

**WHITEMARSH TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

SEPTEMBER 14, 2023

The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Whitemarsh Township Board of Supervisors was held on Thursday, September 14, 2023 at 7:00 PM, in the Whitemarsh Township Building, 616 Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, PA.

Supervisors Present: Fran McCusker, Chair; Jacy Toll, Vice-Chair; Vincent Manuele; Laura Boyle Nester and Patrice Turenne (virtual)

Also Present: Richard L. Mellor, Jr., Township Manager; Sean P. Kilkenny, Township Solicitor; Krista Heinrich, P.E. Township Engineer and Charles L. Guttenplan, AICP

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Supervisor Toll announced:

Road Closures continue throughout Whitemarsh Township, please continue to be patient while these much-needed improvements are being performed: The County's Ridge Pike Improvement Project continues along Ridge Pike in Whitemarsh Township with lane restrictions in both directions; A section of Barren Hill Road at Ridge Pike is closed as part of the County's Ridge Pike Improvement Project as well; Aqua continues replacing a water main on Joshua Road between Ridge Pike and Cedar Grove Lane. Lane restrictions are scheduled for 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM through September; The eastbound lane of Skippack Pike between Butler Pike and Sheaff Lane is closed until September 27, 2023, for work being performed by Texas Eastern Pipeline.

On Saturday, September 23, 2023, from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM The Parks and Recreation Department will host a "Touch a Truck" Event at Miles Park. Pre-registration on our website is required due to limited parking.

Don't forget to pick up your Tree from the Tree Giveaway Event on Saturday, September 30, 2023. All 260 Trees have found a home!! Planting instructions and Tree information along with your time slot for pick-up will be provided to you through your email.

A Shredding Event will be held at Miles Park on Saturday, October 7, 2023 from 8:00 AM to 12 Noon for residents of Whitemarsh Township.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Ordinance Amendment to the Whitemarsh Township Official Map - Washington Street through to Lee Street

On a motion by Supervisor Manuele, seconded by Supervisor Toll (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors opened the public hearing for Ordinance Amendment to the Whitemarsh Township Official Map - Washington Street through to Lee Street.

A court reporter was present, and the notes of testimony are available for review at the Township Building. The following individuals presented information/testimony/comments/questions at the Public Hearing:

Sean Kilkenny, Township Solicitor

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Charles L. Guttenplan, AICP, Director of Planning and Zoning

On a motion by Supervisor Manuele, seconded by Supervisor Toll (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors closed the public hearing.

ORDINANCE

1. Ordinance Amendment to the Whitemarsh Township Official Map - Washington Street through to Lee Street

On a motion by Supervisor Manuele, seconded by Supervisor Toll (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors adopted **Ordinance #1031** amending the Whitemarsh Township Official Map allowing Washington Street through to Lee Street.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. August 10, 2023

On a motion by Supervisor Manuele, seconded by Supervisor Nester (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors adopted the meeting minutes from August 10, 2023.

BOARD PUBLIC DISCUSSION

1. SLD #10-22, Rebecca Padro & Karen Schrader (Montgomery Animal Hospital)/827 Bethlehem Pike; Minor Land Development Amended Plan

Mr. Ed Hughes, representing the applicant, explained the history of the property. Mr. Guttenplan explained SLD #10-22 is for the Preliminary/Final Land Development for Rebecca Padro & Karen Schrader/Montgomery Animal Hospital at 827 Bethlehem Pike, Flourtown. The Applicants are proposing to improve the current parking lots on their two parcels. Parcel A is the triangular parcel where the animal hospital is located, addressed as 827 Bethlehem Pike; the more recently acquired adjacent Parcel B, referenced just as Bethlehem Pike, was previously used for a PECO sub-station and originally owned by Springfield Township. The intent of the improvements on both lots is to provide adequate off-street parking for the current use and to improve upon the overall exterior appearance of the property. There was considerable zoning relief needed for both parcels including relief necessary for floodplain and riparian corridor issues; there were also parking and impervious coverage issues. This case was heard by the Zoning Hearing Board in January. Relief needed for the improvements was granted by the ZHB. He explained the application was in front of the Planning Commission at many meetings at one the revised plans were proposed and a meeting with the Shade Tree Commission was requested before returning. Subsequent to a meeting with the STC and reviews of revised plans, the plans were once again discussed by the planning Commission. At that time, the Commission passed two unanimous motions; the first recommended approval of all of the requested waivers (subject to submission of a revised landscape plan in accordance with the STC recommendation), and the second, recommended approval of the Preliminary /Final Land Development Plan.

