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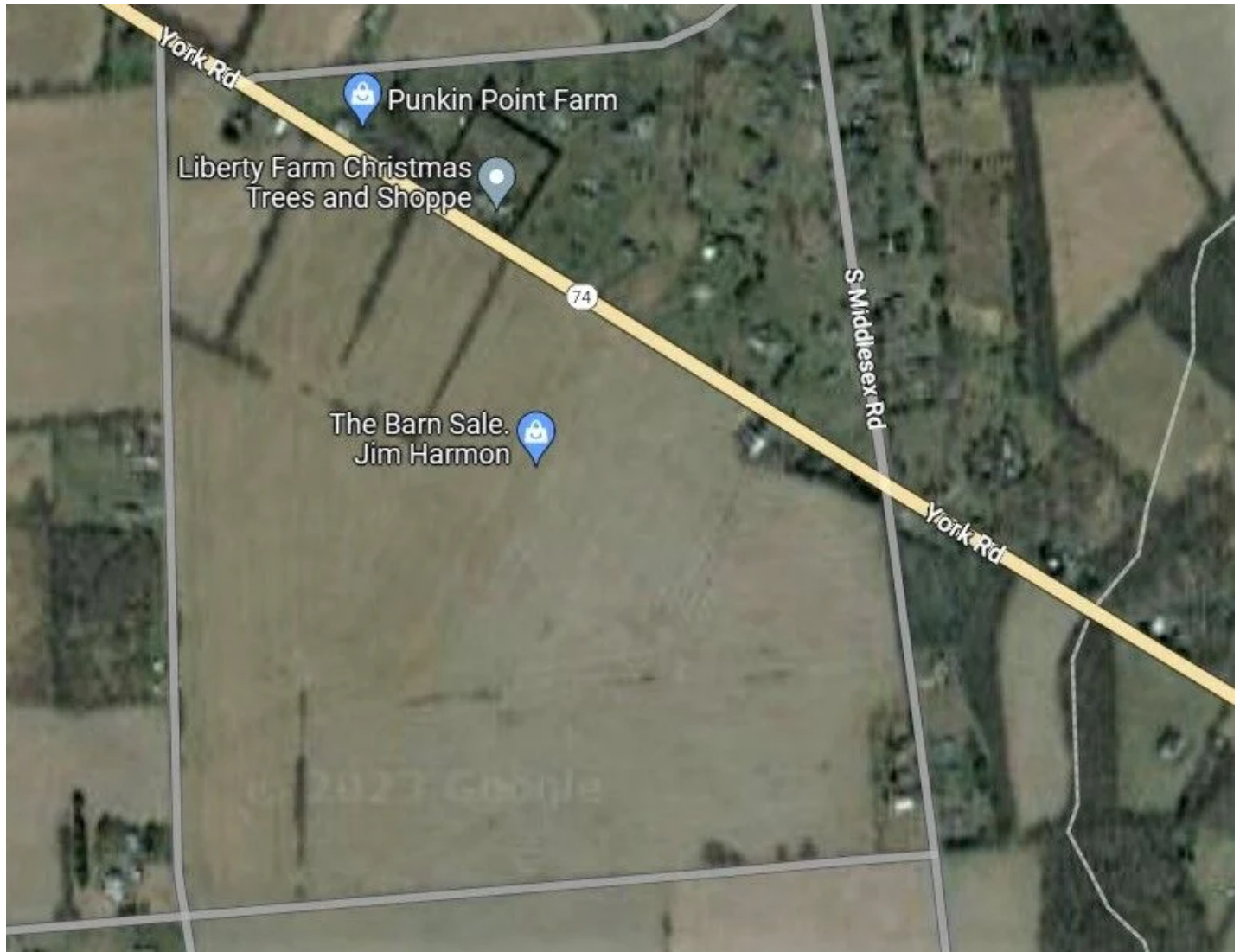
EDITOR'S PICK

South Middleton Township

Soccer complex conditional use application withdrawn in South Middleton

Christine Musser For The Sentinel

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A youth sports organization seeks a conditional-use permit to develop a soccer field complex at 842 York Road in South Middleton Township.

Google Maps

Christine Musser For The Sentinel

A conditional-use application for a soccer complex in South Middleton Township was withdrawn during a supervisors meeting at the end of May, though a new plan is to be submitted in time for the June 20 planning commission meeting.

Tim Duerr, director of community development with the township, read a letter from Michael Pykosh, attorney for the soccer complex applicant, informing the board know of the application's withdrawal and plans to submit something new. The township said the plan was withdrawn was because of revisions to the plans that require it to go back to review.

Those who want to attend the planning commission meeting can contact Duerr to find out if the plans were submitted in time to be considered by June 20 meeting.

The development of a 49-acre soccer complex has been contentious since township residents became aware of the plans. The location is the former Wolfe farm at 842 York Road. It would run along rural Springville Road and is across from Shughart Road. “Deflate Keystone FC” signs are displayed throughout the area.

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Residents are concerned about the traffic the development would bring to an area that is heavily traveled. The two rural roads are not equipped to handle traffic from the complex, they say. Another concern is the contamination of wells from chemicals

used on the fields and the risk of sinkholes.

After an initial conditional use hearing was held with some public input, another hearing scheduled in May for the complex was continued at the request of those opposed to the development.

Ladnor Lane bridge replacement

The Ladnor Lane timber deck bridge over Mountain Creek in South Middleton Township is set for replacement if the funding comes through. Because of its two spans of 22 feet, with an abutment in the middle, it is required to be inspected every two years under the National Bridge Inspection Standards. Its inspection will take place this summer.

"The wood deck is difficult to maintain, but we really can't put anything sturdier on the structure because it would add weight," township engineer Brian O'Neill said. "It's beyond functional repair, and it's been on the township's long-term plans to replace it."

The current weight limit for the bridge, which was built in 1920, is four tons because of its deteriorating state. The steel beams have moderate section loss from rust, and the abutments are deteriorating from stream erosion.

The replacement funding for Ladnor Lane bridge is coming from a different source than the proposed funds from a year ago, which would have come from the Fee for Local Use Fund. That funding comes from Cumberland County residents who are charged an additional \$5 for vehicle registration.

The funding this time is coming from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law that President Biden signed on Nov. 15, 2021.

"The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law authorizes up to \$108 billion to support federal public transportation programs, including \$91 billion in guaranteed funding," according to the federal transportation website.

The county is “working with the township to secure the federal funds that would be used to match township and county funding to replace the bridge. We are still awaiting word from PennDOT on when/if federal funds will be available,” said Kirk Stoner, director of planning for the county.

At the May 25 meeting, O’Neill brought the possible replacement of the bridge to the public’s attention. If the funding goes through, it will cover 80% to 90% of the \$1.5 million costs.

“Often times, the cost to replace the bridge would be a significant impact to local municipalities' budgets," O'Neill said in an email. "For instance, the estimated cost for the Ladnor Lane bridge is between \$1.5 to \$2 million. South Middleton Township’s 2023 budget is approximately \$13.6 million. So, a project that equates to about 15% of a municipalities’ budget is a significant expense.”



Gerald Putt, a wildlife artist from Boiling Springs, has won several duck stamp competitions in Pennsylvania and other states and his work has been featured in Pennsylvania Game News Magazine.

Maddie Seiler