

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
SPECIAL MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 15, 2016

The Board of Supervisors of Upper Merion Township met for a Special Meeting on Thursday, September 15, 2016, in Freedom Hall, in the Township Building in King of Prussia. The meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m., followed by a pledge to the flag.

ROLL CALL:

Supervisors present were: Greg Philips, Greg Waks, Bill Jenaway, Erika Spott and Carole Kenney. Also present were: David Kraynik, Township Manager; Sally Slook, Assistant Township Manager; John Walko, Solicitor's Office; Kyle Brown, Associate Planner; Tom Beach, Township Engineer, Angela Caramenico, Assistant to the Township Manager.

DISCUSSIONS:

RESOLUTION 2016-30 FOR PRELIMINARY/FINAL SUBDIVISION PLAN APPROVAL AND CONDITIONAL USE APPROVAL RE: LOSTY SUBDIVISION; 231 MATSONFORD ROAD; 10.35 ACRES, 7 RESIDENTIAL LOTS (1 EXISTING) AND 3.26 ACRES OF OPEN SPACE, R-1A, SINGLE FAMILY CLUSTER OVERLAY (Plan Expiration: 9/30/16)

Mr. John Walko, Solicitor's Office, stated a conditional use hearing was held on this matter on August 4, 2016. He said there is an order for consideration for this Board's approval of this conditional use application with the conditions that the applicant comply with all the testimony and exhibits presented at the August 4, 2016 hearing. The applicant must also comply with all conditions of subdivision plan approval of the property set forth under Resolution 2016-30. Both items are being done contemporaneously at this business meeting.

Board Action:

It was moved by Mr. Philips, seconded by Mr. Waks all voting "Aye" to approve the Conditional Use Application as submitted. None opposed. Motion approved 5-0.

Board Action:

It was moved by Mr. Waks, seconded by Mr. Philips, all voting "Aye" to approve Resolution 2016-30, Preliminary/Final Subdivision Plan. None opposed. Motion approved 5-0.

CONTINUANCE OF CONDITIONAL USE HEARING RE: O'NEILL PROPERTIES GROUP; 2901 RENAISSANCE BOULEVARD; 300-UNIT MF RESIDENTIAL BUILDING; 10.928 ACRES, SM-1 (continued from August 4, 2016)

Mr. John Walko, Solicitor's Office, opened the continued hearing and turned the hearing over to Michael Sheridan, representing two entitles as party litigants.

Mr. Brian Keaveney, traffic engineer, Pennoni Associates, was sworn in as a witness.

Mr. Sheridan asked Mr. Keaveney to describe the location of the parking lot in relation to the Hughes Park train station. Mr. Keaveney responded the

parking lot is at the end of the Renaissance Boulevard cul-de-sac approximately 250 feet from Crooked Lane on the opposite side of Crooked Lane from the Hughes Park train station.

Mr. Sheridan asked if the applicant is providing a vehicle access from Crooked Lane to the parking lot. Mr. Keaveney responded in the negative.

Mr. Sheridan asked if there is an area where such an access could be constructed. Mr. Keaveney responded there is an open area between Crooked Lane and the cul-de-sac at the western end of Renaissance Boulevard. It is approximately 250-260 feet in length by 50 to 60 feet in width.

Mr. Sheridan asked how a user who drove to the Hughes Park train station would get from the train station to the parking lot. Mr. Keaveney responded they would travel north on Crooked Lane to the signalized intersection of Church Road, make a right turn, travel on Church Road to Horizon Drive which is another signalized intersection and then travel south on Horizon Drive to Renaissance Boulevard which is a four-way stop controlled intersection and then travel west to the end of Renaissance Boulevard to the parking lot location. It was noted that drive is approximately 1.9 miles.

Mr. Sheridan asked if there are areas of the township that would find the Hughes Park station more convenient than using the Gulph Mills station. Mr. Keaveney responded given the stations along the line he would expect the Hughes Park users would primarily be local residents including those coming from the area of the Kingswood Apartments to the west or areas of the township that would utilize Henderson Road to travel either to Church Road or Shoemaker Road.

In response to Mr. Sheridan's request for an explanation of one of the exhibits, Mr. Keaveney pointed out a graphic showing a comparison of the distance to the Hughes Park parking lot in two scenarios one being with a potential connection to Crooked Lane and one without. He focused on the distance from the common intersection of Henderson Road and Church Road. One route would utilize Church Road travel east on Church Road through the intersection with Crooked Lane which is a signalized intersection and again through the intersection with Horizon Drive, south on Horizon Drive to Renaissance Boulevard, through a four-way stop at that location and then west to the parking lot on Renaissance Boulevard for a distance of 1.9 miles. Alternately if a connection were made traffic from that intersection would utilize Church Road, make a right on Yerkes Road, travel south on Yerkes Road to the intersection with Crooked Lane and then travel north on Crooked Lane to the entrance to the parking lot for a distance of .79 miles.

