

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORKSHOP MEETING
APRIL 9, 2015

The Board of Supervisors of Upper Merion Township met for a Workshop Meeting on Thursday, April 9, 2015, in the Township Building. The meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m., followed by a pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Supervisors present were: Greg Waks, Greg Philips, Bill Jenaway and Carole Kenney. Also present were: David Kraynik, Township Manager; Sally Slook, Assistant Township Manager; Rob Loeper, Township Planner; Joseph McGrory, Township Solicitor; and Angela Caramenico, Assistant to the Township Manager. Supervisor Spott was absent.

CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS:

Chairman Philips reported an Executive Session was not held prior to this meeting.

DISCUSSIONS:

YSC SPORTS, 224 COUNTY LINE ROAD. DISCUSSION OF FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS AND EXPANSION

Denise R. Yarnoff, Esq., Riley Riper Hollin & Colagreco, stated this presentation will focus on the possibility of expanding the YSC Sports facility. She indicated there have been some limited internal conversations with staff and the Township Solicitor about the possibility of leasing township property in order to expand their current facility.

Mr. Rich Graham, founder and owner of YSC Sports, indicated he is also responsible for overseeing the Philadelphia Union strategy with youth development. A PowerPoint presentation was shown wherein he described his vision for creating a preeminent player development program in North America.

Mr. Graham stated he is currently working with three teams on one field and is looking to propose a footprint which would provide for one or two additional fields.

Mr. Graham said the next step would be for him to meet with Parks and Recreation Director, Dan Russell, to see how YSC could implement

programming to provide some of YSC's in house expertise for some of the Parks and Recreation programs and share ideas and use of space.

Utilizing the aerial, Ms. Yarnoff pointed out the location of YSC Sports and the township property in the back purchased for public use which includes a portion of the Chester County trail which would need to be relocated as part of the proposal. She reiterated Mr. Graham's offer to work with the township and the Parks and Recreation Department for ways to be able to share the fields and allow the other soccer and lacrosse teams to use the fields at select times as well as rest room and parking facilities. Ms. Yarnoff said if this is something that is of interest they would pursue the proper legal mechanism to be able to achieve this result.

Mr. Waks asked if a field or grass turf is contemplated. Mr. Graham responded they would be looking for field turf.

Mr. Waks asked about night usage. Mr. Graham responded they would have to discuss this further with the township and figure that out.

Mr. Waks emphasized the need to discuss this proposal with the Colonial Village Civic Association. Mr. Graham responded if he could have an idea of the township's interest he could then meet with the group and let them know what is being proposed.

Mr. Waks asked if the township land is wooded or vacant. Mr. Graham responded it is wooded.

Mr. Philips asked if it is wooded with mature trees or wooded with scrub. Mr. Jenaway responded that it is a little of both.

Mr. Jenaway noted the current Parks and Recreation Master Plan process and suggested Mr. Graham meet with T&M Associates, the Township Engineer, and township staff to better understand how it might relate to discussions concerning township fields. Mr. Jenaway noted Mr. Russell would follow up on this.

Mr. Jenaway stated he is familiar with the sports facility and said when his children played there years ago parking was always a challenge and suggested any development plan should take a hard look at the parking issue.

Mrs. Kenney asked about the size of the open space parcel. Mr. Graham responded the entire property is about 6 to 7 acres and the field space is about 4 acres.

Mrs. Kenney asked for additional details about the use of the space. Mr. Graham responded this space would primarily be used for the Philadelphia Union Youth Academy which today consists of three teams. In 2016 U.S. Soccer will

make it 4 teams in age groups U18, U16, U14 and soon to be U13. Currently they are cycling the three teams through training inside and outside and it is not an ideal situation.

Mrs. Kenney asked how many fields are outside now. Mr. Graham responded one full field and a half field. The half field is good for those under age 12, but not ideal for training purposes.

Mrs. Kenney asked if YSC has any girls playing soccer. Mr. Graham responded the facility has various kinds of activities for girls and noted the Philadelphia Union is a boys group. He said he would like to do more programming for girls, but to do it right would be cost prohibitive, especially when there is no pathway currently for the girls professionally.

