

#14-2021  
July 20, 2021

The hybrid meeting of the Whitpain Township Board of Supervisors was held beginning at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, July 20, 2021. Supervisors Michele Minnick, Kimberly J. Koch, Frederick R. Conner, Jr., Jeffrey Campolongo and Joyce M. Keller were in attendance, along with Township Manager Roman M. Pronczak, P.E., Assistant Township Manager David J. Mrochko, Township Solicitors Michael P. Clarke, Esq., and Alex M. Glassman, Esq., Police Chief Kenneth Lawson, Director of IT Nicole M. Leininger, Code Enforcement Officer Michael E. McAndrew, Public Works Director Thomas Farzetta, Finance Director Christine M. Bauman, HR Director Kathleen Yackin, Township Engineer James E. Blanch, P.E., Parks and Recreation Director Kurt W. Baker, Fire Marshal David M. Camarda and Recording Secretary Virginia Papale. There were two in-person attendees and 28 remote attendees.

After an overview of the hybrid meeting procedure by IT Director Nicole Leininger, Chair Michele Minnick welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked them to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was made by Supervisor Conner, duly seconded by Supervisor Koch to accept the 2020 Audit Report and Comprehensive Annual Financial Report as presented by Maillie, LLP) on July 6, 2021. Chair Minnick took a moment to thank the Finance Department, especially Director Christine Bauman and Assistant Director Kellen Jarrett for their outstanding hard work. This is the ninth year the Township has received a certificate of achievement from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). Chair Minnick called for any comments from the Board or the public. There were none. She then took a roll-call vote: Vice-Chair Koch, aye; Supervisor Conner, aye; Supervisor Campolongo, aye; Supervisor Keller, aye and Chair Minnick also voted in favor. The motion carried.

A brief presentation was given by the team of Pete Simone and Joe Wallace of Simone Collins Landscape Architects on the latest concept draft of the Mermaid Lake Master Site Development Plan. Mr. Simone noted that there has been much public interaction throughout the process, with three public meetings to date and six committee meetings. Mr. Wallace discussed the survey results of the three concept plans that were presented in April of this year, including Concept A (passive recreation), Concept B (combination passive/active recreation), and Concept C (active recreation). Concept B is preferred. Further analysis is required regarding the pool, the dam and overall condition of facilities. Mr. Simone and Mr. Wallace then discussed the refined concept, which incorporates elements of the three concept plans and results of the public opinion survey. There are many stages of design development and actual construction. The presentation continued showing facilities for outdoor recreation and inclusive play and open play areas. In addition, removing the dam and floodplain enhancement to help limit downstream flooding is also an important consideration. The water access will not go away, but it will be modified. The Township wants to be a good neighbor to adjacent parcel owners, so safety, noise limits and maintaining privacy are a priority. A pool concept was briefly discussed, though it will require a separate feasibility study. The Arch Street Road parcel suggests four options including open meadow, dog park facility, 9-hole chip and putt or an indoor facility. The indoor facility concept will also require a separate feasibility study.

Current cost estimates are projected to be \$28 million, which includes \$10 million for building renovation costs and pool costs. This is a long-term process that will be completed in phases and will likely take 15 or more years. The Township is looking to partner with others to operate Mermaid Park as an event center. Even if this plan is approved, there is no obligation to build it. If the Board decides to approve moving forward to Phase 3, the consulting team will be ready to present the final master plan in November at the fourth public Mermaid meeting.

Chair Minnick thanked the team for their presentation and then called for any Board questions or comments. Vice-Chair Koch asked if a kiddie pool will be included in Phase 3 and asked for the difference in cost options between the six-lane and eight-lane options. Mr. Simone did not have that information on hand but explained that that it will be shown in detail during the Phase 3 presentation, if approved. He believes it is not a significant difference. Supervisor Campolongo asked about costs for the separate parcel on Arch Street Road. Mr. Simone said they are not included in the overall costs submitted this evening and gave the following approximate estimates: chip and putt, \$3 million, dog park \$900,000 and an indoor facility about \$12 million. The figures will be included in the concept to be submitted. Supervisor Campolongo asked if the costs would be significantly less if the parcel remains a meadow. Mr. Simone confirmed that. Supervisor Conner offered that it is a very good plan that happens to be the consensus plan. It is also a very expensive plan for which there is no budget. The Township has requested submissions from entrepreneurs that may or may not be viable, though they are worth a look. Supervisors Koch, Conner and Campolongo thanked the Simone Collins team for a job well-done. In closing, Mr. Simone said he appreciates the remarks, and he would like to move forward to Phase 3 with these elements.

