

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

2008 was a busy year for the Planning Department. The City received two major housing subdivision applications. The last major housing subdivision in Berlin was approved in 1988 for Grandview Meadow. One of the subdivisions is a phased housing subdivision near Jericho Mountain State Park on Route 110. The first phase was approved for 21 housing lots averaging about 5 acres in size. The second subdivision is geared to manufactured housing and is being planned for Route 16 south of the Armory National Guard building and is proposing 88 lots of housing. This park will be a dense subdivision in which the lots will be leased to residents who will own their homes, but not the property. These two subdivisions which will be built out over the next year will offer two different types of housing both of which are lacking in the community.

The Planning Board also reviewed a Site Plan Review project for Greenova, LLC. The proposed project is a wood pellet manufacturing facility which will be located in the Maynesboro Industrial Park. This project will be a phased project that will eventually produce over 200,000 tons of pellets annually. The project proposes to employ approximately 35 people directly. There will be many indirect jobs resulting from the project as well related to bringing raw product to the facility. This project involved several City boards including, Planning, Zoning, and the Berlin Industrial Development and Park Authority.

The Federal Bureau of Prisons started construction on a 1250 bed medium security federal corrections institution here in Berlin after almost six years of planning and feasibility studies. The construction phase of the project is employing several residents of the region. The City and Chamber of Commerce report several inquiries from current Bureau of Prison employees asking about the City and the surrounding area. It is

estimated that the prison will employ approximately 300-350 people when it opens and of those new employees, nearly 50 percent will be new to the area.

The City hired Jeffrey H Taylor & Associates to begin work on revising the City's Master Plan. The Master Plan was last written in 1992 and in great need of revision. A primary focus of the plan is on economic development. Community participation and involvement throughout the project from our residents is critical to the success of this plan. Any member of the community who wishes to participate is welcome. Meetings continue to be advertised and are open to the public.

The Berlin Industrial Development and Park Authority (BIDPA) continues to look for new land to develop a second industrial park. The land in the park is now all privately owned except for the one parcel the board owns and manages. The board continues to work on strategies for developing new available space for small businesses and entrepreneurs.

Any citizen wishing to participate can come forward to volunteer for one of the many boards in the community. The Planning Department is home to the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustment, and the Berlin Industrial Development and Park Authority. All three boards encourage citizen involvement and welcome the community to participate or observe during their meetings. Visit the City's website regularly for information about our meetings.

Respectfully submitted,

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