RESOLUTIONS

1. SLD #10-22, Rebecca Padro & Karen Schrader (Montgomery Animal Hospital)/827 Bethlehem Pike; Minor Land Development Amended Plan

On a motion by Supervisor Toll, seconded by Supervisor Manuele (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors adopted

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Resolution #2023-21 granting conditional preliminary/final minor land development approval for SLD #10-22 Rebecca Padro & Karen Schrader (Montgomery Animal Hospital)/827 Bethlehem Pike for a parking lot expansion and other improvements.

BOARD PUBLIC DISCUSSION (CONTINUED)

2. SLD #06-23 The Highlands Historical Society/7111 Sheaff Lane; Minor Subdivision Prelim/Final Plan

Mr. Guttenplan explained SLD #06-23 is a Lot Line Adjustment (Minor Subdivision) Plan for The Highlands Historical Society, 7111 Sheaff Lane, Fort Washington. This plan proposes to adjust certain lot lines to allow some lots to be sold and others to be permanently preserved for open space; the purpose of the subdivision is to provide an alternative to the 46-home conservation subdivision proposal which is currently 'on hold' for this land by 7111 Sheaff Lane Partners, LLC. Any lots being sold will be restricted to having no more than one house in the future; no development is being proposed as part of this current subdivision. You will note that Lots 1 and 2 shown on the plan are not affected; no changes are being made to their boundaries. Lot 4A contains the existing mansion. Should the plan be approved, approximately 29 acres would be placed under a new \$6 million Conservation Easement funded by the Township, assuming all conditions are met in Resolution #2023-06. The lands involved in this subdivision are adjacent to the lot owned and preserved by The Highlands Historical Society on which their existing mansion and formal gardens are located and also adjacent to the Willow Lakes Farm preserve owned by Wissahickon Trails. Should this plan be approved, a total of approximately 170 contiguous acres of open space would be permanently preserved through various mechanisms. This application was reviewed by the Planning Commission. After presentation and discussion of the plan, the Commission passed two unanimous motions; the first recommended approval of all of the requested waivers, and the second recommended approval of the Preliminary /Final Minor Subdivision.

Kate Harper, representing the applicant, presented the history of the property and explained the lot line changes, the open space area and the Township easement on the property.

RESOLUTIONS (CONTINUED)

2. SLD #06-23 The Highlands Historical Society/7111 Sheaff Lane; Minor Subdivision Prelim/Final Plan

On a motion by Supervisor Manuele, seconded by Supervisor Toll (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors adopted **Resolution #2023-22** granting conditional preliminary/final minor subdivision approval for SLD #06-23 The Highlands Historical Society/7111 Sheaff Lane for a lot line adjustment

CONSIDER ACTION ITEMS

Ordinances

None

Resolutions (continued)

3. 2024 Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO)

Mr. Mellor explained Act 205 requires the Township to submit a 2024 budget for the Police and Non-Uniformed Employee pension plans by September 30, 2023. The required contribution amount is known as the Minimum Municipal Contribution (MMO) as determined by the Plan Actuary based in part on the Act 205 Actuarial Valuation Report dated January 1, 2023. He stated the Police Pension Plan is a Defined Benefit Plan subject to the provisions of Act 600. The current Police labor contract requires a 5% officer contribution on

