

LOWER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2021

SUPERVISORS PRESENT:

Mark Grey, Chairman
Danielle A. Duckett, Vice-Chair
Edward J. Brandt
Tessie McNeely

ABSENT:

Kathleen Hunsicker

STAFF:

Craig T. McAnally, Township Manager
Jamie Worman, Assistant Township Manager
Carole Culbreth, Assistant Secretary
Neil Stein, Esq., Solicitor
Paul Kenny, Police Chief
Fred Zollers, Public Works Director
Jim Hersh, Township Engineer
Chad Dixon, Township Traffic Engineer
Ken Amey, Zoning Officer

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

The Chairman called the hybrid meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. at the Lower Gwynedd Township Building and virtually on Zoom and led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance. The Chairman stated the Board of Supervisors met in an Executive Session before the meeting on a personnel matter.

Announcement: Tonight's Board of Supervisors Meeting is being video recorded.

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Receipt of Minutes: September 28, 2021

The Board of Supervisors received the September 28, 2021 meeting minutes. There were no comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Brandt to approve the September 28, 2021 meeting minutes. The motion passed 4 - 0.

Receipt of Year-to-Date Budget Report and Balance Sheet

Mr. McAnally stated the Year-to-Date Budget Report and Balance Sheet for July, 2021 has not been prepared, so it will be tabled.

Receipt of Invoice History: August 2021

The Board of Supervisors received the Invoice History for the month of August, 2021 in the amount of \$745,903.75. There were no comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Brandt to approve the August 2021 Invoice History. The motion passed 4 - 0.

BUILDING AND ZONING

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The Goddard School, Bethlehem Pike, LLC-820 N. Bethlehem Pike. Preliminary/Final Land Development #21-01.

Ms. Kate Harper of Timoney Knox was present to discuss this application on behalf of her client David Goldstein who was also present. She referenced the rendering provided of the proposed daycare building and site plan. The subject tract is located at 820 N. Bethlehem Pike in the D-Business District and Lower Pike Overlay District. The site currently contains a vacant restaurant, previously known as the Pike Restaurant, and a residential dwelling. The proposal is to demolish the former restaurant and construct a new daycare facility, the Goddard School, and to repurpose the dwelling into a medical office building. The applicant proposes to establish two parking lot areas, a playground area, and two subsurface stormwater facilities. The plan proposed two separate access points from Bethlehem Pike. Mr. Grey asked about the driveway situation with this plan. Ms. Harper explained that the main item of concern with this project has been the access points. The plan proposes a two-way driveway on the northern portion of the site and an ingress-only driveway at the southern end of the property. Ms. Harper reported that PennDot is agreeable to a two-way driveway at the northern part of the property. Mr. Jeff Todd of Traffic Planning and Design was also present to discuss this application. He explained that there was not enough room at the northern end of the site to extend the driveway to three lanes. Mr. Brandt noted that he had requested an emergency access be explored years ago when this property was before the board. Ms. Harper replied that this plan is different than before and there is a lane behind the office building now so the emergency access has been addressed. Mr. Brandt replied that he is not sure it's been resolved because in the event of an emergency there are many people that will need access to the site. Ms. Harper replied that Mr. Comly, Fire Marshal, has reviewed the plans and he is satisfied with what is proposed. Mr. Goldstein, owner, added that the emergency access has been accommodated and it is a different plan with different circulation. Ms. McNeely questioned if there has been any consideration as to whether this is the best way to access the site in the event someone wants to develop the other side of the street ten years down the road. Ms. Harper replied that this is a redevelopment of a property that has been vacant for 15 years, there are constraints and we feel this is the best plan before you. Ms. Duckett added that her concern is the redevelopment of Bethlehem Pike and how this will impact that. She used the example of two people turning out of the site and the neighboring property at the same time. There is little separation in this area. Ms. Harper replied that people will have to be careful as is always the case and proper signage can assist with that. Ms. Duckett asked if there is a contingency plan if PennDot does not issue a permit for this access configuration. Ms. Harper replied that the plan would be to make the access one-way in and one-way out. We would be prepared to make the required modifications. Ms. Duckett questioned whether that would really be the safest plan. Ms. Harper replied that they believe the plan before the BOS is the safest plan for the site. Mr. Brandt thanked Mr. Goldstein for pursuing this redevelopment. He questioned who would use the southern entrance. Ms. Harper replied that the southern entrance would be used by parents dropping off children. Mr. Mike Johnson, Goddard School, will be the manager of the site. He explained that they have staggered drop off and pick up times and do not function the same as a school in that regard. Mr. Brandt asked what the projected enrollment was for the facility. Mr. Johnson responded that they anticipate 130-140 students. Ms. McNeely asked about flashing signs similar to school zone signs. Mr. Todd explained that those signs are for schools and that PennDot has to approve that. Mr. Chad Dixon, Township Traffic Engineer, explained that those signs are typically for schools K-12, private or public, and not daycare centers. Mr. Dixon was asked his opinion on the plan. Mr. Dixon replied that there isn't a clear answer, risk associated with all options but he does feel that what is