Mr. Sheridan asked where the users of the Hughes Park train station currently park. Mr. Keaveney responded he has observed their parking along Yerkes Road, particularly on the shoulder on the south or west side of the roadway.

Mr. Sheridan asked what would be expected to happen to the current on street parking at the train station without a Crooked Lane vehicle access to the parking lot. Mr. Keaveney responded he expects traffic coming from that direction would continue to park on Yerkes Road.

Mr. Sheridan asked for Mr. Keaveney's recommendation for the parking lot. Mr. Keaveney responded he recommends a connection in some fashion to the parking lot from Crooked Lane.

Mr. Sheridan asked if the connection of Renaissance Boulevard to Crooked Lane would be consistent with Mr. Keaveney's recommendation to the Township in the May 2010 traffic study. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative and stated that recommendation is still valid.

Mr. Sheridan asked how the May 2010 traffic study came about. Mr. Keaveney responded this was a result of a condition of approval for a previous development. Mr. Sheridan asked what the condition required. Mr. Keaveney responded the condition required a detailed analysis of both positive and negative aspects of a potential connection of Renaissance Boulevard to Crooked Lane.

Mr. Sheridan asked if the referenced conditions required that a traffic committee be formed. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Sheridan asked if that committee made a recommendation. Mr. Keaveney responded the committee recommended a more detailed study be done and increased the scope of the study from 7 to 22 intersections in the area. The Pennoni May 2010 traffic study resulted from that recommendation.

Mr. Sheridan asked about the source of the design for the proposed connection. Mr. Keaveney responded the design was prepared by the engineer for the land development applicant, the current applicant in this proceeding.

Mr. Sheridan asked if the escrow deposited by the applicant after the 2007 office building approval included the cost of constructing the connection in that design. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Sheridan asked for a description of the purpose and scope of the May 2010 Pennoni study. Mr. Keaveney responded the study was requested by the Township to conduct an objective evaluation of the impact of the connection not only on Crooked Lane but the surrounding area intersections and identified both positive and negative aspects related to the potential connection of Renaissance Boulevard to Crooked Lane.

Mr. Sheridan asked for a description of the location of the proposed point of connection between Renaissance Boulevard and Crooked Lane. Mr. Keaveney responded the proposed point of connection is just to the north of the rail crossing bridge on Crooked Lane in the vicinity of Philadelphia Avenue.

Mr. Sheridan asked what is shown on the color coded maps in the May 2010 study. Mr. Keaveney responded these maps depict the result of the study in a simplified manner and represent the impact of the operation at those intersections if a connection were made from Renaissance Boulevard to Crooked Lane. Shown on the maps are the intersections that would improve by reducing volume or decreasing delay, intersections that would remain unchanged with regard to volume or delay and intersections which would have more substantial impacts warranting further improvements at those locations. Of the 22 study intersections 6 would have more substantial impact with an increase in delay of greater than 10 seconds on average. The rest of the 16 intersections would improve from the standpoint of either reduced volume and/or delay or remain in the same condition as they were without the connection.

Mr. Sheridan asked what effect, if any, will the change of the applicant's project from office to residential have on traffic. Mr. Keaveney responded the change from office to residential will be less new traffic trip generation into and out of the site and there will be a difference in the directional distribution. Office space is mostly entering traffic in the morning and exiting traffic in the evening. Conversely the residential traffic would be entering traffic in the evening and exiting traffic in the morning which would balance to some extent with the existing office use. Mr. Keaveney said he still believes that the results of the comparison with the connection versus without the connection would still be the same but with less trip generation resulting from this development. The improvements may be less extensive and the negative impacts may also be reduced.

Mr. Sheridan asked what the study concluded concerning the level of traffic between the point of connection and Church Road if there was a properly designed connection of Crooked Lane and Renaissance Boulevard. Mr. Keaveney responded the traffic volume between the point of connection and Church Road would be expected to reduce or lessen in volume.

Mr. Sheridan asked about the primary use along Crooked Lane from the point of connection to Church Road. Mr. Keaveney responded it is primarily residential.

Mr. Sheridan proceeded with a line of questioning regarding the proposed connection design. Mr. Keaveney responded the turn restrictions the connection implemented would be valuable to minimize impact on the adjacent residential properties along Crooked Lane.

Mr. Sheridan asked for a description of the features of the connection design and how it impacts traffic on both Renaissance Boulevard and Crooked Lane. Mr. Keaveney responded the connection would extend Renaissance out to Crooked Lane with predominately the same curvature that currently exists on Renaissance Boulevard. The resulting connection would change the operation of the traffic at the intersection away from Crooked Lane and would orient traffic to the Renaissance Boulevard connection. Crooked Lane traffic would still be maintained in both north and south direction; however, traffic traveling on Crooked Lane that wanted to remain on Crooked Lane and head up to Church Road would enter a left turn lane and make a left turn onto Crooked Lane. This connection would orient a lot of the traffic away from Crooked Lane north of the connection and into the Corporate Center.

Mr. Sheridan asked for a description and purpose of the physical features depicted on the map in the middle of Crooked Lane. Mr. Keaveney responded there is a dividing median in the center of the extension as well as a channelization island on the north side of the connection intersection. The intent of these measures is to keep traffic from turning right out of the connection to head north on Crooked Lane towards Church Road. That movement would be restricted as well as any traffic traveling south on Crooked Lane would be prohibited from turning left into this connection into the corporate center.

Mr. Sheridan stated at the last hearing Supervisor Jenaway commented this design predated the Transit Oriented District (TOD). He asked if the addition of a public parking lot for the Hughes Park train station at the location proposed suggests any changes to the design with regard to pedestrians. Mr. Keaveney responded currently if pedestrians were to utilize the parking lot as proposed they would walk out to Crooked Lane and cross at a mid-block location where traffic on Crooked Lane is free flowing. Under this connection design pedestrians would be protected via a series of crosswalks extending from the existing sidewalk on the western side of the rail bridge across Philadelphia Avenue where a stop sign is provided. Another crosswalk link would traverse the southbound approach of Crooked Lane where another stop sign is provided. Pedestrians would be able to cross through the channelized island area via a marked crosswalk on the northbound movement on Crooked Lane. Mr. Keaveney said traffic on Crooked Lane will be at a much lower speed than under today's condition because it will be a left turn that is forced to slow down as it makes that movement.

Mr. Sheridan asked for comments about Mr. Tavani's previous testimony about the concept of using a T intersection for the connection with no right turn and no left turn in restrictions. Mr. Keaveney responded a T intersection with those turn restrictions would have much the same positive and negative impacts to the surrounding area intersections as Mr. Tavani previously described. The only drawback was that the stop sign would be placed on the approach of Renaissance Boulevard as it T's into Crooked Lane and the pedestrian crossing would still potentially be crossing two free flow travel lanes on Crooked Lane.

Mr. Sheridan asked if the positive aspects listed in the May 2010 report are still valid with the change in use for the applicant's site from office use to residential. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Sheridan asked for a summary of the recommendations in the May 2010 report. Mr. Keaveney responded it was recommended the design and construction of a connection mitigating the impact on the adjacent Hughes Park residents be undertaken to the extent possible.

Mr. Sheridan asked if the change of the applicants use of the site from office to residential changes Mr. Keaveney's recommendation. Mr. Keaveney responded in the negative.

Mr. Sheridan asked if Mr. Keaveney reviewed Mr. Tavani's transportation impact study. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative.

Assuming that the connection of Renaissance Boulevard to Crooked Lane is made with the design attached to the May 2010 study or a design with similar restrictions, Mr. Sheridan asked if Mr. Keaveney agrees with the statement in Mr. Tavani's study that the connection would result in a failing level of service at Church and Crooked Lane. Mr. Keaveney responded in the negative. He stated the failing level of service that was previously referenced assumes a high volume of traffic leaving this new connection and traveling north on Crooked Lane and on Church Road which would not be the case if the turn movement is restricted either by signage or via the geometry of the "yellow" connection that was discussed.

With the same assumption Mr. Sheridan asked if the connection were made what is expected will happen to traffic on Crooked Lane from the point of connection to Church Road. Mr. Keaveney responded he would expect it would decrease over today's volume.

Mr. Sheridan asked if Mr. Keaveney would agree with Mr. Tavani's study that the connection would result in failing levels of service if the connection is made with no left in and no right out restrictions. Mr. Keaveney responded if those restrictions were implemented he would not expect an increase in traffic at the intersection of Church Road and Crooked Lane.

Mr. Sheridan asked what Mr. Keaveney would expect happening to the level of traffic on Crooked Lane and the point of connection to Church Road with the same T intersection restrictions. Mr. Keaveney responded he would expect that it would decrease.

Mr. Sheridan referred to page 2 of the May 2010 study listing fresh traffic counts for 10 intersections in September 2009. He asked what adjustments were made in arriving at the level of service after doing those traffic counts. Mr. Keaveney responded in order to provide an objective evaluation taking into account the existing volumes in 2009, the counts were adjusted upwards to reflect the currently approved 320,000 square foot office building on this site. In addition, it was determined how much unoccupied approved building space there was that could readily be occupied at any time to accurately reflect traffic that may come back to those roads if that space were occupied.

Mr. Sheridan asked if Mr. Keaveney compared the level of service for the 7 intersections found in Mr. Tavani's study with the level of service found in the May 2010 Pennoni study for the same intersections. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative. He said they found that the level of service was much lower in the Pennoni study than in Mr. Tavani's recent study.

Mr. Sheridan asked why Mr. Keaveney highlighted the intersections of Church Road and Yerkes Road and Church Road and Crooked Lane in one of

his exhibits. Mr. Keaveney responded that was due to the fact these were the intersections discussed in Mr. Tavani's study with reference to the impact of the potential connection from Renaissance Boulevard to Crooked Lane.

