Bern Township Planning Commission Meeting of September 8, 2026

Present: Planning Commission: Michael Werley, Christopher Becker, James Colflesh, and Beth Burkovich.

Also Attending: Kent Morey, Spotts, Stevens & McCoy; Atty. Keith Mooney, Barley Snyder.

Michael Werley called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Werley asked for a moment of silence in honor of Mr. Thomas Egan.

Acceptance of Minutes

The minutes of August 11, 2026, meeting were approved. Motion by Mr. Becker, seconded by Mr. Colflesh. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Mr. Potts introduced Jessica Seiders, who will be the new Township Manager, when Mr. Potts retires at the end of the year. Mr. Potts informed the Board the Judge for the Conditional Use appeal, ruled in favor of the developer (Reading One Three, LLC). The Township will have to deliberate whether they want to make an appeal to the Commonwealth Court. What the Judge's ruling means is that the developer can build a 45' tall building with no conditions. Mr. Potts also stated he heard there was a rumor that the Township was looking to shut down the Planning Commission, and he wanted to make sure that everyone is aware there is no truth to this rumor. Mrs. Reed seconded this statement and commended the Planning Commission for always being prepared with their details and facts.

Subdivision and Land Development Plans

Victory Baptist Church, Sketch Plan

Charles Nifenecker from Victory Baptist Church was present. Mr. Morey stated there is only one main item of concern from the SSM letter dated September 1, 2026. The building addition is titled "multi-purpose" and this needs to be defined as to the actual use of this addition. Mr. Nifenecker responded this addition is not to expand the sanctuary, but to give extra space for their members for banquets and also to be used as a gym for the kids to play basketball.

Riverfront FCU, Preliminary Plan

Chuck Frantz with C2C Design Group, submitted a revised Preliminary Plan. The revised plan contained an improved upgraded landscaping plan. Berks County Conservation District NPDES permit was submitted and C2C received back an administrative review. Mr. Frantz asked if the submitted Stormwater waiver request could be tabled for this evening's meeting. Mr. Morey reviewed SSM letter dated September 1, 2026. Items 2,3,4, & 5 also 8,9 & 10 pertaining to landscaping were discussed. Mr. Morey wanted input from the Planning Commission regarding Item # 18. The ordinance calls for a fence at a minimum height of 6 feet to prevent access to

stormwater management basins. Mr. Morey suggests using a split rail fence with wire behind. Mr. Becker suggested using turkey wire, which is 14 gauge, instead of chicken fencing. Circulation issues were reviewed and turning templates were provided.

Eagle Metals, Preliminary Plan

The engineer from McCarthy Engineering, along with the owner, Charlie Bernard, and a co-worker Brian from Eagle Metals were present. This project is a land development and lot consolidation. The plan shows the lot consolidation for parcel 2 & 3 and in addition to this consolidation a portion of parcel 3 will be given to parcel 1 and the portion of parcel 1 will be given to the newly consolidated lot. Mr. Bernard has purchased parcel 3 from Mr. Walter Kreitz. Eagle Metals currently operates as a manufacturing business at 1243 Old Bernville Road. This project proposes a building addition to one of the existing manufacturing buildings with additional parking spaces and a new stormwater facility that will replace three of the existing stormwater facilities on the site. The McCarthy engineer noted upon reviewing the SSM letter dated September 4, 2026, they feel they are able to comply with all the Township and Township Engineer noted comments. Mr. Morey did note that Item # 11 should have been deleted from the letter. Mr. Morey reviewed the letter for some clarifications. Under Waiver Request, Item #1 Section 154-24.A.(12) the last time Eagle Metals came in for an expansion on the Western side of the property they did some improvements along Old Bernville Road to the extent that they could, there is no room for them to do any more widening. Mr. Becker made a motion to the SSM letter dated September 4, 2026, under Waiver Request, Item #1 Section 154-24.A.(12) be granted, seconded by Mr. Colflesh. Motion carried. Mr. Morey read Item #2, Section 154-32.N. Mr. Becker made a motion to the SSM letter dated September 4, 2026, under Waiver Request, Item #2 Section 154-32.N. be approved, seconded by Ms. Burkovich. Motion carried. Mr. Morey read Item #3 Section 184-12.1.A, and Item #4 Section 184-12.1.(A)(4) under Compliance with Zoning Ordinance, the McCarthy engineer responded that the proposed building height will be 35' not 60'. Mr. Morey's next major concern was Item # 26 Section 154-19.D.(20). Mr. Bernard and the McCarthy engineer clarified this concern. Mr. Bernard has spoken with the Fire Chief, and they currently access the building from the sides. There is no concern with having to get to the back of the building. Mr. Morey noted that Item # 29 should be noted as "Preliminary". Mr. Morey wanted to review two issues that were not listed on the SSM letter, the word "should" be replaced with "shall" and the lighting standard should have a minimum 5' behind the curb or tire stops or the pedestal should be minimum of 30" high from the pavement. The McCarthy engineer asked for confirmation on Item # 5 regarding the percentage of the lot shall be maintained as open area, it is stated as 85%, but he thought it was 35%. Atty. Mooney confirmed after looking at the Ordinance, the minimum open space is 35%, but the maximum building coverage area is 50%. Mr. Morey will amend this section in the letter. Mr. Morey summarized, McCarthy Engineering is requesting this Board to take action on two additional wavier requests; 1) is for the fence and 2) for plan scale and to grant Preliminary Plan approval. Mr. Morey recommended that because McCarthy has not provided us with clear evidence regarding the open space coverage and the maximum building coverage and due to the complexity of the stormwater comments, it is his recommendation not to grant Preliminary Plan approval.

Data Center Ordinance Discussion

Mr. Becker and Mr. Tricarico focused this month on noise issues, emergency response/traffic issues. A question was asked about the different standards listed for weekend noise levels verse the weekday noise levels. It was recommended to set the decibel level and stay consistent no matter the day of the week. Atty. Mooney searched in the Zoning Ordinance and decibel level only comes up for recreational zoning district to not exceed 55 DBA. Mr. Becker will incorporate the noise level of 55 DBA for this section. Emergency response section was presented and Mr. Becker and Mr. Potts concluded that emergency management service should be included for their input in this section. Mr. Potts will forward this section to Mr. Hinkle for review. October's meeting will focus on decommissioning and facade.

Solicitor

No Comment

Adjournment

Mr. Colflesh made a motion to adjourn at approximately 8:42 p.m., seconded by Ms. Burkovich. All in favor. Motion carried.