

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORKSHOP MEETING
FEBRUARY 6, 2020

The Board of Supervisors of Upper Merion Township met for a Workshop Meeting on Thursday, February 6, 2020, in the Township Building. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m., followed by a pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Supervisors present were: Bill Jenaway, Carole Kenney, Tina Garzillo, and Greg Waks. Also present were: Anthony Hamaday, Township Manager; John Walko, Township Solicitor's Office; Rob Loeper, Township Planner. Absent: Greg Philips.

CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENTS:

Mr. Jenaway announced Mr. Philips was away on military duty on the west coast and prior to this meeting there was a Township Foundation meeting that needed to be conducted this evening.

DISCUSSIONS:

Update on the Status of the North Gulph Trail by the VF Park Alliance

Molly Duffy, Executive Director of the Valley Forge Alliance, gave a brief background stating the study for traffic and planning was completed about a year ago and it has been shared with different groups and organizations that are affected and possibly interested in it. It was shared with the Parks and Recreation Department here at Upper Merion over the summer. The King of Prussia Bid has seen it and supports it as well as Montgomery County. Mr. Randy Waltermeyer, consultant for traffic planning and design, gave an update to the status of the North Gulph Trail. It was noted this trail is not yet on the County's trail system but there have been discussions that the next time the County updates the trail it would add the North Gulph Road Trail into the County's trail plan. This becomes a critical discussion piece, whether it is or is not included in the map, as discussion about who will own the trail long-term continues. The North Gulph Road trail will begin the opportunity to make interesting loops. To the west there are discussions to make another loop through the Phoenixville area where one could come back down and get between the Schuylkill River Trail and the Chester Valley Trail via the North Gulph Road alignment. The North Gulph Road trail would give bike riders a safe off-road way to get between these two major trails. Mr. Waltermeyer went over the alignment and briefly discussed a few renderings. It was noted the sidewalks right outside the Ave would have to be widened to get them to multiuse width as

well as behind Canvas hugging Guthrie Road and Swedesford. Depending on which alignment was selected costs ranges from \$4 million and \$5.5 million and then adding on the remaining bit of First Avenue, it would be a ballpark of \$800 thousand, another \$1 million to finish the loop in the Village and about \$1.7 million for the recommended bridge over Route 202. The total cost may seem overwhelming but Mr. Waltermyer referred to the grant opportunities in handouts he gave the Board. The County has agreed that if the Township receives grant funding and designs it, at the end of the construction the County would then agree to own and maintain the trail long-term. The County has made this commitment to sections of the Cross-County Trail in the Fort Washington area. Mr. Waltermyer stated he thought it is an appealing model and one that could have a lot of merit for moving this trail forward.

Mr. Waks expressed his support in trails noting he uses them often. He also stated he understands the high costs and believes the Township should wind up partnering with the whomever it can to bring this moving forward. Mr. Jenaway also agreed with Mr. Waks statement and also stated that a meeting should be set up with the appropriate parties to begin the next steps to start a coalition.

Public Comments:

Richard Thorpe, 247 Valley Forge Lookout Place, gave a traffic light suggestion to the trail. Mr. Jenaway responded that the Upper Merion Township Police has been engaged in this the entire time since Top Golf came in with their plan to make sure it was going to be a safe crossover.

GSK Building 40 Developmental Plan: 709 Swedeland Road, 38,492 sf expansion, 50.79 acres, HI Heavy Industrial. Expiration: 5/12/20

Mr. Loeper stated this is one of several plans that have been submitted this month. Building 40 was originally built back in the nineties and since that time there has been several remodels as well as in the last couple years there was another building that was built next to it as part of the operations at Building 40. This would add an additional approximately 40,000 square feet to the complex. Mr. Loeper stated the representatives from Jacobs Engineering are here. The first review letter was received back from Remington Vernick this afternoon which was shared with Jacobs Engineering. Rich Hendricks, engineer for Jacobs Engineering, introduced the Jacobs Engineering team. Mr. Hendricks stated their intention is to expand an existing building. Right now, it is a parking lot and one-hundred percent impervious and in the future, it will be reduced 20% per the Township ordinance. They intend to meet the ordinance and not request waivers. It is proposed that stormwater flows will be reduced.

Mr. Jenaway asked for clarification on expanding on the parking lot area and it was responded that to remedy the lost space there will be another project

to add parking spaces. Mr. Jenaway asked for them to provide a consolidated approach on the parking and transportation and vehicle movement. It was also responded that there is a grading project that will be going on Lot 6, on campus. This will provide an additional 75 parking spots. There is also another project that is in the design phase now that will further expand the existing lot and add an additional 75 spots.

UDR Valley Forge Development Plan: 140 Valley Green Lane; 201 apartments, 5.47 acres

Mr. Fry briefly went over the project which includes building about 200 apartments. The land development plan has been submitted to the Township and Remington Vernick has provided comments and responses are currently being worked on per the settlement agreement process. Mr. Fry reviewed products UDR has constructed around the country such as California and Texas and also noting they own properties in the Township as well as Philadelphia. Renderings are being worked on. The location is on the northwest corner of the parcel and is about 5.5 acres. There will be mostly surface parking and some of the parking will be in a below grade level underneath some of the buildings and other parking areas. Out of the 200 units, about 105 are one-bedroom, close to 20 will be singles and the rest will be three-bedroom units. The buildings will be only two to three stories tall. Mr. Fry presented the unit layouts and amenity spaces. The anticipated schedule is to present in front of the Planning Commission next week and then presenting for the Board of Supervisors meeting in the end of March. Construction to start in the third quarter of this year and hopefully open in about two year from today, spring of 2022.

Mr. Waks expressed his concerns regarding charging for parking as part of the rent for the units and Mrs. Garzillo agreed. Mrs. Kenney mentioned making better signage for a parking garage at the Village. Mr. Jenaway asked what spaces were left to develop and it was responded there are three parcels remaining.

Authorization to Advertise Zoning Amendment for R3A District

Mr. Walko stated what is being addressed is Section 165, Subsection 65, Zoning Regulations in the R3A District. There is a provision that is proposed to be removed from that section which essentially states that the zoning tract shall revert to its former zoning classification if a shot clock is not met in an amount of time from plan approval. The first thought at looking at that is that it is illegal under Pennsylvania law. In looking at the matter in detail and doing research, the same was confirmed. Pennsylvania law does not let you do a zoning map change through text in an ordinance. Under the municipality's planning code, there is a process set up and it is what is being advertised for today which is that you have to have public notice, public hearing, and in addition for a zoning map change, there are additional requirements under Section 6092I of the

Municipality Planning Code, that the tract has to be posted. Land owners affected by that tract have to be given notice of that zoning map change. This is something that is completed whenever zoning changes are done. However, this provision does not have any of those requirements. It essentially tries to go around the municipality's planning code and as a result of that it is not inline with Pennsylvania law. It would not be enforceable and would not be defensible if left in. The current zoning map still shows this as R3A. Someone that was going to move forward would be relying on that zoning map. Under the law this provision would be unenforceable as a legal provision and as a result it is recommended that it should not be in the zoning code.

Board Action:

It was moved by Mr. Waks, seconded by Mrs. Kenney, all voting "Aye" to Authorize Advertisement for the Zoning Amendment change. None opposed. Motion approved 4-0.

Public Comment:

A resident asked if there were other municipalities with a similar provision in their codes and Mr. Walko responded none have this provision. A discussion ensued regarding the history of the provision in the ordinance. A resident from Ross Road and Johanna Drive expressed her questions and concerns.

Bid Authorization re: ADA Improvements at Bob White and Swedeland Parks

Mr. Hamaday stated a request is being made for the Board to authorize a bid for the Swedeland Park and Bob White Park. This would be a final phase for these projects.

Community Center Roof Program Bid Award

Mr. Hamaday stated a request is being made for the Board to authorize a bid for the Community Center roof. It was also discussed that a warranty would be included.

Resolution – TCDI Grant Application – Moore Irwin Property Master Site Plan Feasibility Study

Mr. Hamaday stated a request is being made for the Board to approve a resolution authorizing the submission of a TCDI Grant Application for the Moore Irwin House. The Grant Application is proposing a Feasibility Study which will evaluate the property.

Resolution – Authorization to sign PennDOT Traffic Signal Permit Application for South Henderson Road and Saulin Boulevard

Mr. Hamaday stated a request is being made for the Board to approve a resolution to allow the Township Staff to sign the TE160 for South Henderson Road and Saulin Boulevard.

Authorize Capital Equipment Purchase – UMGA – TV Replacement Trailer

Mr. Hamaday stated a request is being made for the Board to purchase a new trailer. A year or so ago the existing trailer was damaged in a storm. It was a 20-foot trailer the UMGA TV crew used for not only concerts but special events. Insurance in the amount of about \$28,000.00 was received for the damaged trailer. The cost for the new trailer will be \$7,797.00.

EMS Student Clinical Training Agreement – Reading Hospital

Mr. Hamaday stated a request is being made for the Board to approve a three-year agreement with Reading Hospital. They will be educating and providing EMS assistance. The Director of Public Safety, Chief Nolan, has reviewed this and is in favor as it is a benefit to us.

Verizon Cell Facility Lease – Township Public Works Facility, 466 Church Road

Mr. Hamaday stated a request is being made for the Board to consider a lease with Verizon for a cell facility at the Public Works garage, 466 Church Road. They are looking to lease 394 square feet of property next to our salt shed. It will be an initial 5-year lease with four 5-year extensions. The rent they are offering the Township is \$20,000.00 a year.

Escrow Release Request No. 2 (Final) – Target Shopping Center

Mr. Hamaday stated Target notified the Township that the escrow they established which is an improvement bond is going to expire and they do not want to renew it. Remington Vernick did a final inspection and they are recommending that we release Target from that bond.

Ordinance Updates

Rental Inspection Program

Mr. Hamaday stated this is being amended to provide additional inspections of apartments in the common areas. One of the final pieces was specifying who was doing those inspections and Chief Nolan and Chief Rubin have finalized this. Our fulltime career inspectors will be doing the apartments as well as the common areas along with Deputy Fire Marshals. The new fire

inspectors will be doing the commercial and rental programs.

Public Comment:

President of a home owner's association at Revel Hill expressed his concerns regarding the ordinance.

Street Width Requirements

Mr. Hamaday stated the Planning Commission is recommending the Board that the current street width be amended and increase to 31 feet.

Discussion – Potential for Implementing an Impact Fee Study for Public Safety for New Developments

Mr. Jenaway suggested sending an RFP to a variety of planners and or engineering firms to see who might have an interest in giving a proposal to do something like this.

Appoint Luis Willis to the Environmental Advisory Council

Board Action:

It was moved by Mr. Jenaway, seconded by Mrs. Kenney, all voting "Aye" to Appoint Luis Willis to the Environmental Advisory Council. None opposed. Motion approved 5-0.

Public Comment:


Resident from the Township expressed his concerns regarding the horrible parking situation at the Town Center. Mr. Jenaway stated the contact person for the ghost garage at the Town Center must be identified to further discuss the parking situation.

ADJOURNMENT:

Board Action:

It was moved with all voting "Aye" to adjourn the meeting. None opposed. Adjournment occurred.

mm
Minutes Approved:
Minutes Entered:


ANTHONY HAMADAY
TOWNSHIP MANAGER