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proposed appears to be satisfactory. The one-way design may be fine too. He continued that the southern driveway entrance has limited sight distance so what is proposed is all you can do there. Ms. Duckett suggested adding a new driveway more central to the site. Ms. Harper replied that they did look at that but it didn't work with the sight distances. Ms. Harper continued that they were hoping for an approval this evening. Mr. Grey requested feedback from the Township Engineer, Jim Hersh. Mr. Hersh said that he was supportive of the application as they will have to comply with the items outlined in the review letter and he agreed with all of the waivers requested. Mr. Dixon concurred. Ms. Duckett asked if all of the comments from the Planning Commission were included in the approval resolution. Mr. Amey replied that the comments were all addressed and the PC was supportive through their recommendation for approval to the BOS. Mr. Mark Schafer, resident, commented that if there were any future development across the street, they would need to accommodate this development because it would be complete. Ms. Debra Schaffer, resident, questioned the number of parking spaces allocated to staff. Mr. Todd replied that there were 20 separate parking spaces for staff and overflow if needed. Mr. Stein directed the applicant's representative to acknowledge their approval of the resolution as presented prior to the BOS taking action on the application. Ms. Harper said that her client was comfortable with the resolution, although he questioned the calculation of the landscaping item. Mr. Hersh explained the calculation. The applicant agreed to the terms of the resolution. Mr. Brandt made a motion to grant preliminary/final approval to the Goddard School Bethlehem Pike LLC Land Development #21-01 with the conditions discussed. Ms. Duckett seconded the motion and the motion passed. 4-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

Appoint Jamie Worman as Township Right-to-Know Officer

Ms. Duckett made a motion to appoint the Assistant Township Manager, Jamie Worman, as the Township's Right-To-Know Officer. The position is vacant due to the recent retirement of Carole Culbreth. Mr. Brandt seconded the motion. The motion passed. 4-0.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Chairman opened the meeting for public comment for items not on the agenda. Mr. Mark Schafer questioned a recent social media issue that dealt with a political ad noting involvement by the Township. Mr. Brandt replied that there was a political ad that mistakenly listed the Township as the sponsor. The candidate was made aware and subsequently took the ad down. He continued that he suggested a two-line disclaimer prepared by the Township Solicitor be posted to the Township site to clarify that the Township was not involved. Ms. Duckett added that the two-line statement was to be added to a statement that she had prepared. She continued that she proposed clarifying language to the entire board identifying the page, who did it, and that it was done in error. Both Mr. Brandt and Ms. McNeely agreed with this statement. The statement went up and then it was taken down. Ms. Duckett questioned why it was put up and then taken down if the majority of the BOS agreed. Ms. Duckett expressed her belief that this was about good governance. Discussion about supporting the statement ensued. Ms. McNeely read the statement proposed by Ms. Duckett and the additional language provided by the Township Solicitor. Mr. Grey requested that the three statements be displayed. Mr. Grey reviewed the statements offered by Ms. Duckett, Mr. Stein, and himself. Mr. Grey replied that the statement to be posted was untrue as it acknowledged him as the person who posted the ad and listed

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the Township as the sponsor. He was unaware of the ad and was not responsible for the information contained within it. Mr. Grey stated that he was withdrawing his statement and no longer wished to have that posted as the disclaimer for the Township. Mr. Stein advised the BOS that if they wish to make a motion, they will need to first agree to amend the agenda to include this motion. Ms. Duckett made a motion to amend the agenda. Ms. McNeely seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0. Ms. Duckett then made a motion to post the disclaimer language provided by the Township Solicitor to the website and social media sites. Mr. Brandt seconded the motion. The motion passed. 4-0.

Anaya Carter-Duckett offered suggestions based on her knowledge of social media to avoid things of this nature from reoccurring. Mr. Grey noted he does not have a FB page. Ms. Carter-Duckett explained that even if he doesn't have a page, his name and likeness are associated with it.

Mr. Schaffer felt there was no question that Mr. Grey would not have supported this type of post. He could see both points of view as some statements were taken out of context. He apologized for bringing it up.

SUPERVISORS COMMENTS

Mr. Brandt recognized Kathy Morris for all of her hard work with the Fall Fest. He noted his disappointment in the lack of musical presentation from the school district.

Ms. Duckett commended the Police Department on their Law Enforcement Treatment Initiative (LETI) training. We are one of the first municipalities in this portion of PA that are participating in this. This training allows for people with substance abuse issue to seek treatment rather than getting arrested. Ms. Duckett stated that this is a great initiative and she is really glad that six officers went through the training and hopefully all of the officer will get the opportunity.

Mr. Grey thanked Chief Kenny on the LETI training, he was not aware. He also thanked Kathy Morris as well. Mr. Grey also commented on the importance of ethics to this Township. He continued that the Township needs to gain and retain the trust of its citizens.

There being no further questions or comments, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. until the next meeting scheduled for October 18, 2021 at the Lower Gwynedd Township Building and virtually.

Respectfully submitted,

Jamie Worman
Assistant Township Manager