Mrs. Kenney asked for more details about the trail, its proposed relocation and who would pay for this. Utilizing the aerial, Ms. Yarnoff pointed out the location of the existing trail and the proposed relocation. She said they would have to work closely with the county that built the trail and it is hoped they would be able to work out a positive solution. Ms. Yarnoff stated moving the trail would not be a township responsibility. It would be solely for the applicant to work that out as to how that is going to happen.

Mr. Philips asked if there was any further comment from the Board. Mr. Waks stated YSC should reach out to the civic association first.

Mr. Philips asked the Township Solicitor if there is anything that needs to happen if the Board would like to pursue. Mr. McGrory responded it would be necessary to start negotiating the terms and he would work out the details with Ms. Yarnoff. This could be done concurrent with approaching the civic association.

Mr. Jenaway stated he would want YSC to discuss this with T&M Associates.

Mrs. Kenney asked if this has been discussed with the Park and Recreation Board. Ms. Yarnoff responded in the negative. She said their first step was to determine the interest of the Board of Supervisors, but it would be their goal to work closely with them [Park and Recreation Board] to satisfy their concerns as well as work with all appropriate groups.

Mr. Philips asked Mr. Graham if YSC has any time constraints they might be working under in terms of getting the fields ready. Mr. Graham responded they would like to get started as soon as they can create the right environment. In further response to Mr. Philips' question, Ms. Yarnoff asked if his question was more if this does not happen would they have to look for something else to which she responded in the affirmative.

Mrs. Kenney asked for clarification about the township's use of the fields and what percentages of time are being considered. Mr. Graham responded at this stage he was unable to provide an answer and this would be worked out during staff discussions. He pointed out it is not only field usage, but there are some world class soccer experts that are at YSC and the question would be how to leverage some of that expertise in community programs and be something of value for local coaches.

Mr. Jenaway pointed out during the Park and Recreation Master Plan process they have heard people are interested in more soccer, more lacrosse and more field use and it would be timely to discuss this with the Park and Recreation Director.

DISCUSSION OF STORMWATER MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

Mr. Kraynik stated there are stormwater issues in the township and the question is how to deal with them on a township-wide comprehensive basis. He said about a year and a half ago the Governor signed a bill at the time to allow for stormwater funds to be created. Ever since then this has been discussed at the Municipal Utility Authority level as to whether the Authority could expand its role to take on township-wide stormwater management. Ideas were discussed about the name of that Authority, assessment of fees, expanding the current five member Authority, and the legal mechanism to accomplish this. The question remains what entity would be the agent for stormwater management the Township or the Authority. Steve Hahn (Township Solicitor's partner) has some definite ideas on how to proceed legally, but this discussion is necessary at this point to see whether it makes sense to have the Authority take the lead, expand its role, or whether it is something the Township should do as part of the Operating Budget and assess a fee.

Stan Channick, Vice Chairperson, Upper Merion Municipal Utility Authority (UMMUA), stated there is one important decision that has to be decided initially before getting into all the other details – should it be a Township responsibility or an Authority responsibility. While he has been a strong proponent of the Authority taking over stormwater responsibility, he now has some reservations as more discussions are held and does not think that the Authority role is the right approach.

Ed Veneziale, Chairperson, UMMUA, stated other municipalities have not put forth strong stormwater authorities and this is still at an early information-gathering stage.

Mr. Philips provided the genesis of the thought behind the stormwater authority. He stated some areas of the township were built in the 1950 to 1970 era before strong stormwater management techniques were developed.

Pennsylvania is now moving continually down to a more stringent regulation of stormwater both from a runoff and water quality standpoint. He said the idea of a stormwater authority would be to charge a rate to be able to do public works projects to control stormwater more effectively with Best Management Practices.

Mr. Channick asked how stormwater issues are being handled in the township today. Mr. Philips responded when developers come in under today's codes they have to provide certain Best Management Practices such as more rain gardens and underground facilities.

Mr. Channick asked how that is monitored. Mr. Philips responded there are codes in place which are enforced by the Codes Department. Mr. McGrory commented there were times when no stormwater controls were required and now because of federal and state regulations municipalities have more responsibility to take care of stormwater. Mr. Jenaway noted during planning commission meetings every plan is addressed from a stormwater perspective considering things such as changes in impervious, etc.

Mr. Waks asked where other Second Class Townships are in the process. Mr. McGrory responded to the best of his knowledge no Second Class Township or township of any class has created an authority under the new law, but many are now looking at it.

A discussion followed about the various options for administering and/or operating the stormwater management entity and considered such issues as funding and staffing.

Before getting to decision-making, Mr. Jenaway suggested doing an operational analysis to first determine what tasks or activities actually have to be done to meet the stormwater requirements. It could then be determined whether it fits better in the model of a separate authority or an existing authority. Mr. Jenaway also suggested that the planning commission, EAC and the Authority get together for a brainstorming session because all three will play into the ultimate result.

Mr. Veneziaie stated once an operational analysis is done the next task is to fund a stormwater study for the whole township and determine the projected improvements that need to be made, estimate those costs which can then back into a fee, and then through the whole process.

Mr. McGrory commented the biggest challenge would be how the fee will be assessed as it is the unproven ground.

Mr. Kraynik stated in addition to the stormwater management study another discussion the Authority has had was an independent fee structure study for residential, commercial and institutional properties.

Mr. Philips stated the next step would be a joint meeting of the planning commission, UMMUA and EAC to discuss the possibility of an ad hoc committee of the Authority to start brainstorming. Mr. Channick agreed. Mr. Veneziale said they could brainstorm and then come up with a package of the tasks and what the next steps are for an action plan for the next 6 months.

TURNPIKE CORRIDOR REINVESTMENT STUDY PRESENTATION BY MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Brian O'Leary, Section Chief, County Planning, Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC); Leo Bagley, PennDOT; Matthew Edmond, Section Chief, Transportation Planning, (MCPC); and Scott France, Principal Planner, County Planning, (MCPC) were in attendance at this presentation.

Mr. Brian O'Leary stated at a previous meeting the Board was shown the potential layouts of the two interchanges for Henderson Road and the improvements to the interchange at Valley Forge. Since then MCPC has been working on the numbers with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) and Turnpike Commission to figure out realistic projections of revenue and traffic associated with these interchanges. The report should be finalized in time for a May 6th event, "Reinventing Business Parks," and they will be looking for feedback from the communities.

With regard to land use, Mr. O'Leary noted at the last meeting there was a discussion of what has already been done about zoning, mixed use zoning and creating a more walkable environment. For the Swedeland area the Montgomery County Planning Commission is recommending it remain primarily an office/industrial area and not go to a mixed use type of concept, except near the train station. Along US 202 there is a possibility of some changes for residential on the old Glasgow site.

Mr. O'Leary mentioned the goal is to reinvent our business parks and as part of that to get the Turnpike to invest in some sorely needed interchanges across Montgomery County.

Mr. Edmond stated since the turnpike was designed 50 plus years ago communities have developed differently. The turnpike in Montgomery County is about 17 miles end to end from Willow Grove to Valley Forge with only a handful of interchanges along that whole stretch. If you go to any other highway in the region and probably any other highway in the nation and interchanges are one to two miles apart. The objective is to reinvent the turnpike as a way to get around as a commuter road and at the same time use transportation as a way to create economic development and make sure Montgomery County is competitive for the

future. The study looked at all the different crossings and came up with two in Upper Merion that could be important to Upper Merion Township. One would be a modification of the existing Valley Forge interchange to “punch a hole” up to First Avenue and the other would be a new intersection at Henderson Road. Boles Smyth Associates has been hired to handle some of the conceptual engineering for these interchanges.

Mr. Edmond described the intricacies of the movements of the proposed Henderson Road interchange which would feed into a roundabout and eventually tie into the Saulin Boulevard area. He noted this interchange is positioned in an area of growing importance to the township.

Because there are two different types of interchanges one being modified and the other a brand new interchange they have different construction costs and different challenges.

Mr. Edmond discussed current and projected traffic counts over the next 25 years through the Valley Forge interchange.

Mr. O’Leary pointed out everything would be dependent on all electronic tolling (AET). He explained the AET process and how the gantry process will read the license or transponder.

Mr. Edmond stated it is assumed the opening of the interchanges would not occur until 2020 because that is probably the earliest all electronic tolling will take effect on the turnpike.

Mr. Edmond mentioned SEPTA’s proposal to extend the Norristown High Speed Line into King of Prussia. He indicated the Planning Commission has had constant discussions with SEPTA to make sure that neither one precludes the plans of the other and both are able to coexist.

Mr. Edmond stated the Montgomery County Planning Commission will be sharing this information more formally at some point and will ask the stakeholder municipalities to sign a joint letter or take some type of action supporting this plan.

Mr. O’Leary noted the goal to encourage the turnpike to put all the interchanges in their 10-year capital plan and then start mediating into engineering as well.

Mr. Jenaway asked how possible highway widening in some nearby areas might impact their plans. Mr. Edmond stated that is one of the concerns they had farther east on some of their main line systems. He said this would be dealt with during the design process in coordination with Boles Smyth Associates.

Mr. Jenaway asked if traffic calculations took into consideration the golf course property. Mr. Edmond responded they amended some of Upper Merion's projections about a year and a half ago and took it into account based on full development.

COMMUNITY CENTER MEMBERSHIP & MARKETING UPDATE

Dan Russell, Director, Park and Recreation, stated after seven plus years of planning, the community center it is finally coming to fruition with the formation of the new Park and Recreation Department. He unveiled their new logos and branding and introduced the executive team who will present the marketing efforts for the new community center, the unveiling of the Charter Passholder Campaign, and proposed revenue for this year for the Park and Recreation Department and the community center.

Ms. Sudha Suryadevara, Recreation Superintendent, discussed the approved 2015 budget revenue projections for the community center which are based on the Ballard King business plan. In 2015, the passholder fees will make up 73% of the total revenue for the community center. This includes three month passes, annual passes, corporate group passes as well as rentals. The program categories consist of the general and contracted programs and miscellaneous consists of leasing, vending, child watch and also special events for a total revenue of \$530,500. In 2016, 96% of the total community center revenue will consist of passholder fees, 3% for rentals and 2% from corporate. Because the majority of projected revenue consists of passholder fees the initial focus of the marketing campaign was on a charter passholder campaign.

Ms. Glenn Anne Chabala, Assistant Director, Park and Recreation, provided the charter passholder annual cost breakdown which was based on the Ballard King plan and explained the ways extra value and benefits are provided to charter passholders. Charter passholders will be encouraged to bring a friend as part of the marketing campaign to engage and inspire additional membership. Ms. Chabala also provided some renderings for the interior of the community center.

Mr. Russell provided an example of how a 15% discount on park and recreation activities for passholders could add up value wise for a family with two children where mom would sign up for Zumba, dad signs up for guitar lessons and children sign up for Adventure Day Camp programs. That family with those four programs could save \$244.

Ms. Gerri Vattimo, Marketing and Special Events Director, presented the marketing plan for the community center which is based on a three-pronged approach utilizing print media, social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.) and direct contact events. The passholder campaign is the first focus. Additional marketing efforts will include a postcard canvass to nearly 13,000 residents. The

post card will announce the community center is coming soon and this will help drive the social media campaign which will be a multi-platform daily engagement with the community. Face to face contact will be made with as many community members as possible at networking events, speaking events at various civic and homeowner's associations. Social media messaging and scheduling will be managed via Hootsuite which is the number one management tool for social media. For about \$10 a month it will be possible to schedule messages and go out in sync on a daily, weekly, monthly basis.

Mr. Russell stated the community center is very unique in what it will be able to offer to this community as opposed to other municipal community centers. The cost of the great array of services is not only competitive in nature but in some respects cheaper, especially when considering the benefit values with discounts, free programming, etc.

Mr. Waks suggested the Park and Recreation Department make the same presentation at an upcoming business meeting and have it aired on UMGA-TV on an ongoing basis. He said it would also be beneficial to reach out to the Business Improvement District for use in their efforts to keep businesses in Upper Merion Township.

Ms. Vattimo noted a corporate membership campaign will be launched in the fall. There are approximately 283 businesses that have over 50 employees and the community center would be an attractive wellness solution for their employees. Mr. Waks pointed out this would also be an opportunity for employees to network.

Mr. Philips said people who live outside of Upper Merion who are thinking of moving do not necessarily think of moving to Upper Merion because the perception is it is primarily commercial. He pointed out 50% of our township is residential and there are many good reasons, including low taxes, to consider Upper Merion as home. The community center will be another resource to market to those outside the township.

Mr. Russell noted there have been recent studies by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, the National Recreation and Park Association and the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society showing home values increase due to park and recreational opportunities.

Mr. Waks pointed out the benefit of people who live in proximity to the new community center which has gone from a blighted, empty structure with many associated problems to a brand new community center with sidewalks, trails and significant public safety improvements.

Mr. Jenaway asked how this initiative could be integrated with a potential "welcome wagon" for new people coming into the community. Mrs. Carla

Showell-Lee responded the Public Information Office will work together with the Park and Recreation Department on a way to reach out and welcome new residents.

Mr. Philips asked for clarification about the cost of the charter passholder. Ms. Chabala responded it would be \$999 the first year and then \$700 annually to renew. Mr. Jenaway pointed out charter passholders would receive benefits for 15 months until 2017. Mr. Philips commented that is an outstanding bargain coupled with the discounts.

Mike Trachtenberg, speaking on behalf of the Park and Rec Board, offered the support of the board in serving as “ambassadors” for the community center. It was noted that the senior center is also an important part of the community center.

A member of the group indicated there is an online sign up and a link is in the works for the Park and Recreation and township websites.

A question was asked about the specific marketing plan for new residents. Mr. Russell responded one of the strategies to be explored is a constant interaction with local realtors about the amenities of the community center as well as fees. Mr. Philips noted in the case of apartments contact would have to be made through a leasing office as opposed to a private realtor.

Ms. Vattimo mentioned she would also like to reach out to the various faith communities in the township.

A member of the group commented about people who work in King of Prussia but do not live here. It was noted there is a dual fee schedule for resident and non-resident. The question was asked if the fee schedule would be changed to accommodate a third tier pricing for the Upper Merion worker who is not a resident but works here and wants to work out during their lunch hour.

Ms. Vattimo noted there are approximately 57,000 employees to approximately 29,000 total residents and 13,000 homes. This is a high tech area and there are young professionals looking to decide where they are going to live.

Ms. Chabala said corporate passholders will receive a discount based on the number of employees. She said the resident, non-resident category was part of the Ballard King plan. With regard to an intermediary tier for those who work but do not live here further discussions will be held to determine how many tiers can be managed. Initially staff was thinking of it more in a corporate way, but on an individual way it is something to be considered in the future.

Mr. Russell commented this will be evolving as time goes by. Once people are in the door it will be necessary to sustain the facility into the future.

Mr. Jenaway asked about day passes. Mr. Russell responded it will be possible to sign up for a Park and Recreation activity, come to the community center, take that activity and not have to pay a day pass or a door entry, but if you want to start using the fitness center, the gyms, etc. that is when you would pay the \$7 or \$8 rate. Discounts on the activities are only available for annual members.

Tom Kohler asked if there has been a discussion about a fee structure for rentals. Ms. Chabala responded in the affirmative and said it is incorporated into the plan.

TRICENTENNIAL FACEBOOK PAGE

Mrs. Kenney indicated she was asked by some people whether it was time to remove the Tricentennial Facebook page. She offered both the pros and cons for doing so.

After a brief discussion, it was agreed to retain it as a Facebook capsule without any further posting. Mrs. Showell-Lee indicated she would write an appropriate closure that encompasses the Tricentennial year.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Board, it was moved by Mrs. Kenney, seconded by Mr. Jenaway, all voting "Aye" to adjourn the meeting. None opposed. Motion approved 4-0. Adjournment occurred at 9:40 p.m.

DAVID G. KRAYNIK
SECRETARY-TREASURER/
TOWNSHIP MANAGER

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Minutes Approved:
Minutes Entered: