

LOCAL TOPICS

Damascus Township Zoning Amendments – Alternative Energy Systems

In December of 2023, our office reviewed a proposed amendment to the Damascus Township Zoning Ordinance. Many municipalities have been adopting regulations regarding Solar Energy in the past two or so years and we anticipate this trend to continue with the increase in interest for alternative energy systems, specifically solar. The proposed amendment includes updates, changes, and additions to existing Section 433 – Alternative Energy Systems within Article IV – Supplementary Regulations. More specifically, the intent is to update the design and removal of equipment requirements for Solar Energy Systems and add sections for application plan requirements for ground-mounted Solar Energy Systems exceeding 35 kilowatts per hour. Amendments had not been adopted by the end of 2023.

Lake Township Subdivision & Land Development Ordinance Amendment – Large Scale Solar Electric Energy Facilities

In December of 2023, our office reviewed an amendment to the Lake Township SALDO as related to the regulation of large-scale solar electric facilities. The purpose of the Ordinance amendment is to provide for the construction, installation, operation and decommissioning of Large-Scale Solar Electric Facilities within the Township, subject to reasonable conditions that will protect the public health, safety and welfare of residents within that local municipality. The Ordinance amendment was adopted by Lake Township on February 6th, 2024.

Mount Pleasant Township Subdivision & Land Development Ordinance Amendment – Solar Energy Systems

In the summer of 2023, our office reviewed proposed amendments to the Mount Pleasant Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO). The amendments propose standards relating to the regulation of Solar Energy Systems, both accessory and principal. The proposed regulations involve such aspects as minimum setbacks, screening, fencing and decommissioning, among others. Our review was completed in August and our comments were sent to the Township for their consideration. The Mount Pleasant Township SALDO, which included the Solar Energy System regulations, was amended December 4th, 2023.

Palmyra Township Zoning Map Amendment

In June of this past year, we reviewed a proposed amendment to the Palmyra Township Zoning Map. The amendment was proposed to address a perceived discrepancy with respect to the Industrial Zoning District boundary. The Township was assisted in this effort by Kiley Associates, LLC in the drafting of a new map. Kiley Associates, LLC also conducted a prior survey of the area in question and this recorded map served as the basis for the proposed amendment. Our office also assisted the Township by providing Geographic Information System (GIS) data that was used in the creation of the new map. The amended map was adopted by the Township on July 5th, 2023.

Paupack Township Short Term Rentals Ordinance and Zoning Ordinance Amendments

In the summer of this past year, we conducted our third and final review of a proposed Ordinance for the purpose of regulating Short Term Rentals in the Township. It has been common over the past several years for municipalities to develop regulations to better manage this type of land use. It is especially important to Paupack Township due to the large numbers of rental properties along and near Lake Wallenpaupack. The typical issues that these regulations seek to manage most often relate to sewage, parking, noise and other disturbances, and occupancy limits. This was a two-year process, which involved both the development of a stand-alone Short-Term Rental Ordinance and also involved proposed amendments to the Paupack Township Zoning Ordinance in order to achieve consistency with the new regulations. Our office's involvement began in the fall of 2021, and then was followed with a subsequent review in November of 2022. As noted, our final review of the proposed regulations was completed in June of this year. The Township formally adopted the Short-Term Rental Ordinance on August 10th, 2023 and the corresponding Zoning Ordinance Amendments were adopted on November 9th, 2023.

Paupack Township Zoning Ordinance Amendments

In February of 2023, our office reviewed proposed amendments to the Paupack Township Zoning Ordinance. In July of 2023, we conducted a second review to the amendments that addressed the comments from the first review. The proposed amendments involved regulations for Bed and Breakfast establishments such as requiring safety equipment and which Zoning Districts they will be allowed in depending on the number of rooms available for overnight accommodations. The amendments also included regulations for the keeping of domestic animals on residential lots such as the number and type of animals allowed depending on parcel size and where this use will be allowed in regards to Zoning. The Township adopted this amendment on August 10th, 2023.

Preston Township Subdivision & Land Development Ordinance Amendments – Solar Energy Systems

In March of this past year, our office reviewed a proposed amendment to the Preston Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. The proposed amendment's intent is to manage and regulate the development of Solar Energy Systems in the Township. The Township was assisted in the development of these regulations by Shepstone Management Company. Among others, the proposed amendments included standards regarding setbacks from right-of-ways and property lines, evergreen screening and decommissioning. The Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance amendment was adopted on August 3rd, 2023.

Texas Township Zoning Ordinance Amendments

In December of 2023, we reviewed, for the second time, the updated draft amendments to the Texas Township Zoning Ordinance. This most recent draft was a continuation of the effort to comprehensively review and amend the Ordinance as needed, as well as to add and update sections on such pertinent land uses as Short-Term Rentals, Solar Power Generation, and Wind Energy Facilities, among several others. We reviewed draft changes originally in the Spring of 2022. Texas Township was assisted in this effort by Woodland Design Associates, Inc. and Shepstone Management Company. It is anticipated that the amendments to the Texas Township Zoning Ordinance will be adopted in early 2024.

Wayne County and Municipal Comprehensive Plan

Consistency Reviews

Canaan Township Supervisors – Canaan Road Sewer Line Extension

The Canaan Township Supervisors requested a letter of support from the Wayne County Planning Department to apply for a grant that will be used to extend the central sewer line along T-466 (Canaan Road) that will serve their municipal garage and also residents along that portion of Township roadway. This extension will aid in economic development while reducing the threat of malfunctioning on-lot septic systems. The Township plans on upgrading their current municipal garage to include a meeting room, an office area, storage area and restrooms. This project was found to be consistent with the Community Facilities section of the County's Comprehensive Plan and a letter supporting this project was forwarded to Canaan Township.

Damascus Township – Phase II Township Park Improvements

Letters of support were provided to Damascus Township to be included with grant applications to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and also the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Greenways, Trails and Recreation that will be used to further the development of the Damascus Township Park. Phase II will include the development of an ADA trail and improvements to the existing baseball field. This project is consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan and the East Central Municipal Comprehensive Plan.

Dyberry Township – Tractor/Mower

Dyberry Township requested a letter of support to apply for grant funding through the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Local Share Account (LSA) that will be used to purchase a tractor with mower attachment. This equipment will be used to mow along township roadsides to increase visibility making the roads safer to travel for the residents of the Township as well as visitors to the area. A letter of support was forwarded to Dyberry Township as this grant request is consistent with the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan.

Honesdale Borough – Central Park Mobile Stage

Honesdale Borough applied for a grant through the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Greenways, Trails and Recreation for funding that will be used to purchase a mobile stage that will replace the old stage located in Central Park. The stage in Central Park is used to host many seasonal performances, festivals, ceremonies and other community events for the residents and visitors to Wayne County. Wayne County supported this mobile stage purchase and provided the Borough with a letter for this grant application.

Honesdale Borough – Central Park Play Area

The Borough of Honesdale is applying for grant funding through the Department of Community and Economic Development-Greenways, Trails and Recreation that will be used to assist in re-designing the play area within Central Park. The re-design will help to make the play area more inclusive for all abilities including ADA accessibility, access for the developmentally disabled, older adults and sensory needs. The improvements to the play area within Central Park are consistent with the Central Wayne Comprehensive Plan and a letter of support was forwarded to the Borough.

Honesdale Borough – Recreation Trail

A grant application to the Department of Community and Economic Development-Greenways, Trails and Recreation is being submitted in order to obtain funding that will aid in the creation of a recreation trail that will begin near 4th Street and head east towards the Borough of Hawley. The trail will increase walkability between 4th Street and Brown Street in the Borough of Honesdale. A component of the recently completed County Recreation, Parks and Natural Resources Plan is to encourage pedestrian and bicycle networks to better connect parks. A letter of support was forwarded to Honesdale Borough.

Honesdale Borough – Streetscape Project

Honesdale Borough is applying for grant funding through the Department of Community and Economic Development Multimodal Transportation Grant that will be used to revitalize and beautify the downtown area creating safe and open pedestrian walkways, safer crosswalks, parallel parking and street lighting. This project is part of a planned, multi-phase streetscape between the future 12th Street Riverfront Trail heading downtown to the 4th Street central business district. A letter of support was forwarded to Honesdale Borough as this project is consistent with the Central Wayne Regional Comprehensive Plan.

Lacawac Sanctuary

Lacawac Sanctuary is a non-profit environmental education center located in southern Paupack Township seeking grant funding from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) in order to construct recreational cabin-type structures near its new Environmental Education Center. These cabins will become a part of the ecovillage that is used for environmental education, recreation and tourism. Lacawac Sanctuary has provided a love of nature to families and students throughout Pennsylvania and beyond for over 57 years. Wayne County supports their need to revitalize and expand the aging facility and to preserve its forests, wetlands and other natural areas for future generations.

NEP Sno & ATV Trails, Inc. – Railbed Purchase

NEP Sno & ATV Trails, Inc. has applied for funding through the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) that will allow them to purchase a 12-mile section of the O&W railbed. This section will connect to the southern nine-mile portion of railbed that extends into Lackawanna County. These trails are currently being used by ATV's and Side x Side's under the oversight of

NEP Sno & ATV Trails, Inc. Wayne County fully supports this project as promoting the availability of recreational facilities and attractions within Wayne County. A letter supporting this grant application was forwarded to NEP Sno & ATV Trails, Inc. based upon the recently completed County Recreation, Parks and Natural Resources Plan.

Prompton Borough – Road Improvement

Prompton Borough requested a letter of support for a grant application to the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) that will be used for drainage pipe replacement and road paving work on Prompton Road. Maintaining an adequate road network for the local residents and visitors utilizing this road is consistent with the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan and a letter of support was forwarded to the Prompton Borough Council.

PA Route 6 Alliance – Route 6 Facade Improvement Program

The PA Route 6 Alliance is applying for grant funding from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2) and the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Keystone Communities Grant to aid in a facade improvement program in the Pocono Mountain Region of Wayne and Pike Counties. Improvements to building facades will stimulate economic revitalization and growth while preserving historical resources and architecture along the Route 6 corridor. Wayne County supports this grant application as the project is consistent with the Housing Plan section of the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan.

South Canaan Township – South Baker Road Bridge Replacement

South Canaan Township is seeking funding through a grant application to the Penn DOT Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF) that will be used for a much needed replacement of the Township bridge on South Baker Road (TR-412). At the moment the bridge is open to local traffic up to 3000 pounds. A 30% cash match will be provided by the Township. Since maintaining an adequate transportation network is a goal of the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan, a letter of support was forwarded to South Canaan Township.

South Canaan Township – Truck Purchase

South Canaan Township is pursuing funding through the Department of Community and Economic Development Local Share Account (DCED LSA) for the purchase of a new Township truck that will enable the Supervisors to provide the residents with the required maintenance of nearly 34 miles of township roads including winter snowplowing. Wayne County supports this grant application as the request is consistent with the Wayne County Comprehensive Plan and seeking out grant funding reduces the burden on the local taxpayers.

Texas Township – State Route Crosswalks

A letter of support was forwarded to Texas Township to aid in their efforts to apply for grant funding through the ARLE Funding Program that will be used to establish two pedestrian crosswalks over SR 2006 (White Mills Road) and SR 6 (Texas Palmyra Highway). With applicable signage, road epoxy paint and no parking signs, these crosswalks will provide for a safe

route from the Sports Factory of NEPA and the White Mills River Access Park to the Dorflinger Glass Museum Trail. PennDOT has reviewed the preliminary plans and also supports this crosswalk safety improvement project.

Waymart Borough Council – Wayside Park Improvements

Waymart Borough has requested a letter of support to apply for funding through the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Community Facilities grant program. The funds will be utilized for improvements to Wayside Park such as sidewalks, ADA parking spaces, children’s play equipment and lighting for the veterans’ flagpole and monument. This project is consistent with the recently completed Wayne County Recreation, Parks and Natural Resources Plan and a letter of support was forwarded to the Waymart Borough Council.

Wayne County Commissioners – Hankins Pond Recreation Project Phase I

Wayne County is applying for funding through the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to begin Phase I of the development of the Hankins Pond recreation area located off SR 670 (Bethany Turnpike) in Mount Pleasant Township. The grant funding will be utilized for the restoration of the stone dam to be converted to a pedestrian bridge over the former dam opening with a walkway across the entire length of this hand-laid stone structure. A letter supporting this project was forwarded to the Wayne County Commissioners as the project is consistent with the County’s Comprehensive Community Facilities and Recreation Plan and also the 2022 County Recreation, Parks and Natural Resources Plan.

Wayne County Commissioners – SR 191 Road Intersection Improvement Project

The Wayne County Commissioners are seeking funding through Penn DOT’s Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF) Program that will be used to make improvements at the intersection of SR 191 and SR 3033 (Spinner Road) in Cherry Ridge Township to accommodate a planned development of a Community Health, Wellness and Innovation Campus. Based on the identified goals and objectives within the County Comprehensive Plan, such as providing for community facilities like libraries, senior centers and youth centers, a letter of support was provided by the Wayne County Planning Commission for this development project.