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applicable employee compensation. The Officer contributions projected at \$231,627 are applied to the Total Police Pension Plan Financial Requirement \$1,433,915 to arrive at the Township MMO of \$1,202,288. The Non-Uniform Employee Plan is a Defined Contribution Plan where the Township matches employee contributions up to 6% of compensation. The Total Financial Requirement for the Employee Pension Plan of \$288,163 includes Normal Costs of \$238,163 based on 6% of compensation plus a \$50,000 provision for administrative expenses. The combined MMO for both Plans totals \$1,490,451 comprised of \$1202,288 for the Police Plan and \$288,163 for the Non-Uniformed Employee Plan. The combined MMO calculated for 2023 was \$631,409.

On a motion by Supervisor Toll, seconded by Supervisor Nester (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors adopted **Resolution #2023-23** approving the 2024 Minimum Municipal Obligation for the Police and non-uniformed pension plans in the combined amount of \$1,202,288.

MOTIONS

1. Release of Capital Funds - New Fire Apparatus – Barren Hill Volunteer Fire Company

Mr. Mellor explained Barren Hill Volunteer Fire Company requested the Emergency Services Board's approval and recommendation to the Township Board of Supervisors to disburse \$277,281.51 and future contributions to the capital fund for Barren Hill up to the delivery of the new Tower Ladder 29. Chair Lukens stated that there was a motion for the release of \$277,281.51 for the new Tower Ladder 29 to be recommended to the Board of Supervisors. Chief Schwartz made the recommendation with Vice Chair Behr seconding the motion. The new Tower Ladder 29 is expected to be delivered in 33 to 38 months as of the August meeting. Mr. Mellor explained the planning process and the fire companies' familiarity with the truck to our staff as the new truck is built substantially similar to the truck we currently use with the additions of newer technology and safety features.

On a motion by Supervisor Toll, seconded by Supervisor Nester (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors authorized disbursement of \$277,281.51 and future contributions to the fire capital fund to Barren Hill Volunteer Fire Company up to the delivery of the new fire apparatus.

2. Change Order - 2023 Road Program

Ms. Heinrich explained the need for the increase in the cost of the program. She explained the reduction of quantity due to field conditions, the utility main replacement completed by PECO which increases the quality of produce due to field conditions and the determination that the entrance driveway to the Township Building was in need of resurfacing and was incorporated into the scope of this year's road program.

On a motion by Supervisor Toll, seconded by Supervisor Nester (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors authorized change order #1 for the 2023 road program to N. Abbonizio Contractors, Inc. in the amount of \$44,763.22 for providing additional paving work.

3. Escrow Release #7 - River Place/901 Washington Street

On a motion by Supervisor Nester, seconded by Supervisor Toll (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors authorized escrow release #7 for River Place/901 Washington Street in the amount of \$177,0010.15.

4. July 2023 Expenditures and Payroll and Pension Plan Paid Costs

On a motion by Supervisor Toll, seconded by Supervisor Manuele (Vote 5-0) the Board of Supervisors approved expenditures totaling \$868,923.30; and payroll totaling \$684,553.23; and pension paid costs totaling \$3,917.42 for August 2023.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Edmund Shinn (Lafayette Avenue) thanked the Board of Supervisors and Township Staff for their help with The Highlands Projects.

Joe Downey (Kerper Road) spoke about the safety issues of the unoccupied house on Germantown Pike which is being used by the fire companies. He asked about the status of the project there. He explained he is concerned about the safety of the building. Mr. Mellor explained at this time there are no recorded plans and the developers are working on the conditions of the approval for the development.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Chair McCusker spoke about Stormwater Management. He stated the Township is working to figure out how to do some of the stormwater work. He said they hear and understand the issues that residents are facing and the Supervisors and Staff are here to help.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chair McCusker announced the Board of Supervisors held an Executive Session prior to the meeting to discuss real estate and personnel.

ADJOURNMENT

On a Motion by Supervisor Manuele, seconded by Supervisor Nester the meeting for September 14, 2023 was adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard L. Mellor, Jr.
Township Manager