

**TOWNSHIP OF FALLS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MAY 27, 2025**

Meeting commenced: 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned: 7:22 p.m.

Members present: John J. Haney, III, Colin Henderson, Mary Leszczuk, Jesse O'Brien, Daniel Everett

Members absent: Paul Hartzell (alt), David Coyne (alt)

Also Present Representing:

Falcon Field – Pennsbury School District: Michael Malloy, Esquire (Obermayer, Rebmann), Jamie Lynch (CHA – architect), Andrew O'Connell (Musco Lighting), Terry DeGroot, P.E. (Terraform Engineering), Thomas Smith (Superintendent Pennsbury School District)

For the Township: Douglas Waite, P.E. (Jones Engineering Associates) and Diane Beri (Recording Secretary)

Item #1: Falcon Field Athletic Improvements -- Pennsbury High School, 608 S Olds Blvd /705 Hood Blvd / 75 Unity Drive; TMP # 13-015-175 / 13-015-175-001 / 13-018-003 / 13-018-003-001 / 13-018-003-003 / 13-018-003-005 / 13-018-003-007 / 13-018-022 / 13-018-025. Amended Final Plan -- Construction of 4 field lights at practice soccer field which were not included in the Final Plan approved by Res. 2023-13

Michael Malloy, Esquire, presents the application and states this is a straightforward application. We have an existing soccer field which at the time of final plan approval a few years ago was not proposed to be lit. Yardley Makefield Soccer club then approached the school district and offered to finance the lighting for both their use and for use by the students. Pennsbury School District agreed, and we are back before you to amend the final plan. There will be an addition of four field lights. We have a review letter dated May 16, 2025 from Jones Engineering Associates which are all comply items. We also will comply with all SALDO requirements and Township ordinances. The lights will be similar in design to the existing lights on the football field. The field will be lit during soccer season almost every evening until 10:00 p.m. and an occasional Saturday.

Chairman Haney asks if there is some kind of study for lighting pollution.

Atty. Malloy says yes, there will be reports on the light fixtures to make sure the foot candles do not leave the facility.

Chairman Haney says I understand you gave us something, but there is no report for the football stadium and soccer stadium lit at the same time. I would like to see something along those lines.

Member O'Brien asks if the neighbors have been consulted in giving feedback on how these additional lights will affect them.

Atty. Malloy says Superintendent Smith might be the better person to answer, but I will say we have not received any complaints whatsoever about the lights on the football field. Our understanding is there are no residential neighbors impacted by this project who would complain.

Chairman Haney says that is a pretty big assumption. Another question is parking. I have been through Macclesfield in Lower Makefield which is a disaster when they have their tournaments. This is going to be a huge traffic issue at the school. If you are going to put a youth organization on there with lights, your traffic flow increases, the amount of time people are on those fields increases. I just want to make sure that all parties in that area, with traffic coming and going, are consulted. It is not just installing four lights, you are creating a new venue, which was never there before. It is going to compete against the football field. You will have two items going on right now with two different lighting fixtures going through. I want to make sure everything is looked at.

Andrew O'Connell continues and says it is a good question to ask if both fields are illuminated at the same time, how does it affect any nearby neighbors. Unfortunately, we have not run that report for both the stadium and soccer field together. However, when we did run the stadium report, when you have the full output of those fixtures which is 60 plus fixtures on 70 ft. poles and you look at 150 ft. spill similar to what we put together on the plans for the practice field – those foot

candles when measured in horizontal foot candles are nearly zero (0.01). What that tells us is this light is now cutting off 150 ft. from the edge of the stadium field. When you start to merge a new field into play, there is not much light which will be spilling over from your stadium and combining with the light that is now directed to the practice field. I am more than happy to combine both of those files to show what we will be experiencing from a spill and glare standpoint. But I see there being no negative impact on the community.

Chairman Haney says I agree with you. With technology today and the way they are shielded, I have seen it. My concern is the larger picture. I would like to get those so we can reference them.

Atty. Malloy says he spoke with Superintendent Smith. First, the football field which is lit is used for practices literally every night now without any complaint from neighbors. We do not expect that to change with the lighting of the soccer field. Second, there will never be an event or events on the soccer field at the same time as the football game. The football games bring in 4,000 people to the stadium; there will not be an event on the soccer field. The use of the field – they are working on the frequency which Yardley Makefield Soccer will be able to use the soccer field. They are not going to have large events; they are not going to have tournaments. The soccer field is mainly for the school's use and the kids' use to give them the opportunity to play soccer at night.

Chairman Haney states in addition to having two major events at the same time, his concern is the lights on till 10:00 p.m. every night. If they do run a tournament, that's one thing, but running the lights more than they do now at different time frames and people coming and going is a concern. I am also concerned about what Yardley Makefield Soccer intends to do with the field. They are no longer using Macclesfield as they used to, and they are looking for other venues, and I am concerned.

Atty. Malloy says these are things which are entirely controllable. Through the land development process and the Planning Commission's input, we would work through putting reasonable restrictions on the lights if that satisfied the Township. Secondly, in the future, if it was causing some kind of concern, some sort of problem for the neighborhoods, we would have to change it accordingly. The last thing the school district wants to do is turn their soccer field into a private venue for club sports. They want to legitimately use it for themselves.

Chairman Haney says he understands. His concern is Yardley Makefield Soccer is financing the soccer field lights. The football field is fine -- there is no issue there. When you add the two together, maybe longer hours at night, I would like the voice of the surrounding neighbors to be heard, and I would like to know from Yardley Makefield Soccer exactly what their intentions are for the soccer field. These are our suggestions.

Member Henderson asks how many soccer fields are on the campus.

Superintendent Smith says one of the reasons we are building a second field is because with the new high school construction, we will be losing the lacrosse field, the soccer field and the field hockey field. The goal is for this field to replace all three.

Member Henderson asks so this field is more than just soccer.

Superintendent Smith says they are already playing now on the stadium field, and they are practicing during the day on the grass fields. The goal is when the grass fields go away to schedule them all on the turf field.

Member Henderson asks this is not just for soccer games; you will be scheduling lacrosse and field hockey games as well.

Superintendent Smith says the goal is for all the games to be played in the stadium and that this would be allowed so if field hockey is playing, soccer can practice on the other field.

Member Leszczuk asks if the lights will be installed with the same electrical contractors that you currently have working.

Superintendent Smith says yes.

Atty. Malloy states if he is reading the signals properly, the Planning Commission is not going to take any action on this tonight and would request the Planning Commission to table this project and put us on the next agenda. Next time we appear before this Board, we would provide a proposed schedule of events, provide more detail on Yardley Makefield

Soccer's intention regarding the field, and be able to show this will be a reasonable use of the field that will not negatively impact the neighbors.

Chairman Haney says that would be outstanding.

Member O'Brien says when you do come back, if you could bring some documented interaction with the neighbors to find out what their thoughts are on this extended use of the field and lighting.

Atty. Malloy says they will work with the Township about how best to communicate with the neighbors.

Member Leszczuk says any light pollution reports should also be given for the next time.

Member Henderson makes a motion to table the application of Falcon Field Athletic Improvements for the lights until the June meeting.

Member O'Brien seconds the motion.

All in favor 5-0. APPLICATION IS TABLED UNTIL JUNE MEETING.

Item #2: Minutes from April 22, 2025

Minutes approved.

All in favor 5-0.

7:22 p.m. Meeting adjourned