Mr. Sheridan asked Mr. Keaveney to compare the baseline level of service found in the Pennoni study with the baseline level of service found in Mr. Tavani's study for the intersections listed in the exhibit. After a line of questioning about the baseline level of service found in both studies, testimony revealed the readings between the 2010 and 2016 studies were far apart. In addition, Mr. Keaveney responded traffic improvements to the area since the 2010 study do not explain the divergence in the baseline results.

Mr. Sheridan asked Mr. Keaveney to read a paragraph on page 3 of the McMahon review letter. It read as follows, "The study should be revised to include queue matrix tables at the study intersections to verify that proposed queue lengths can be accommodated in existing storage lanes. The 95<sup>th</sup> percentile queue should be shown in these tables."

Mr. Sheridan asked what is meant by the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile. Mr. Keaveney responded as traffic fluctuates during the peak hours there are queues that vary in length. During the busiest peak hour the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile is the longest line of cars and the worst condition during the peak hour.

Mr. Sheridan asked what purposes are served by queue matrix tables. Mr. Keaveney responded the referenced queue matrix would look at what the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile queue is under the existing conditions which in Mr. Tavani's study would be classified as the no build condition and would compare it to what the resulting queue would be under the post development or build condition. It would compare the two for the same time period.

Mr. Sheridan asked if the queue matrix helps corroborate or check the accuracy of the levels of service indicated in the report. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative. He said it is often a secondary way of checking the accuracy of the report as the queues are relatively easy to verify in the field with existing conditions.

Since Mr. Keaveney's office is located on Horizon Drive, Mr. Sheridan asked if Mr. Keaveney frequently uses Horizon Drive to exit the business park onto Church Road between 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Sheridan asked about Mr. Keaveney's experience concerning the length of the traffic queue during the PM peak period. Mr. Keaveney responded it has not been studied in detail but his experience is 20-30 vehicles in the queue.

Mr. Sheridan asked if that is consistent with the baseline level of service found by Mr. Tavani for traffic exiting Horizon Boulevard onto Church Road. Mr. Keaveney responded it could be; however, his experience waiting in that queue and the amount of time to getting through the signal would not equate to a level of service B or C.

Mr. Sheridan asked if Mr. Tavani's study included an adjustment to take into account vacant office space at the office park as was done in the Pennoni traffic counts. Mr. Keaveney responded it does not appear so in his review.

Mr. Sheridan asked the amount of vacant space reflected in the May 2010 report. Mr. Keaveney responded 259,955 square feet.

Mr. Sheridan asked if Mr. Keaveney's preparation for his hearing testimony looked into the current vacant space square footage at the business park. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative. He said the estimates provided to him were in the range of 380,000-390,000 square feet that is

unoccupied which he confirmed was similar to a 390,000 square foot office building.

Mr. Sheridan asked about the effect of that omission in Mr. Tavani's study. Mr. Keaveney responded if the traffic were included in the baseline analysis he would expect it would reflect a level of service less than what is currently shown in the study.

Mr. Sheridan asked if Mr. Keaveney believes it would be better practice to adjust for the vacancy level at the business park. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative. He said it was particularly important with respect to the evaluation of a connection from Renaissance Boulevard to Crooked Lane.

Mr. Sheridan asked how many intersections were included in Mr. Tavani's traffic counts on November 24, 2015. Mr. Keaveney responded Mr. Tavani studied four (4) of the seven (7) intersections on November 24, 2015. It was noted Thanksgiving occurred two days later on Thursday, November 26, 2015.

Mr. Sheridan asked if traffic counts taken that close to the Thanksgiving holiday are reliable. Mr. Keaveney responded PennDOT guidelines outline counts should not be taken during weeks when a holiday is present. He said it is impossible to tell if they were normal counts or not. Mr. Keaveney further stated counts taken during a week like that should be confirmed with additional counts on a normal weekday during a normal week.

Mr. Sheridan asked if Mr. Tavani's study included any adjustment to take into account the additional traffic that would result from completion of the Fed Ex distribution center. Mr. Keaveney responded it does not appear there was anything directly related to the Fed Ex facility.

Mr. Sheridan asked about the failure to make that adjustment. Mr. Keaveney responded the Fed Ex facility may increase traffic in the area. He said it may not have a substantial impact at some of the intersections, but it might and it should be considered.

Mr. Sheridan asked if the report prepared by Mr. Tavani included a study on the impact of connecting Renaissance Boulevard to Crooked Lane and if there was any data included regarding the impact of such connection. Mr. Keaveney responded Mr. Tavani provided a narrative describing his evaluation of what the impact would be; however, it does not appear there is any detailed supporting data.