Chair Minnick then called for public comment. Joey Fay thanked everyone for the presentation and said he shared a petition for a larger sports opportunity that he believes would be financially beneficial to the Township. He heard from Supervisor Campolongo who said they would take another look at it. He is disappointed to see that it didn't happen, and things are moving forward this way with a \$28 million proposal, moving into the next planning phase, and not knowing the source of the project funds. He is one who submitted a Request for Information (RFI), but he believes it is limited, forcing him into this proposed plan. Before advancing to Phase 3, he would like to know how the development of Mermaid will be paid. He also asked how someone could present a plan outside of this box, and at what venue would it be presented. Chair Minnick explained that this is a planning process, with nothing being developed in a short time frame. She also thanked him for submitting his RFI. There has been an extension for submissions, and the committee will be taking a look at them after the end of the extension period. They will look carefully for all funding opportunities and will keep the public updated. This is an overview. It is understood that a community center would be beneficial not only from the standpoint of WRA, but also to the Parks & Recreation Department and the programs they can provide. Supervisor Conner added that Mr. Fay will receive feedback for his RFI, and possibly be invited to talk with the committee. He thanked Mr. Fay for bringing his concept forward and echoed Chair Minnick in that there is no budget at the present time for any of it. Mr. Fay again asked how someone

could bring something viable before the Board that is other than being in line with the Simone Collins presentation. Supervisor Conner responded that anyone can submit an RFI during this extension period. Margaret Phiambolis followed by stating the plan looks nice and will be a gem for the community. It is a positive asset for Whitpain, thanking the Supervisors and the planner for what they have put forward. She then put forth her thoughts regarding the pool, and its suggested size, believing it is smaller than comparable pools in the area. Her advice is to do a more thorough investigation. Chair Minnick explained that as the process moves forward, the pool will need a further feasibility study. She thanked Ms. Phiambolis for bringing the other facilities to the attention of the Board. Supervisor Campolongo said the diverging viewpoints and competing interests are what make this community so wonderful. He and his colleagues are open to ideas that anyone wants to bring before the Board. Tonight's presentation was based on the ideas brought about by the respondents to the survey. Chair Minnick added that many of the comments, as well as the plan itself, came from the community input. Lane Santiago Meltzer thanked everyone for their hard work. He asked where the numbers originated, and if there was a competitive bid. Mr. Simone explained that this is not ready for bid as yet. The numbers are estimates based on costs for current material and labor rates. Supervisor Conner noted that with the costs beginning to be realized, we must figure out what is wanted and needed and how we will pay for it. Victoria Hyczko thanked everyone for their hard work. She is surprised about the traffic study results. She believes the traffic patterns are not going to be corrected with timing adjustments. Mr. Simone said traffic engineering is difficult to understand, and timing does have an effect. The long-term effects of the pandemic and traffic will not be known for five years, though this study is focused on the present. It is important to remember that as the park is developed over time, traffic and uses patterns will change again. Ms. Hyczko also asked what steps the Township will take to enhance traffic flow. Supervisor Conner responded that the timing is regularly checked for optimum traffic flow. Mr. Pronczak added that at present it is difficult to perform a traffic study; things are different right now because of Covid and also the construction on Rt. 202. Adjustment factors are applied to the results. We look at traffic signals on an ongoing basis to make sure they are operating as efficiently as possible. Our Traffic Task Force discusses a variety of safety concerns and traffic concerns. A representative from McMahon Associates is present as well. Chair Minnick thanked everyone for this presentation, and moving forward, looking forward to getting the report.

