

WORK SESSION

March 10, 2015

A work session of the Whitpain Township Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, March 10, 2015 at the Manor House at Prophecy Creek Park, 205 W Skippack Pike, Ambler, PA 19002 at 6:00 p.m. for the purpose of reviewing the agenda of the March 10, 2015 Supervisors' meeting. Chairman Frederick R. Conner was present with Supervisors Adam D. Zucker, Anthony F. Greco, Melissa M. Weber, and Kenneth F. Wollman. Also present were Township Solicitor James J. Garrity, Esq., Township Manager Roman M. Pronczak, Assistant Township Manager David J. Mrochko, Director of Public Works Ronald J. Cione, Deputy Police Chief Ken Lawson, Parks and Recreation Director Kurt W. Baker, Director of Code Enforcement Michael McAndrew, Director of Finance John Nagel, and Fire Marshal David M. Camarda. Two members of the public were also present.

Mr. Conner opened the meeting by thanking Mr. Camarda for coordinating an emergency management table-top exercise on Monday, March 9. Mr. Conner also thanked all those who participated in the exercise.

The Supervisors continued the meeting by reviewing the agenda discussing approval of the February 17, 2015 Board of Supervisors' meeting minutes, the February 2015 Voucher List, the January 2015 Treasurer's Report, authorization to advertise Ordinances #4-236, 335, 337, 338 and 339, proposals from Kimmel Bogrette for the Olson House and McMahan Associates for intersection improvements at Butler and Skippack Pikes, release of funds for Red Fox Farm, a waiver for Wings Field, approval of the amended Cafeteria Plan, the March Zoning Hearing Board cases and the public hearing on Ordinance No. 22-40.

After reviewing the agenda, the Supervisors discussed reforming the Centre Square Park Committee. This committee was active in the initial stages of the park, but will be reconstituted as the park's grand opening is approaching in September. The committee will consist of two Supervisors, Mr. Conner and Mr. Zucker. They will work with representatives from the Whitpain Recreation Association and Township staff members on a variety of park related topics including the construction of a bathroom facility at the park.

At 6:25 p.m., the Supervisors adjourned the work session and met in executive session to discuss legal matters. At 6:30 p.m., the Supervisors adjourned the executive session and left for the public meeting. When the public meeting ended, the Supervisors reconvened the executive session at 8:10 p.m.

David J. Mrochko
Whitpain Township Assistant Manager

#05-2015
March 10, 2015

The regular meeting of the Whitpain Township Board of Supervisors was held Tuesday, March 10, 2015 at the Manor House at Prophecy Creek Park, 205 Skippack Pike, Broad Axe, PA. Chairman Frederick R. Conner, Jr., along with Supervisors Adam D. Zucker, Anthony F. Greco, Melissa Murphy Weber and Kenneth F. Wollman were present. Township Manager Roman M. Pronczak, P.E., Assistant Township Manager, David J. Mrochko, Solicitor James J. Garrity, Esq., Deputy Police Chief Kenneth Lawson, Township Engineer James E. Blanch, P.E., Finance Director John B. Nagel, Code Enforcement Officer Michael E. McAndrew, Public Works Director Ronald J. Cione, Parks and Recreation Director Kurt W. Baker, Fire Marshal David M. Camarda and Recording Secretary Virginia Papale were also present. In addition, Planning Commission Chairman Kenneth Corti with Planning Commission members Richard Shorin, Bradley Tate, Otis Hightower, Tory Meitner, Penny Gerber and Edward McLaughlin were there, and Park and Open Space Chairman Susan Mudambi and member Amy Fruncillo were in attendance. Staff members present included: Assistant Zoning Officer William McManus, Parks and Recreation Assistant Director Michael Richino, Parks and Recreation Coordinator Courtney Fox and IT Administrator Nicole Leininger. There were approximately 40 members of the public at the meeting.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Chairman Conner welcomed everyone to the Whitpain Township Conference Center and called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. This is the fifth meeting of the year, which was previously scheduled for March 3, 2015. It is a joint meeting with the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Commission Chaired by Ken Corti and the Park and Open Space Board Chaired by Susan Mudambi. The regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting will commence at the conclusion of the Board of Supervisors' meeting. At the conclusion of the Board of Supervisors' work session this evening, the Board met in executive session to discuss legal matters. The third Town Hall meeting of the Comprehensive Plan will be held tomorrow evening beginning at 7 p.m. at the Arborcrest Business Campus on Arbor Way off of Union Meeting Road (the former Unisys property). Our consultant, Pete Simone, joins us this evening. He and his team are doing an excellent job with the Comprehensive Plan Committee meetings.

Mission Moments was presented by Township Manager Roman Pronczak, who focused on the achievements attained by the Public Works Department during this winter and the previous week's weather, and the Centre Square Fire Company's response to a building fire along Route 202 in sub-freezing temperatures. We experienced 15 events to deal with, and most of those events involved ice and snow. Last week, we underwent a mix of precipitation that began as rain and quickly changed over to ice and snow. In normal conditions, the Public Works Department prepares the roadways by applying a salt brine in anticipation of the weather. Crews were unable to pretreat the roadways with brine in the last week because of the rain. When they began clearing operations, the Public Works crews salted and plowed and did a tremendous job in making most of the roads passable. There were some shaded areas which created some difficulty, although crews addressed those matters as calls were received. After each storm, staff meets to evaluate the process to show where we've met our goals, or where we've fallen short, and we welcome input from residents. The Centre Square Fire Company responded to a

building fire in the middle of the night Friday into Saturday morning. It was a two-alarm fire that quickly escalated to require the aid of several departments to help them battle it. There were no significant injuries, although several firefighters were injured and treated by the Second Alarmers on site. Those responders then continued to battle the blaze after being treated. Hazardous conditions caused by the sub-freezing temperatures made the job difficult. Compliments were given to all for their hard work in fighting and containing the fire. Chairman Conner added that the firefighters did a heroic job, with selflessness and professionalism. He thanked Chief Lee Miller, who was in attendance, and asked him to take that back to the membership.

Chairman Conner also mentioned that one of the Police Detectives has a young daughter with a life-threatening heart condition. The family received tremendous response and support due to a WRA-led effort. Chairman Conner is happy to report the young patient is on the long road to recovery.

Township Manager Roman Pronczak then presented the Open Space Initiative under consideration after an introduction by Chairman Conner.

Over the years, Whitpain Township has demonstrated its leadership in resource conservation. From 1966 to the present, through acquisitions and partnerships, the total protected open space area in the Township is 446 acres. Golf courses are known as the last frontier of open space protection. Surrounding municipalities have faced years of proceedings in consideration for best use of golf course-occupied land. In 2009 Upper Dublin Township purchased a conservation easement from the owners of LuLu Country Club, which encompassed a 115-acre parcel. The Club continues operating as a private club, and the open space is permanently protected. In our Township, Meadowlands Country Club is a 125-acre tract in the heart of Blue Bell and it is zoned "Park and Recreation". Significant value to surrounding properties and the community is enhanced by scenic woodlands and the Willow Run tributary to the Wissahickon Creek. Additionally, it is near Boehms Church and the Blue Bell Inn, two historically significant buildings. A difficulty in the area includes traffic gridlock at surrounding and nearby intersections.

Mr. Pronczak continued to explain that the proposal being presented today is a way to preserve open space at the Meadowlands Country Club. By rolling over soon-to-expire municipal debt that was incurred when other properties were acquired, we can keep the existing debt service for open space at or below what we have currently. It would involve a conservation easement to be purchased by Whitpain Township, with the approval of Meadowlands Country Club and a final approval by the Board of Supervisors. There are still many details to be worked out as far as the agreement and type of conservation easement. Within a 20-year period, there would be options to purchase, either by the Township or Meadowlands Country Club. Important in the change of the operation is an assurance of best management practices in golf course management, enhanced stormwater management, improved water quality and buffers, improved walkability and discounts and other access accommodations for Whitpain residents and organizations. We are also looking to partner with the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association in this preservation effort to provide in-kind services for land management, water quality, geology, plant life and wildlife and bird habitat. In addition to the preservation efforts with Meadowlands, a consideration of an additional \$1 million for open space project improvements is requested. The Park and Open Space Board has

identified several high-priority projects, including the completion of connector trails, trail connector enhancements and expansion. Improvements at Centre Square Park include trail surfacing, along with completion of the nature trail and dog park. Several projects also under consideration in partnering with the Shade Tree Commission include restoration of some of the wooded areas taken down during the Turnpike widening project.