Mr. Sheridan asked if there is additional information the township should require before there is any reliance on Mr. Tavani's study. Mr. Keaveney responded he would recommend addressing the comments outlined by the Township's traffic engineer, McMahan Associates. He said he also believes the unoccupied space should be accounted for in some fashion as well as the presence of the Fed Ex facility directly adjacent to the Corporate Center.

Mr. Sheridan asked if new traffic counts were needed to replace the Thanksgiving traffic counts. Mr. Keaveney responded he would recommend that the four intersections counted during the week of Thanksgiving be recounted to compare the volume conditions.

Mr. Edmund J. Campbell, representing the applicant, began his cross examination of the protestant's witness.

Mr. Campbell asked how long Mr. Keaveney served as the traffic engineer for Upper Merion Township. Mr. Keaveney responded his firm, Pennoni Associates, served as traffic engineer from 1999 through 2011 and he was the primary traffic engineer for the Township from 2003 to 2011.

Mr. Campbell asked if Mr. Keaveney has had occasion to review Mr. Tavani's work in Upper Merion Township as well as other townships in the surrounding area hundreds of times and if he is a competent traffic engineer. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Campbell asked if Mr. Keaveney was asked to prepare a traffic study similar to what he prepared in 2010. Mr. Keaveney responded in the negative.

Mr. Campbell asked if there are specific PennDOT bulletins or publications indicating when traffic studies should not be held. Mr. Keaveney responded he is aware the local district 6 PennDOT has outlined guidelines for traffic impact studies and it specifically indicates that counts should not be taken during weeks when a holiday occurs.

Mr. Campbell asked if Mr. Keaveney is aware of any traffic study from 2010 to the present time other than Mr. Tavani's which contemplates or anticipates residential development in the Renaissance Park. Mr. Keaveney responded the only study he can think of would have been the traffic impact fee update the Township performed for the entire township that incorporated some of these intersections. Mr. Keaveney did not recall whether the assumption was residential or office for this area in the corporate center but said he could check.

Mr. Campbell asked if anyone proposed residential development on that site before his client did approximately 2 ½ years ago when the TOD began to be processed. Mr. Keaveney responded in the negative.

Mr. Campbell stated it is unlikely the study relating to the traffic impact fees would have anticipated residential development there if no one had proposed it. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative.

Referring to protestant's exhibit 8, Mr. Campbell asked what Mr. Keaveney's client instructed him to do. Mr. Keaveney responded they wanted to convey the context of the different studies. He said the Pennoni study at the time was done to evaluate the connections and the impacts of the potential connection on a much broader area and convey that the study done in support of the land development had a much smaller scope and different assumptions.

Mr. Campbell asked if there were different assumptions between the Pennoni 2010 study and Mr. Tavani's 2016 study. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Campbell proceeded with a line of questioning regarding the baselines for both studies. He made the point that the baseline for the 2016 study is an actual count of traffic and the baseline from 2010 is a count from 2009.

Mr. Campbell stated Mr. Tavani's report analyzed 7 different intersections for this exhibit and Mr. Keaveney only reported on three intersections. Mr. Keaveney responded Pennoni illustrated the intersections that were used in the narrative regarding the extension.

Mr. Campbell asked if Pennoni did the same type of comparison for the other 4 intersections. Mr. Keaveney is certain they looked at them but did not recall the reason they were not included.

Mr. Campbell made reference to Mr. Tavani's initial investigation regarding the alternative trip distribution model which includes a third new access to Crooked Lane and determined that such access would increase traffic along Crooked Lane approximately 200% and negatively impact traffic at Yerkes Road and Church Road, Crooked Lane and Church Road. Mr. Campbell indicated Mr. Keaveney's testimony is that there is no evidence whatsoever to support that statement. Mr. Keaveney responded it does not appear so but the evidence in the narrative indicates the assumption made in this study is that the traffic leaving



this potential connection will travel north on Crooked Lane to Church Road and also travel west on Yerkes Road to attempt to make a very difficult left turn onto Church Road.

Mr. Campbell asked if Mr. Keaveney's testimony is that there is no objective basis for the conclusions Mr. Tavani made in that initial investigation. Mr. Keaveney responded it is limited and would require further analysis.

Mr. Campbell stated the Pennoni 2010 report draws some similar conclusions. Mr. Keaveney responded he believes Pennoni's results are that the intersection of Church Road and Crooked Lane improve and not degrade.

Mr. Campbell said Pennoni's 2010 conclusions are that there would be a negative impact in general, for example, Shoemaker Road and Yerkes Road. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Campbell asked if the conclusion in the 2010 report is that there would be a negative impact on Crooked Lane. Mr. Keaveney responded there would be a negative impact south of the proposed connection; north of the connection there would be an improvement.

Mr. Campbell asked if the 2010 report came to similar conclusions. Mr. Keaveney responded there were similar effects.

Mr. Campbell made reference to the appendix to the 2010 report and that it was not included in the exhibit that was offered today.

Mr. Campbell indicated an analysis was not done for the impact on Philadelphia and Crooked Lane.

Mr. Campbell asked what the 2010 study indicated would happen at the intersection of Crooked Lane and Philadelphia Avenue. Mr. Keaveney responded it would experience increased traffic and more delay.

Mr. Campbell asked which intersection would go from an A to an F. Mr. Keaveney responded the intersection that is currently configured as a four-way stop which is Crooked Lane, Yerkes Road and Holstein. He indicated it is identified as one of the intersections that would warrant improvement because it was decreasing in operational characteristic.

Mr. Campbell stated Crooked Lane and Philadelphia Avenue is one of the roads Mr. Tavani studied. He noted the 2010 study shows the traffic increase would go from zero to 550 trips in the AM peak. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Campbell indicated the traffic increase would go from zero to 600 in the PM peak. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Campbell stated when there is criticism of Mr. Tavani's report because there is no objective evidence supporting his conclusions there would be a negative impact in the Hughes Park area and the surrounding areas there is objective evidence which comes from the backup information of the 2010 study. Mr. Keaveney responded that is partially correct. He said it is an accurate assessment if you are looking at a very small area.

Mr. Campbell pursued a line of questioning concerning the adequacy of the proposed parking supporting the Transit Oriented Design and the pedestrian connectivity between that parking area and the train station. Mr. Keaveney responded the parking lot is within a very reasonable distance to walk to the train station. His testimony also revealed the pedestrian connectivity could be improved.

Mr. Campbell asked if Mr. Keaveney's only criticism is that it is 1.9 miles to drive from the train station to the parking area. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Campbell asked if Mr. Keaveney's testimony is that the additional distance makes the parking inadequate to support a Transit Oriented Development. Mr. Keaveney responded it may not get the intended use.

Mr. Campbell proceeded with a line of questioning raising different hypothetical scenarios drivers would encounter from various locations and various speeds.

Mr. Campbell asked if parking could be discouraged on Yerkes Road and encouraged in the new parking area by using no parking signs or limiting the stays on that road. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative.

Dennis Rathore, Philadelphia Avenue, asked for clarification about the safety of the neighborhood as mentioned in the 2010 study. Mr. Keaveney responded the study indicated the connection could be designed to minimize the impact from the standpoint of traffic volume and efficiency and with the signage designed by the applicant's engineer it would present a relatively safe design.

Mr. Philips asked about the purpose of the 2010 study. Mr. Keaveney responded the purpose was to take an objective look at whether this connection from Renaissance Boulevard to Crooked Lane would have a net positive or a net negative effect on the larger area in that portion of the township.

Mr. Philips asked who commissioned that study. Mr. Keaveney responded the township at the time.

Referring to the yellow drawing on the screen, Mr. Philips asked if that was acceptable to Mr. Keaveney as the township representative at the time. Mr. Keaveney responded there would be a more desirable connection if the bridge and rail line were not there. He said given the constraints of the existing roadway network, the location of the bridge, the available space to construct a connection and the fact that it did provide the desired turning movement restrictions he felt it was a little unconventional at the time; however, the thought was that once people became familiar with the situation it would operate at an acceptable level of service.

Mr. Philips asked if Mr. Keaveney would say it was a safe connection. He established it is known that the intersection from Crooked and Yerkes and the driveway that goes back to Gulph Road and Holstein is not an efficient intersection. Mr. Keaveney agreed.

Mr. Philips asked if Mr. Keaveney would also agree that it is not an appropriate intersection. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative. He said he would not expect anyone would voluntarily build an intersection like that these days.

In response to Mr. Philips' additional clarifying questions, Mr. Keaveney responded the 2010 study points out that any new traffic added through the multi-way stop at Yerkes and Crooked Lane needs further improvement if this connection were to be made. He said with regard to the connection itself, he believes once people get used to these movements people would be able to traverse them in a safe and efficient manner. Mr. Keaveney noted the intersection where the numerous stop signs are located would need to be evaluated for some alternate type of treatment such as a traffic signal, a modern round around, or elimination of certain movements. He stated that was never pursued at the time the study was completed.

Mr. Philips asked if Pennoni had to do the study again how it would change based on today's conditions. Mr. Keaveney responded the scope of the study would look at the same intersections and the same peak hour conditions. They would update the traffic counts, take into account the existing unoccupied space of the Corporate Center as well as the potential developments that have occurred recently or are on the books for the next year. This would be done to present a complete picture of what this area may look like if all those changes were to occur in the foreseeable future.

Mr. Philips asked if it is Mr. Keaveney's contention that without this [connection] the parking would not be used. Mr. Keaveney responded he believes it would become a secondary alternative when it may be the intent to make that the primary alternative for those using the Hughes Park station.

Mr. Philips asked how Mr. Keaveney's opinion would be affected if SEPTA put in proper parking for the Hughes Road station. Mr. Keaveney responded there are two aspects to the connection. One is that it serves the parking lot. The other is that it certainly worsens a number of intersections, but the amount of improvement it yields to other area intersections when looking at it on a global scale provides a net benefit because it better distributes the traffic to intersections and roadways that are underutilized.

Mr. Philips asked for clarification if Mr. Keaveney's testimony was that the net result would be a lowering of traffic because this is a residential use versus an office use. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative. He said it was specific to this application.

Mr. Philips asked if Mr. Keaveney's opinion would be affected if the Norristown High Speed Line comes to fruition and a station is built at Henderson Road. Mr. Keaveney responded it depends on its location on Henderson Road, but it may draw a lot of the users away from Hughes Park.

Mr. Waks asked if peculiar intersections tend to have a higher accident rate than more familiar intersections. Mr. Keaveney responded that is difficult to answer but as a general question if there is an unexpected condition it may yield to some driver confusion and as a result a higher accident rate.

Mr. Waks asked if there were any residents from Hughes Park or Gulph Mills on the traffic committee for the 2010 study. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Jenaway asked if SEPTA was included in any of the discussions. Mr. Keaveney responded he did not believe they were consulted.

Mr. Jenaway asked if the "swoosh" enters into the applicant's property and comes through the proposed parking area. Mr. Keaveney responded in the negative.

Mr. Jenaway stated the 2010 study preceded two major traffic initiatives in Upper Merion Township which were initiated to alleviate traffic. One was the Henderson Road ramps onto and off of the expressway and the other was the installation of the adaptive traffic signaling system. Mr. Jenaway asked if that affected the assumptions made in the 2010 study. Mr. Keaveney responded they made assumptions based on the planned implementation of the Henderson Road ramps which had an associated traffic impact study with similar existing conditions and what the conditions would look like after the ramps were installed and that was integrated into their base condition.

Mr. Jenaway referred to the chart Mr. Campbell provided which suggests 500 to 600 additional cars would go through that intersection where the proposed changes would occur. He said he did not see that projected into anyone's analysis. Mr. Keaveney responded it is reflected in the maps associated with the

2010 report. He pointed out the intersection of Yerkes Road and Crooked Lane and Holstein is the multi-way stop directly adjacent to this potential connection and goes from green without a connection to a red condition [with a connection]. He acknowledged there is a substantial enough impact so that the intersection needs to be considered for additional improvement. The map reflects the resultant redistribution of those 500-600 cars out of that potential connection and reduces those cars traveling out of the existing Horizon Drive/Renaissance Boulevard connection which has a positive impact at a number of other intersections within the network.

Mr. Jenaway stated the solution actually proposes another significant challenge which is the reconfiguration of that entire intersection. Mr. Keaveney responded the solution for that intersection was really not a part of the scope at the time and was not reviewed with PennDOT as it was a connection in concept.

Mrs. Kenney asked if any studies reflect the percentage of users coming to the Hughes Park train station from the surrounding area and what direction they are coming from if they are driving. Mr. Keaveney responded he does not believe that has been studied in detail. He noted cars that are parked on Yerkes Road are all on the western shoulder heading from Church Road all pointing towards Crooked Lane because of the parking orientation.

Mrs. Kenney said it makes a difference where people are coming from and it would be a good question to answer so that the traffic could be managed most efficiently. She asked if that is something that could be studied. Mr. Keaveney responded in the affirmative.

Mrs. Kenney asked if anyone has considered the possibility of a third solution such as a roundabout instead of a "swoosh" or a T. She pointed out with the "swoosh" people have to come out of Philadelphia Avenue only in one direction thereby impeding the flow. Mrs. Kenney asked if there is room for a roundabout which would allow everyone free access. Mr. Keaveney responded a roundabout would work there. It was noted focusing all the traffic to the multi-way stop may be the better location for a potential roundabout or traffic signal or improved intersection, but it has not been looked at yet.

Mrs. Kenney asked if there have been any discussions with the school district about the additional traffic counts and safety factor once the Gulph Road School is rebuilt. Mr. Keaveney responded he does not know if that has been studied. He said any new traffic coming into that intersection from any direction whether it is through this connection or some other development is going to generate the need to look at an improved intersection in some fashion there.

Mrs. Kenney asked if there is a possibility of moving the exit to be south of where the school is and away from the curve. Mr. Keaveney said it is possible but it would have to be evaluated as to the extent of other issues such as cost, available property right-of-way, and a new rail crossing.

Mrs. Spott stated she is disappointed no one thought of a roundabout as an option. Mr. Keaveney responded it is an option but it would be difficult restricting movements into the neighborhood and to the north on Crooked Lane.

Mrs. Spott asked for clarification about the multi stop signs. Mr. Keaveney responded the most anyone would stop at is two. There would be one stop at the new intersection and one at the existing intersection in the southbound direction of Crooked Lane leaving Philadelphia Avenue.

Mr. Jenaway stated based Mrs. Kenney's question he is making an assumption there is no demographic for the direction of travel for those currently working in Renaissance Park today. Mr. Keaveney responded there is data for the number of drivers coming from Horizon Drive from each direction, on 320

from each direction and exiting to make a left or right onto 320 or left or right onto Church Road.

Mr. Jenaway commented it seems everything is being pushed to the western or northern side of the township. He asked if anyone looked at traffic movement toward River Road, specifically the opportunities or challenges to opening Hertzog Boulevard down to Flint Hill. Mr. Jenaway said if this were done it would be possible to find an alignment to McCoy's Lane. He pointed out since the Fed Ex property has moved into the community there is a right-of-way along the backside of that property. Mr. Jenaway wanted to know if there could be an arterial roadway running from Renaissance Park all the way down to River Road to alleviate traffic. Mr. Keaveney responded it depends where traffic is going. He said a lot of the traffic making a right onto 320 out of Renaissance and a left onto Church out of Horizon would indicate it is going towards the Henderson Road/Schuylkill Expressway/ 202 corridor.

Mr. Jenaway commented it may be based upon the demographics he has seen from DVRPC as to where traffic comes from. He said there is a lot of traffic coming from Conshohocken, Norristown, East Norriton, Plymouth Township and that traffic might use that route. Mr. Jenaway stated it is an alternative that he does not think was explored.

From the public:

Patricia Buard, Holstein Road, said she lives at the intersection that is going from A to F and asked if consideration was given to the residents there. Mr. Keaveney responded it was acknowledged a number of intersections will worsen unless improvements are made. He reiterated Pennoni's charge from the township in 2010 was to do a broader evaluation as to the impact of this connection. There are positive and negative impacts.

Rob Erickson, Lawndale Avenue, asked a series of questions regarding the parking lot, various intersections that decrease to a failing rating or worsen with the connection, traffic counts done by Mr. Tavani before Thanksgiving, length of queues at various intersections. He also asked how much space would be needed for a roundabout. Mr. Keaveney responded the roundabout sizing is related to the amount of volume it would process, but roundabouts could be anywhere from 90 foot diameter to 140-150 foot diameter.

Joan Shaw, Edgewood Road, asked if there was a follow up study after the Henderson ramp opened to see how much less traffic there was on 320. Mr. Keaveney responded there are some new counts in that area, but he did not have the percentages. He said some of the traffic that exited previously at Balligomingo and at Gulph Mills has now been distributed to Henderson Road which was the intent of that project.

With regard to directing traffic towards Shoemaker, Ms. Shaw asked how it is known that is the direction they would go rather stay on Crooked Lane and make the left turn. Mr. Keaveney responded there will be some traffic that stays on Crooked Lane and goes all the way to South Gulph Road and that is why it is one of the intersections experiencing a negative impact. Mr. Keaveney pointed out the township has plans to improve that section of South Gulph Road when funds become available.

Patricia Cunane, White Avenue, expressed concern about the children trying to get to Gulph School.

Jim Rapine, Foulkrod Boulevard, expressed confusion about the "swoosh" and inability to turn left out of Renaissance. Mr. Keaveney clarified traffic is only directed to the left across the rail bridge.

Mark McKee, Jones Road, asked if it would make more sense for someone coming from the Blue Route or out of Philadelphia to access the Hughes Park station by taking the Shoemaker Road extension through to Yerkes rather than staying on Henderson Road all the way down to Church Road. He asked how they would access the lot now since there is no connection for the approximate 200 feet to the lot from Crooked Lane. Mr. Keaveney responded there would be two choices if they come down Shoemaker to Yerkes Road. They could turn left and take Yerkes up to Church or the more efficient route would be to make a right on Yerkes Road, left onto Crooked Lane and travel Crooked Lane north to Church Road through the signal and down via the same route of Horizon Drive to Renaissance.

Mr. Walko temporarily adjourned the hearing until October 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. in Freedom Hall and reconvened into the public meeting.

Board Action:

It was moved by Mr. Philips, seconded by Mrs. Spott, all voting "Aye" to appoint Karen Huller to the Community Center Advisory Board and Mrs. Linda Castro to the Environmental Advisory Council. None opposed. Motion approved 5-0.

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

COMMUNITY CENTER

Mr. Waks reported on the phenomenal response received by the Board of Supervisors and Park and Recreation Department to the opening of the Community Center. He said in the last nine days alone there were over 200 new pass holders signed up.

CITIZEN BOARD VACANCIES

Mr. Jenaway noted several vacancies on various citizen boards.

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP EVENTS

Mr. Jenaway provided details on a rain barrel seminar and giveaway on Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup> and the Police Department initiative, "Modern Day Policing" to be held in October at the Township Building.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved by Mr. Philips, seconded by Mrs. Kenney, all voting "Aye" to adjourn the meeting. None opposed. Motion approved 5-0. Adjournment occurred at 10:28 p.m.

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DAVID G. KRAYNIK  
SECRETARY-TREASURER  
TOWNSHIP MANAGER

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Minutes Approved:  
Minutes Entered