

#07-2021
WORK SESSION
April 6, 2021 – 6 p.m.

A virtual work session of the Whitpain Township Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, April 6, 2021 at 6 p.m. for the purpose of updating the public on several matters and reviewing the agenda of the April 20, 2021 Supervisors' meeting. Supervisors Michele Minnick, Kimberly J. Koch, Frederick R. Conner, and Jeffrey Campolongo were present. Also present were Township Solicitor Alexander M. Glassman, Esq., Township Manager Roman M. Pronczak, Assistant Township Manager David J. Mrochko, Township Engineer James E. Blanch, P.E., Police Chief Kenneth Lawson, Director of Code Enforcement Michael McAndrew, Finance Director Christine M. Bauman, Director of Public Works Thomas Farzetta, IT Director Nicole M. Leininger, Human Resources Director Kathleen Yackin, Fire Marshal David M. Camarda, and Parks and Recreation Director Kurt W. Baker. Supervisor Joyce M. Keller was absent. There were four attendees who joined the meeting.

IT Director Nicole Leininger gave an overview of the process for participants, then turned the meeting over to Chair Michele Minnick who asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Minnick began the work session with a roll call, noting that Supervisor Joyce Keller and Solicitor Michael Clarke were not in attendance.

Chair Minnick introduced Rachel Riley, the Senior Director of Communications for the Valley Forge Tourism and Convention Board who will give an overview of what they do. Ms. Riley explained that this group is the official tourism organization of Montgomery County and is membership-based with over 600 current members. She gave a brief overview and presentation on its mission and vision, adding that tourism in Montgomery County is big business. Several fundraisers are scheduled in 2021, including a golf outing on May 3rd at Blue Stone Country Club in Whitpain Township. At the conclusion of the presentation, Chair Minnick thanked Ms. Riley for a great presentation and offered to promote the Blue Stone event in our electronic newsletter and on our website.

Chair Minnick then turned the meeting over to Township Manager Roman Pronczak to review the draft agenda for the April 20, 2021 business meeting. Mr. Pronczak made note that the Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB) meeting scheduled for April 15th is before our second meeting of April 20th. The cases are listed in this evening's agenda. He added that the Board will have a chance at the April 20th meeting to review the two larger ZHB cases scheduled for April 22nd with input from the Planning Commission.

The Consent Agenda includes approval of the meeting minutes of March 16th and April 6th, the March Voucher List, February Treasurer's Report, Resolutions #1442 through #1446, disposition of certain public records, authorizing the Solicitor to draft an ordinance regarding political signs, authorizing McMahon Associates to proceed with engineering services for traffic safety improvements, approve a waiver at Normandy Farms Estates, accept the resignations of Daniel Ronca from the Zoning Hearing Board and Natalie Macy from the Planning Commission, consider an appointment to fill the

Planning Commission vacancy, Resolution #1447 approving the final plans for 1950 Skippack Pike, authorize Dawood Engineering to proceed with engineering design services for streambank stabilization for the Pulaski Drive Bridge, and authorize the Solicitor to execute a Stipulation of Conditions with Beach Realty Associates for Application #2246-20 before the ZHB.

Supervisor Conner questioned the reason for an ordinance regarding political signs, and Mr. Pronczak responded that in the past, the Board directed the Code Enforcement Officer to send notices to political organizations/candidates regarding sign placement during the pre-election period. The ordinance will update that procedure and include a policy for signs at Township parks and public events.

Mr. Pronczak explained the number of items that with Board approval, McMahon Associates will be working on for safety improvements at various intersections. The safety concerns were brought up at Traffic Task Force meetings and can be easily implemented. They include:

- Signalization at Skippack Pike/School Road which will interconnect with the signal at Skippack Pike/Union Meeting Road.
- Additional signage and line striping at Jolly/Wentz Roads to eliminate turning movement conflicts.
- Develop a concept for turning alternatives at Rt. 202 and Cherry Road/Cherry Lane in conjunction with the Rt. 202 widening.
- Roundabout concept plans for Walton Road/Stenton Avenue to alleviate conflicting movements and allowing for all turns.
- Potential signing/striping to further emphasize the approach curves on Stenton Avenue at Penllyn Pike.

Supervisor Conner agreed that the Stenton Avenue/Penllyn Pike needs something as the curves are approached too fast, and we have lost the sign a few times. Vice-Chair Koch said she would like to see the roundabout concept, and also asked if there are updates regarding the entrance to Blue Bell Springs as far as the safety upgrades. Mr. Pronczak explained that as the construction along Rt. 202 continues, PennDOT and the contractor have made some improvements to help alleviate the problem. We are hopeful that long-range, there will be additional traffic gaps that will help with the left turn out, as well as when the center turn lane is constructed, it will help with turning in and coming out of the community. There are other options, although nothing is moving forward at this time. In further addressing the roundabout at Stenton Avenue/Walton Road, Mr. Pronczak added that a meeting with residents on Royal Oak Drive highlighted the safety concerns, and when the roundabout is installed, it will be safer to make a left from Stenton Avenue to travel north on Walton Road.

In reviewing the ZHB applications that will be heard on April 15th, prior to the April 20th Board meeting, Mr. Pronczak said that most are residential applications that involve

either an accessory structure or additions to buildings that encroach into the required setbacks. The property on Sullivan Drive has a setback issue, as well as a non-green area that is slightly less than required. The applicant on North Wales Road is requesting a variance to construct a detached accessory structure on the property on a lot not large enough to subdivide. However, the accessory structure would function as a second residence on one property. A motion was made by Vice-Chair Koch, seconded by Supervisor Conner to send the Solicitor to appear before the Zoning Hearing Board on the Township's behalf in opposition to application #2277-21. Supervisor Conner said that most times he will defer to the ZHB, but this is a significant request being made, which will create a second residence on the property. It is not the normal in-law suite attached to a home. Supervisor Campolongo asked if the Planning Commission has reviewed the application. Mr. Pronczak said they will review it next week, although this case will be heard by the ZHB before the next Board meeting. Supervisor Campolongo agreed to send the Solicitor in opposition, as did Chair Minnick. Chair Minnick asked if there is any public comment. There was none. She called for a roll-call vote on the motion made by Vice-Chair Koch, seconded by Supervisor Conner, Supervisor Campolongo voted in favor, and Chair Minnick voted in favor as well. The motion passed unanimously.

For the ZHB applications to be reviewed on April 20th, Mr. Pronczak said that the Board will have the benefit of having received the Planning Commission recommendations for the cases scheduled on April 22nd.

Mr. Pronczak offered congratulations to Dr. Victoria Bastecki-Perez who will be inaugurated as the 6th President of Montgomery County Community College on April 16th. There will be a fireworks' display on the 17th in celebration.

Supervisor Conner wanted everyone to be aware that the second public meeting to view the Mermaid concept plan will be held virtually on Monday, April 12th at 7 p.m. Much work has been done by the committee and staff. There are three concept plans for the public to view and offer comments. Supervisor Campolongo asked if there is an update to the resident concerns regarding sheds, and Mr. Pronczak said the Code Enforcement Department has been in touch with the residents and is following up. Supervisor Campolongo also asked about the Rt. 202 project and the night work that is in possible violation of our noise ordinance. Mr. Pronczak explained that the Rt. 202 widening project is a state project, and it supersedes our regulations. There is no easy solution to the inconvenience, and the gridlock would be horrendous if they were only able to work during daylight hours. Supervisor Campolongo also said the contractors are parking on private property, and Mr. Pronczak responded that it is possible the property owners granted permission and may not have notified occupants. PennDOT did its homework up front in securing temporary easements related to some of these issues. Supervisor Campolongo additionally asked if there is any additional information related to the West Ambler fire. Mr. Pronczak said the investigation is not yet completed. The Board has and will be updated as the investigation moves forward.

Chair Minnick called for any final comments. With no additional comments from the Board or the public, a motion was made by Supervisor Conner, seconded by Supervisor Campolongo to adjourn the meeting at 6:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Roman M. Pronczak, P.E.
Township Manager

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