

#07-2022
WORK SESSION
April 5, 2022 – 6 p.m.

A work session of the Whitpain Township Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, March 1, 2022 at 6 p.m. for the purpose of updating the public on several matters and reviewing the agenda of the March 15, 2022 Supervisors' meeting. The meeting was held in hybrid mode. In-person attendees included Supervisors Kimberly J. Koch, Jeffrey Campolongo, Joyce M. Keller and Soctt M. Badami along with Township Manager Roman M. Pronczak, P.E., Solicitor Michael P. Clarke, Esq., Solicitor Gregory R. Heleniak, Esq., Police Chief Kenneth Lawson and IT Director Nicole Leininger. Public Works Director Thomas Farzetta, Code Enforcement Officer Travis DeCaro, Finance Director Christine Bauman, Fire Marshal David M. Camarda, Parks and Recreation Director Kurt W. Baker, and HR Director Kathleen Yackin attended remotely. Supervisor Michele Minnick, Assistant Township Manager David J. Mrochko and Township Engineer James E. Blanch, P.E. were absent. There were 15 members of the public in-person and 18 remote attendees.

Chair Koch welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded them that we continue to use closed captioning for the meetings which are auto generated by Zoom. They are not the official meeting minutes which will be approved at a subsequent meeting. She then asked all to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Koch expressed sorrow on the passing of long-term Code Enforcement Officer Michael E. McAndrew who served the community for 38 years and turned the meeting over to Mr. Pronczak.

Mr. Pronczak began by noting that March 18th was a very sad day for Whitpain when we learned of Mike McAndrew's passing. He gave a moving, personal tribute to Mike, which was followed by a video overview of the many communities and activities in Whitpain Township where Mike was involved, as well as highlights of Mike's personal accomplishments. Mike represented the Township well, serving the community for nearly forty years. He was a mentor to many of the employees. Mike will be truly missed. Following the presentation, Chair Koch called for a moment of silence.

Chief Lawson presented the second Mission Moment of the evening highlighting community policing with the Bridge Program. He introduced Mackenzie Hiltbold, Assistant Director of Police Partnerships with Mobile Crisis through Access Services. The purpose of the Bridge Program and its Mobile Crisis partnership with Law Enforcement is to try to help build community connections, assessing the level of risk for individuals who are frequent callers to 911, with goals to minimize forensic involvement while reducing the burden on emergency services. Two case reviews were presented that included an adult male with unmanaged mental health concerns that resulted in recommending long-term treatment away from the family home, and an adult female who expressed thoughts of suicide, which lessened after a safety assessment with Mobile Crisis. The subject was connected to the Peer Support Talk Line for further support. Future plans include increasing the number of mobile units and involving more Officers

in the referral process. Chief Lawson added that involvement with Mobile Crisis has certainly made a difference with responses. He thanked them for all they do.

Mr. Pronczak introduced Mr. Peter Simone of Simone Collins Landscape Architecture who gave an update on the Wissahickon Park progress which began about ten years ago with the \$25 million BoRit remediation by EPA. The Final Master Plan was approved with an approximate \$2.9 million budget. Mr. Simone showed an overview of the proposed plan and updated the Board and staff on each section. Various surfaces include meadows, turf grass, concrete paving, asphalt paving, safety surfacing, and some artificial turf. There is a driveway drop-off section, a lawn area for unstructured play, locations with benches, a walking path, two playgrounds, a zero-depth pool, bike racks, a pavilion, a covered grill area, and two bathrooms among other amenities. All structures will be durable and low maintenance. The proposed schedule includes bid documents to be completed by the summer of 2022, with the project being bid in early winter 2022. By the spring of 2023, the awarded contractor will be given the go ahead to begin. Supervisor Campolongo thanked Mr. Simone and asked about the possibility of a bike-share program. Mr. Simone said the programs can be very successful and he would pull information from other communities he has worked with and talk with Mr. Baker about this. Mr. Pronczak mentioned the bikeability study done by Montgomery County and connecting rail lines with the Montgomery County Community College. While the Ambler station might not be ideal, other stations closer to the college could be. Supervisor Campolongo also asked about sponsorship opportunities. Mr. Pronczak said we would have to check the grant guidelines to see if that would be permitted. Chair Koch asked about community feedback. Mr. Simone responded that the proposed plan addresses the needs expressed by the public which came from public participation in a series of community meetings that were well attended.

Mr. Pronczak then gave an overview of the proposed noise and lighting nuisance ordinance, noting that the current ordinance is subjective. The draft has specifics for noise that include a process with consequences. Lighting as addressed in the current ordinance covers non-residential properties but does not address residential homes. Recent problems are with LED lighting, which is more energy efficient, though can be offensive if not properly aimed or shielded. The proposed ordinance addresses both concerns. For noise enforcement, a noise meter would be used to make sure standards are met. There has been extensive research done by the Solicitor's office and our Planning Consultant, and the proposed ordinance is closely aligned with that of Lower Merion Township, which has a similar quality of life to Whitpain Township.

Mr. Pronczak then discussed the proposed term limits resolution that will be on the next agenda. If enacted by the Supervisors, the resolution supports limiting terms for elected officials.

Mr. Pronczak continued with a review of the preliminary agenda for the April 19th meeting beginning with Consent Agenda items including approval of the March 15th and April 5th Board of Supervisors' meeting minutes, the March Voucher List, the February

Treasurer's Report, a confirming approval of a water shut-off agreement with PA American Water Company, two waivers of land development, Deeds of Dedication and Temporary Construction Easements for the Pulaski Drive Bridge Replacement project, authorization for professional services related to road vacation and utility easement for a portion of McDivitt Drive, release of escrow funds for three projects, and award of the contract for the Pulaski Drive Bridge Replacement Project. Mr. Pronczak explained that the water shut-off agreement authorizes us to work with the water company in situations where a property owner has excessive overdue sewer bills. We can lien the property, though over time the amounts grow to unreasonable levels. We cannot shut off sewer lines coming from the house, but we can shut off water going into the property. When this has been done in the past, the notice of water shut-off usually prompts payment. The list of liens is beginning to grow again, and it is important to look into this and implement, if necessary.

Following the Consent Agenda, Mr. Pronczak continued reviewing the remainder of the agenda stating the Board will consider passage of a resolution to establish a policy for review of professional services, authorize establishment of a 50-foot-wide sanitary sewer easement at Montgomery County Community College, and consider resolutions approving land development and subdivision plans for properties that have gone through the Zoning Hearing process. There are four Zoning Hearing Board cases scheduled to be heard April 28th. Attorney Christen Pionzio gave an overview of the application submitted by Madison Capital Group Management, LLC for a property located at 953 Penllyn Blue Bell Pike, and Mr. Pronczak gave a brief overview of the amended application submitted for Simran Properties at 646 Skippack Pike. They are asking for a reduction in the number of parking spaces from the original submission, as well as a reduction in green space. Robert E. Blue, P.E., representing the applicant, further explained the requested variances. Mr. Pronczak continued, explaining the requested variances for 1509 Vernon Road (residential/setbacks) and 1529 DeKalb Pike (commercial/expanding non-conforming use).

With no further discussion, Chair Koch adjourned the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Roman M. Pronczak, P.E.
Township Manager