

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORKSHOP MEETING
SEPTEMBER 2, 2021

The Board of Supervisors of Upper Merion Township met for a Workshop Meeting on Thursday, September 2, 2021, in the Township Building. The meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m., followed by a pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Supervisors present were: Bill Jenaway, Tina Garzillo, Greg Waks and Greg Phillips. Absent was Supervisor Kenney. Also present were: Anthony Hamaday, Township Manager; Joe McGrory, Township Solicitor; and Leanna Colubriale, Township Engineer.

CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENTS:

Mr. Jenaway announced an executive session will be following this meeting to discuss litigation and personnel matters. He also noted that last night's storm/hurricane spared Upper Merion to some degree. We are extremely thankful for that and have compassion for our neighboring communities particularly Bridgeport, Norristown, Upper Dublin and Lower Providence. Chairman Jenaway thanked the Public Works Department for all the work they did in preparing for the storm and our Public Safety Team for responding to approximately 25 water rescues.

DISCUSSIONS:

GKO ARCHITECTS – LIBRARY/POLICE FEASIBILITY STUDY

Kevin Goddshall with GKO Architects presented the Library/Police Feasibility Study. The goals of the project were to evaluate the space and layout of the library and police departments and to see how we could meet their needs in 2021. Secondly, in reviewing the Township Building we quickly realized that the library sits on top of the police so anything that you do to the library affects the police department therefore we analyzed both the needs of the library and the police. Thirdly, we had to evaluate the infrastructure of the building.

Tonight, the architects just want to review the basic parameters, their findings on the project and making sure the vision they see matches the expectations of the board. The library is a place for community to meet and it is an important resource to the community. An important goal is to make the library a place where people want to go for information and resources.

To make the library up to date and more modern the plan proposes the following:

- Visibility and Openness
- Office Spaces
- Creation Labs (Open Studio)
- Café or Small Restaurant

The Police needs are as follows:

- Improvements need to be made to the facility to stay on task with accreditation. The big issue is space. There are many more officers and staff that have been added to the department over the years. The building was not designed for the number of officers currently working at this location.
- Meeting Rooms/Roll Call Rooms

- Interview Suites
- Holding and Processing Area (Dedicated Sally port)
- Locker room facilities
- Aging Infrastructure (Leaks in roof and windows)
- Mechanical Concerns – Heat and A/C need to be replaced
- Lighting Systems – LED Lighting needs to be at 100%
- Ventilation

Three options were presented to the Board and they are as follows:

Option 1 was to renovate and expand the existing building. Option two is moving the library out and having the police and administration departments remaining. The third option is that administration moves out of the building and the library takes over the upper level and police take over the lower level of the building. These three options will be developed in detail and cost estimates will be provided to the Board in the future for review.

Board Comments:

The Board offered some comments/suggestions that the architects will take into consideration when redefining the plan options.

JP MORGAN CHASE BANK DEVELOPMENT – 677 W. DEKALB PIKE

The Board wanted to further discuss several items with regards to this plan. They deal mostly with stormwater management, circulation, and the waiver of trees.

Mr. Fran Greene, representing the applicant, addressed a few of the concerns the board still has about this development. First, he addressed the design of the stormwater management basin. He explained that the applicant is exceeding the stormwater requirements that the township requires. He explained that the impermeable barrier will be around the entire system and that will be shown on the new plan. Circulation and parking were also discussed. The Board was also concerned about the trees on the site. The applicant is asking for a waiver of the street trees because of how the site is laid out and the utilities makes it impossible to place them all on site. The Board is asking for the exact number of street trees on site. Mr. Greene did not know the answer but stated that the applicant's landscape architect will look into that.

It was noted that the Township Engineer is still reviewing this plan.

Board Comments:

Supervisor Waks asked that the applicant accept a condition on the plan banning the use of a fast food restaurant at this location.

Chairman Jenaway still had concerns regarding the proposed stormwater management system.

It was noted that due to the outstanding actions – no vote will take place tonight. This plan will be placed on the September 18, 2021 business agenda. The applicant will submit an extension on this plan until September 30, 2021.

Board Action:

It was moved by Supervisor Waks, seconded Supervisor Philips, all voting "Aye" to approve the extension of this development plan through September 30, 2021. None opposed. Motion passed 4-0.

VIMCO – 250 HANSEN ACCESS ROAD

Mr. Hamaday, Township Manager, stated that Vimco, 250 Hansen Access Road, came to a chair meeting earlier this year to discuss their plan for a proposed 30,000 square foot building. Craig Lewis, Kaplan Stewart was present to represent the applicant. Mr. Lewis addressed the Board. A sketch plan was submitted to the Board. The 11 acres Vimco property is located at 250 Hansen Access Road and is zoned LI- Limited industrial. Currently, it is a warehouse and steel products manufacturing facility. The proposed expansion consists of a new 27,000 square foot warehouse

Mr. Lewis addressed a possible parking issue. The existing facility and proposed expansion would require 296 parking spaces. The current parking is sufficient for the current use and the proposed warehouse would not generate the need for additional employees or parking. The current parking ordinance does provide the Board of Supervisors an opportunity to determine that a use is an unspecified use and determine the appropriate parking ratio for an unspecified use based on evidence presented to the Board and Vimco is requesting the board consider this provision. Vimco is proposing to provide 60 parking spaces with some better located ADA spaces which they feel is adequate parking for the facility.

The second item the Board was concerned about was stormwater. There are existing stormwater management facilities on site already to the rear of the property that discharges towards the railroad tract. Stormwater basins have been added to the new plan. Mr. Lewis wanted to be certain that the Board agreed that the stormwater obligations are to manage the increase of impervious coverage from the new development. The Township Ordinance has a provision that talks about re-development. The applicant feels that they only need to meet the ordinance provisions for all the new impervious created.

Board Comments:

Chairman Jenaway asked if the applicant has met with staff. It was stated that they did meet with staff prior to coming before the Board in July. Chairman Jenaway stated the one of the challenges is that this is a 1970 building and there were no standards for stormwater or public safety at the time it was built. It was suggested that the applicant carefully review access around the building.

Supervisor Garzillo questioned what amount of green space the new building would be built upon.

Mr. Richard McCormick, Vimco, addressed the Board. He stated that the additional building planned will be 27,000 square feet but we would be covering existing concrete of about 8,000 square feet so the addition would be about 18 – 19,000 square feet of impervious which is well within the required green space percentage.

Supervisor Garzillo also asked about the existing stormwater management system and what the capacity/discharge is currently at the site. It was stated that they have not analyzed the basin. The goal is to leave it as is and not to change it. Instead of adding to the existing basin they are proposing an entire new stormwater system for the new building.

The Board thanked Vimco for being in the Township and for manufacturing their product in Upper Merion.

GAMBONE – UPPER MERION SWIM CLUB PROPERTY

Mr. Hamaday, Township Manager, stated that earlier this year the Gambone Organization came before the Supervisors with a proposal for a portion of the old Upper Merion Swim Club property. They were proposing an age restricted townhouse development. Back in 2009 the Board changed the zoning from AG to R2 and there is a covenant on the remaining property that limits the development of the property to 25 single family dwellings. The applicant is looking to see if the Board is willing to change those restrictions to allow age restricted townhouses in place of single-family homes. With that he introduced Mr. Eric Frey, Joseph Gambone, and John Kennedy, Planner.

Mr. Frey stated that the reason they are before the Board is to amend the declaration. It will have to go through Conditional Use. It is a permitted plan under the R2 zoning – the only thing in the way is the declaration so they are looking to amend that to allow the 49 age restricted townhomes. Mr. Frey stated that he did draft an amendment to the declaration and submitted it to the Township Solicitor for review prior to tonight's meeting. Mr. McGrory commented that he did review the amendment and the only change he would suggest is to add language about age restrictions similar to what is in the Fair Housing Act and to cap the development at 49 townhomes.

Mr. Frey also stated that the applicant is planning on an HOA and the street would remain private.

Board Comments:

The Board for the most part was in favor of the project but asked the applicant to consider a playground and trails when finalizing their plans – they felt those two items would be an asset to this community.

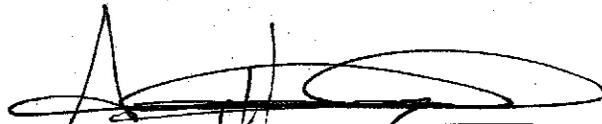
REVIEW OF SEPTEMBER 23, 2021 BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA

Mr. Hamaday, Township Manager, reviewed the draft agenda for the upcoming September 23, 2021, 2022 Business Meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Board Action:

It was moved by Supervisor Garzillo, seconded by Mr. Waks, all voting "Aye" to adjourn the meeting. None opposed. Adjournment occurred at 9:45 pm.



ANTHONY HAMADAY
TOWNSHIP MANAGER

cd
Minutes Approved:
Minutes Entered: