

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
WORKSHOP MEETING
MARCH 7, 2024

The Board of Supervisors of Upper Merion Township met for a Workshop Meeting on Monday, March 7, 2024, in the Township Building. The meeting was called to order at 7:42 p.m., followed by a pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Supervisors present were: Bill Jenaway, Greg Waks, Tina Garzillo, Carole Kenney and Greg Philips. Also present were: Anthony Hamaday, Township Manager; Amanda Lafty, Asst. Township Manager; Sean Kilkenny, Township Solicitor; Leanna Colubriale, Township Engineer; Jarrett Lash, Township Planner.

CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENTS: None

ELECTRICAL PERMIT WAIVER REQUEST: Upper Merion Community Cupboard

Mr. Tony Hamaday, Township Manager said the Community Cupboard is asking for a waiver on a permit for a generator that they want to install to keep the air-conditioning and refrigeration systems working during a power outage. Mr. Hamaday said the permit cost is about a thousand dollars that the Township will absorb since this is a nonprofit organization but the site will still be inspected to make sure the installation is completed properly.

Board Actions:

It was moved by Supervisor Kenney, seconded by Supervisor Waks, all voting "Aye" to Waive the permit fee for Upper Merion Community Cupboard. None opposed. Motion passed 5-0.

Public Comments: None

DISCUSSIONS:

A. KOP BID RENAISSANCE PARK CONNECTIVITY PLAN PRESENTATION:

Mr. Chris Basler joined by Eric Goldstein, President of the BID along with Anita Nardone talked about all the improvements the BID implemented in the Business District. Now that Moore Park is almost completed they are focusing on Renaissance Park and connecting the two parks together.

Ms. Anita Nardone, Civil Engineer with Simone Collins gave an overview of the Study they conducted which is broken down into six (6) pacific plans. She mentioned there were eight recommendation that are part of the Connectivity Study but for now they're focusing on two parts which are about pedestrians and the site itself.

Ms. Nardone said this is a multi-modal site not only for vehicles but biking and walking which is why they want to connect the sites. This is a beautiful area which is so close to many transportation arteries as well as two beautiful trails along with Septa stations throughout. They are proposing to install 5' sidewalks on Horizon and Renaissance Roads and 6' bike trails with 2' buffers where possible or sharrows (bike lanes incorporated onto the road). By doing this makes the Park more accessible for the employees coming and going as well as nearby residents that work there or just want to enjoy the beautiful trails.

Ms. Nardone also mentioned extending Hertzog Blvd. into Renaissance Park making it more accessible as well as extending McCoys Lane to Horizon but first McCoys Lane has to be declared a Township Road. Also, they would like to make a round-about at the intersection of Horizon and Renaissance Roads making a beautiful accessible intersection.

Finally, Ms. Nardone talked about recreational trails which will be about 8' to 10' wide to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists and she mentioned the Septa stops. Ms. Nardone said when Bus Revolution comes Septa will be cutting back on some bus stops and with Renaissance developing there will be a need for some type of shuttle to bring the people from Norristown and Conshohocken trains. With that said, she agreed it's not the Townships responsibility to provide transportation but maybe they can start a Forum with Septa.

Chairperson Garzillo said she doesn't understand why Septa is cutting back on Bus Stops when they originally wanted to extend Norristown Rail into KOP. Mr. Basler said Septa is cutting back due to low ridership but will revisit adding more stops again once Renaissance is completed. Chairperson Garzillo said they have to keep the line of communication open with Septa, then there was a long discussion about the roads, stormwater and landscaping.

Public Comments:

Ms. Ilene Justin from Crooked Lane asked if this project was going to cause another tax increase to the residents? Then she mentioned the around about intersection sound lovely but is it practical since New Jersey has been doing away with them since they don't work well. She feels the Crooked Lane crosswalk to Septa is a great idea but suggest to add flashing lights to slow cars down when people are crossing. Also, mentioned since Septa has cut back services maybe the Businesses at Renaissance should contribute to extending the Rambler bus into that area.

B. POTENTIAL GRANT APPLICATION TO DCED MUNICIPAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO FUND AN ECONOMIC ANALYSIS MODEL:

Mr. Jarrett Lash, Twp. Planner said the Township would like to work with Urban 3 who is an economic development consultants which performs advance modeling that project the type of revenue and cost of services within a community. This company is based in Asheville, North Carolina and can present in person or virtual whichever the Board is comfortable with. Urban 3 takes a look at the value per acre and translates it into revenue per acre and the cost of service per acre, allowing us to transfer that back to the kind of typology within that helping the Township to know what it will receive.

This process will be in four stages and take about four months to complete giving the Township time to apply for the grant which will cover fifty percent of the eligible cost. This study will cost about \$76,000.00 less the grant money leaving the Township to pay \$38,000.00. This will not only be used within the Comprehensive Plan because it really three-fold.

First, the Comprehensive Plan itself by incorporating the findings into the Comprehensive plan to have that hard data to be able to support the vision of economic stability. Second is project Scoring, this is when you take a look at any new land development applicant and go through the process of deriving what the expectant revenue from that would be as well as the expected cost of service would be. Even though the Township can't make determinations for approval on that, it's good to see over time if the projects in the Township costs more than the revenue it receives. The Third is long term zoning decisions because some of our land use cost more than Township receives in revenue. So, how can we incrementally change that so more developments are net revenue boosters for the Township. By having all this data, the Township will be able to harden up the tax base which would be imperative for the economic stability of the Township for the future.

Chairperson Garzillo feels this data will be good to have and would like to move forward with the grant. Supervisor Philips said it will be reliable data

and the Township should set aside the full amount of this survey in case they don't receive the grant. Supervisor Waks also feels this survey would be good, the Township can use the information to show a developer or business that wants to invest in an area why they should move into Upper Merion Twp. So, the Board all agreed to put this on the agenda for their next Business Meeting.

C. LAND DEVELOPMENT/SUBDIVISION DEFINITION REVIEW – Major/Minor Land Development Plan, MPC Exemptions & Waiver Requests.

Township Mgr. Tony Hamaday showed four plan options for renovating the Township Building then introduced Asst. Township Manager Amanda Lafty who explained the grant. Amanda said this grant is offered by DCED for multi-purpose community facilities of local government. This includes our Township Build, Police and Library allowing us the ability to renovate or construct a new facility for one of them.

Amanda stated the Township can apply for up to a two million dollar grant with no matching funds necessary, this is a perfect opportunity for Upper Merion Township to save money towards the final cost. Amanda said she will write the grant which is due by April 20th with the help of Jarrett Lash and Geoff Hickman but needs to know which option the Board want to go with.

Supervisor Waks mentioned about renting office space for Administration to move into but Chairperson Garzillo likes the construction of an additional building near the existing one. Supervisor Philips suggest constructing it to the left of the existing building instead of towards the back and Vice-chair Jenaway agrees that would be better. Amanda said the Board has to decide before she can write the grant so she can include which option, with that said the Board agreed to put this on the agenda for the next Business Meeting.

D. BUSINESS MEETING AGENDA REVIEW:

Before Mr. Hamaday went over the Agenda for March 21st meeting he mentioned that Supervisor Waks received an email from a resident questioning the Township's Building Permit Fees. After a long discussion the Board feels that the permit fees are in line with other surrounding municipalities.

Mr. Hamaday mentioned since the Business Meeting is two weeks away due to the PERLAS meeting they'll all be attending he will go over the final agenda at their next Chair meeting on Monday, March 18th.

Public Comments: None

ADJOURNMENT:

Board Action:

It was moved by Supervisor Waks, seconded by Vice-Chair Jenaway, all voting "Aye" to adjourn the meeting. None opposed. Adjournment occurred at 9:52 pm.



ANTHONY HAMADAY
TOWNSHIP MANAGER

lr
Minutes Approved:
Minutes Entered:

