along the Route 310 corridor. With over 130 homes and commercial projects planned near Refugee Road, as well as developments in Pataskala, he urged the township to work together to maintain the viability of the 310 corridors. This involves coordinating on projects such as multi-use paths that enhance connectivity across the area. Pointed out that density doesn't need to be concentrated solely in Etna Township to support amenities, as the



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broader region is experiencing significant growth. However, he warned about potential issues like overcrowded schools and traffic congestion, especially with the industrial development in Pataskala.

The sewer capacity and availability are primary concerns, and there are ongoing back-and-forth discussions with the Licking County Planning Department.

There are currently over 700 units planned for the High Point development, along with 240 units on Route 310 and various other projects. They also pointed to potential commercial development in the area, particularly around the High Point, which could help meet residents' demands for local amenities.

**Mark Evans:** While there is enough sewer capacity for phase one of the project, the developer is holding off until there is sufficient infrastructure for the entire development.

The impact of increased density on local schools, particularly due to tax increment financing (TIF) arrangements that divert funds away from schools and other public services. Highlighted that two small projects on Route 310 will divert approximately \$3.6 million from schools and \$1.2 million from the fire district over 10 years.

The lack of local commercial business development along Route 310, particularly in front of where Kohl's and Sheetz are located. They argued that this area would have been an ideal location for local businesses, such as Bob Evans or Cracker Barrel, especially given the nearby high-density housing. Expressed a vision of maintaining Etna Township as an "oasis" with a rural feel, even as development continues. They acknowledged that farmland won't remain forever but emphasized the possibility of preserving large lots and rural charm. Mentioned that some residents are already building homes on two- and five-acre lots, suggesting there is demand for this type of lower-density development.

Noted that the current discussion pertains to a specific property and not to overall rezoning.

**Chuck Bundy, 10254 Tollgate Road:** Question about the surface transportation plan, specifically the upgrade of Palmer Road and Mink Street as shown on the map. Inquired if the Palmer Road upgrade is still a viable route. Expressed concerns about previous information from Mr. Carlisle, indicating that Palmer Road would be upgraded to a four-lane road with a divider.

**Mark Evans:** the upgrade is related to the Etna Parkway extension over 70 to Palmer, not Mink Street as previously understood. The upgrade would not be going down Palmer Road but through a different route. The plan involves extending over and bringing truck traffic that way, which was part of an earlier commercial corridor plan that he opposed.

**Jim Lenner:** Confirmed that the blue lines on the map should be removed based on the zoning commission's decision. Added that the plan to upgrade Palmer Road was part of an original plan involving warehouses south of 70.

**Gary Burkholder:** Confirmed that the plan for upgrading Palmer Road is outdated and no longer viable. The current plans do not include the proposed upgrade and the discussion about Palmer Road goes back several years.

## 7. Discussions



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**Mark Evans:** asked whether planned unit developments (PUDs), such as PMUD (Planned Mixed Use Development), are standalone zoning categories. Also inquired about the availability of PUD information on the township's website, noting that they hadn't seen any listed, unlike other districts like Cameron Chase. Mentioned the need to evaluate how to implement planned residential and unit districts, suggesting collaboration between legal experts and consultants. The difficulty of ensuring future adherence to the comprehensive plan, acknowledging that there are no guarantees that future trustees will follow it. The current zoning code references the comprehensive plan and legally requires development to align with it, potentially opening up the township to lawsuits if the plan is not followed. This creates a debate: should the comprehensive plan be legally binding or remain a guidance document? While referencing the comprehensive plan in the zoning code ensures compliance, it also increases the township's legal risk. Suggested this is a key issue to consider when revising the zoning code and how the plan is enforced.

**Gary Burkholder:** PUDs are unique zoning categories and explained that at one point, the PUD zoning section was removed from the township's zoning resolution. However, for existing PUDs, their unique zoning requirements were supposed to be included as an appendix to the zoning resolution. While some newer commercial developments are included in the current zoning resolution, older ones like Cumberland Trail and Cameron Chase seem to be missing. The importance of having these included in the appendix for transparency and code enforcement, ensuring that zoning requirements for these areas are clear. A recent issue with Cumberland Trail highlighted the challenge of locating the zoning details for unique districts. Cumberland Trail is essentially a mixed-use development, incorporating commercial elements like a strip center, apartments, and condos. However, there was some uncertainty about whether the commercial aspects were planned from the beginning or added later as separate parcels. Gave an example of how the comprehensive plan was changed for the Cumberland Trail development, where the lot sizes were adjusted in the final phase. The changes to the comprehensive plan can follow a process, but in the case of the PUD (Planned Unit Development), there is a more formal procedure for amendments. While there is no strict legal requirement for public hearings when changing the comprehensive plan.

**Jim Lenner:** Recommended that, while it's not required by law, it's good practice to follow zoning procedures, including public hearings, when making changes to the comprehensive plan for the sake of transparency and community involvement.

**Jim Lenner:** Announced that ODOT is conducting a study from 161 to 70 and is currently gathering public input. Details for accessing the study and submitting feedback: [publicinput.com/16170study](http://publicinput.com/16170study). Etna is included in the study area and encouraged stakeholders to participate.

Uncertainty about the next steps following the TJs Foundation's involvement and the potential influence of a new planning director.

**Gary Burkholder:** Inquired about the progress of the framework and the next steps for the region. Mentioned MORPC's involvement in a water and sewer study. Asked about the transition from the TJs Foundation's involvement and whether a new planning director would influence the process.

**Mark Evans:** Requested feedback from Jim on the concept and proposals, beyond corrections and suggestions related to errors. Emphasized the importance of aligning the project with the community's future.

Encouraged stakeholders to provide feedback via email at [office@etnatownship.com](mailto:office@etnatownship.com)

GOVERNMENT FORMS & SUPPLIES 844-224-3338 FORM NO. 00000001 Board of Trustees Special Meeting

Held June 26, 2024

8. Motion to adjourn

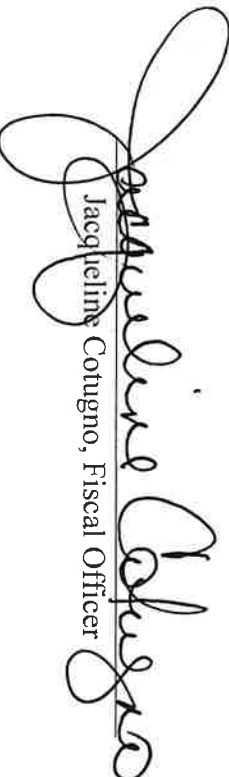
Motion to adjourn at 8:00 PM

Moved by: *Mark Evans*

Seconded by: *Gary Burkholder*

Yes Gary Burkholder, Mark Evans Carried 2-0

  
Gary Burkholder, President

  
Jacqueline Cotugno, Fiscal Officer