To summarize, Mr. Pronczak said this proposal would be done with no tax increase while maintaining the current debt service. What is being proposed will keep us well below the Township's allowable debt of \$36 million. If approved, we will preserve an additional 125 acres of open space for \$6 million at an interest rate of approximately three (3%) percent. The existing debt expires by 2018, and the new debt will expire in 2035. If this project moves forward, we increase the amount of protected open space from 446 acres to 574 acres. Chairman Conner thanked Mr. Pronczak for the presentation.

Chairman Conner introduced members of the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association, our long-term preservation partner. Rick Collier is the Chairman of the Board of Directors and Dennis Miranda, the Executive Director. The Meadowlands Country Club Board is in attendance. They have been very community-minded in their efforts to partner with us. Chairman Conner asked if anyone wanted to make public comment.

Beth Pilling, the Montgomery County Planning Commission trails and open space specialist, gave a thumbs up to the Township in its efforts to preserve open space. There are approximately 7,500 acres of golf courses in Montgomery County that have very important natural resources. This proposal is good, wonderful news. Chairman Conner thanked Ms. Pilling for all she has done for Whitpain Township over the years.

Dennis Miranda thanked the Board of Supervisors and the other Boards and Commissions for being true leaders in open space preservation. In preserving the high quality of life today, we ensure a better tomorrow. The financial commitment is to be applauded, this is a great conservation story, and the WVWA looks forward to a continued, wonderful partnership. Rick Collier said they appreciate beings asked to be partners and being part of preservation in a progressive way. The WVWA is committed and ready to get started soon with this very valuable enhancement.

Chairman Conner said additional comments will be taken at the next Board meeting on March 17 and until the agreement is at a point with which the Board is comfortable. The Board will then vote in open session after more discussions, and will also vote to assume new debt. Deliberations have been careful and analytical, exploring the overall impacts. This presentation will be available on the Township's website. As we move forward, questions and comments are welcome.

Ken Wollman pointed out this was a difficult and long process. The Development Committee, including Mrs. Weber and Chairman Conner, has done a great job and Mr. Wollman is looking forward to getting started. Tony Greco noted he was on the Board when we purchased Prophecy Creek Park, which has been turned into a revenue-producing property for the Township and Robert Fair Caterers. If we do not follow through with Meadowlands, it will not remain open space. It is the right decision to

make. Adam Zucker had nothing to add after an excellent presentation; he thanked everyone for attending this evening. Melissa Weber thanked everyone for coming out, and asked that everyone continue to monitor the Township website, the Wire and any other communication effort put forth by the Township for additional updates. She thanked the Planning Commission and Park and Open Space Board and their members and the members of other Boards and Commissions for their efforts.

After a brief break, the regular meeting resumed with Chairman Conner additionally thanking Peter Williamson from the Natural Lands Trust for the important contributions they have made toward our Open Space Initiative. They offered good information and helped us move through the process.

A motion was made by Mr. Greco, duly seconded by Mr. Wollman to approve the minutes of the Board of Supervisors' meeting of February 17, 2015. Chairman Conner called for any discussion. There was none and the motion carried.

A motion was made by Mr. Zucker, duly seconded by Mrs. Weber to approve the February 2015 Voucher List in the amount of \$634, 737.56, check sequence #544337 through #54538. Chairman Conner called for any discussion. There was none and the motion carried.

A motion was made by Mr. Greco, duly seconded by Mr. Wollman to approve the January 2015 Treasurer's Report. Chairman Conner called for any discussion. There was none and the motion carried.

A motion was made by Mr. Greco, duly seconded by Mrs. Weber to authorize the Township Manager to advertise Ordinance No. 4-236, amending the sign ordinance. Chairman Conner noted that this Ordinance was presented at the last meeting in February and did not pass. This authorization to re-advertise will allow the Board to consider the passage of the Ordinance at a future date. There were no additional comments and the motion carried.

A motion was made by Mr. Greco, duly seconded by Mrs. Weber to authorize the Township Manager to advertise Ordinance No. 335, confirming participation in the PSATS Unemployment Compensation Group Trust (UC Trust) plan, in compliance with the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act and the amended UC Trust Agreement. Chairman Conner called for any discussion. There was none and the motion carried.

A motion was made by Mr. Wollman, duly seconded by Mr. Greco to authorize the Township Manager to advertise Ordinance Nos. 337, 338 and 339, making certain administrative revisions to the Non-Uniformed and Police Pension plans. Chairman Conner called for any discussion. There was none and the motion carried.

A motion was made by Mr. Zucker, duly seconded by Mr. Greco to accept a proposal from Kimmel Bogrette to study the Olsen House for adaptive re-use in an amount not to exceed \$6,400, per their submittal dated February 17, 2015. Chairman Conner noted that this is to investigate the re-use of the Township-owned property at Skippack Pike and Cathcart Road, to explore options for a public-private partnership, a revenue-generating partnership at the current location while utilizing the historical nature of the house and setting. There were no further comments and the motion carried.

A motion was made by Mr. Greco, duly seconded by Mr. Wollman to authorize McMahon Associates to proceed with engineering services related to the intersection improvements at the intersection of Skippack Pike and Butler Pike in accordance with their proposal dated February 20, 2015 at a cost not to exceed \$53,100 (tasks #1 through #5). Chairman Conner remarked that this is necessary for future intersection improvements while we continue to review the Broad Axe area and what is known as the "Sunoco Tract". As we move ahead with the Comprehensive Plan and the focus on Broad Axe Village, this will expedite the work in that area. There were no additional comments and the motion carried.

A confirming motion was made by Mr. Greco, duly seconded by Mr. Wollman to release \$45,630 (Release #5) from the escrow fund for Red Fox Farm Subdivision/Land Development located at 1895 Skippack Pike. Chairman Conner called for any discussion. There was none and the motion carried.

A motion was made by Mr. Greco, duly seconded by Mr. Zucker to grant a request to Wings Field Preservation Associates from the requirement of preparing a land development plan for the rehabilitation of the airport terminal apron located at 1501 Narcissa Road. The waiver from land development is conditioned upon the review and approval of the site plan by the Township Engineer. Chairman Conner mentioned that this incorporates de minimis change to the apron, and the Township Engineer will monitor the planning and approval of the plan. There were no additional comments and the motion carried.

A motion was made by Mrs. Weber, duly seconded by Mr. Greco to approve the amended and restated Cafeteria Plan effective April 1, 2015. Chairman Conner explained that this amendment to the healthcare plans offered by the Township covers opting out of the plan and getting benefits. There were no additional comments and the motion carried.

The Board took no action on the following cases scheduled to be heard by the Zoning Hearing Board on March 19, 2015:

#2032-15 (Revised)	Pet Supplies Plus & Forman Sign Co.
#2034-15	Robert & Patricia Haasz
#2035-15	Joseph & Donna Ferrier
#2036-15	1155 DeKalb Associates, LLC

As advertised, a public hearing on Ordinance No. 22-40 was opened by Chairman Conner. Mr. Pronczak summarized the amendments which asks our Code to reference the most recent version of the International Property Maintenance Code so our Code is in compliance with it. Chairman Conner asked if the Board or any member of the audience had questions. There were none and on motion made by Mr. Greco and Mrs. Weber, he closed the hearing.

A motion was made by Mrs. Weber, duly seconded by Mr. Zucker and unanimously approved to adopt Ordinance No. 22-40.

Chairman Conner turned the meeting over to Vice-Chairman Zucker who asked if any member of the audience wished to make public comment. There was none. He

asked if any member of the Board wished to discuss old or new business. There were no comments. Vice-Chairman Zucker announced that the Board will retire to executive session to discuss legal and personnel issues after the meeting. Chairman Conner confirmed tonight's presentation slides will be available on the Township's website Wednesday. Discussion will be continued at the next meeting on March 17, 2015, next Tuesday at the Township Administration Building.

There being no further business, Vice-Chairman Zucker moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony F. Greco
Secretary