A motion was made by Supervisor Koch, duly seconded by Supervisor Campolongo to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

- a. Minutes of the Board of Supervisors' meetings of June 15 and July 6, 2021.
- b. Minutes of the joint meeting of the Board of Supervisors and Elected Auditors of July 6, 2021.
- c. June Voucher List in the amount of \$566,612.32, check sequence #73325 through #73570.

- d. 2021 Treasurer's Reports for May and June.
- e. Pass Resolution No. 1465 to extend waiver of sanitary sewer billing fees for the third and fourth billing periods of 2021.
- f. Approve the Decision and Order of Conditional Use Application #CU-43-21, ACTS Retirement-Life Communities, Inc.
- g. Authorize the Chair and Secretary to sign on behalf of the Township a Pillar Agreement between Daniel S. Stuart and Pascale Abi-Khattar, owners of the parcel located at 264 W. Mt. Pleasant Avenue and Whitpain Township. This agreement will permit the installation of cobblestones within the ultimate right-of-way located along W. Mt. Pleasant Avenue on the condition that the cobblestones will be removed if any future road widening, repair or excavation is necessary.
- h. Grant a waiver request from the requirement of preparing a land development plan to Ristorante Castello to install an outdoor patio, sidewalk and ADA improvements at the restaurant (Building #1) located at 721 Skippack Pike.

The waiver from land development is conditioned upon the review and approval of the site plan by the Township Engineer.

- i. Authorize the Township Solicitor to review sign provisions in the Zoning Ordinance and recommend amendments as appropriate.
- j. Authorize the Township Manager to advertise Ordinance No. 4-258, an ordinance amending the Zoning Ordinance by adding provisions for open or enclosed porches, decks or patios and fences within the setback from property lines at Article VIII, Section 160-42.H [Development Requirements/Accessory Buildings or Structures].
- k. Authorize members of the Whitpain Township Fire Police to assist the Limerick Township Police Department on September 25, 2021, from approximately 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. during a parade to honor one hundred-plus years of volunteer fire services in Limerick Township.

Chair Minnick called for Board or public comment. There were none and Chair Minnick called a roll-call vote to pass the Consent Agenda: Vice-Chair Koch, aye; Supervisor Conner, aye; Supervisor Campolongo, aye; Supervisor Keller, aye, and Chair Minnick also voted in favor. The motion carried.

A motion was made by Supervisor Conner, duly seconded by Chair Minnick to pass Resolution No. 1466 to approve preliminary/final plans titled "Subdivision Plan for 1199 Jolly Road" located at 1199 Jolly Road, Sheet 1 of 1, prepared by Hibbeln Engineering

Company, LLC, plan dated June 18, 2021, in accordance with Section 509 (b) of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code conditioned upon compliance with the recommendations contained in the motion from the Township Planning Commission and the resolution of items in the review letter from the Township Engineer dated June 23, 2021. Chair Minnick called for any questions or comments from the Board or the public. There were none. She called a roll-call vote: Vice-Chair Koch, aye; Supervisor Conner, aye; Supervisor Campolongo, aye; Supervisor Keller, aye and Chair Minnick also voted in favor. The motion carried.

A motion was made by Chair Minnick, duly seconded by Supervisor Campolongo to grant a request from Blue Bell Country Club to allow an outdoor event that would be held in a tent from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on October 2, 2021. This event was scheduled during the restrictions on indoor banquet events, but will be held after September 11<sup>th</sup>, which is the expiration of the period when outdoor events are permitted in Whitpain Township. Chair Minnick called for Board comment. There was none. She called for public comment. There was none. Chair Minnick then called a roll-call vote: Vice-Chair Koch, aye; Supervisor Conner, aye; Supervisor Campolongo, aye; Supervisor Keller, aye and Chair Minnick also voted in favor. The motion carried.

Chair Minnick turned the meeting over to Vice-Chair Koch for public comment. There was no public comment, and the meeting was turned back to Chair Minnick who asked if the Board had any closing comments. There were none.

With no further comments, a motion was made by Chair Minnick, seconded by Supervisor Conner to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Frederick R. Conner, Jr.  
Secretary