

**LOWER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2025**

SUPERVISORS:

Danielle A. Duckett, Chairman
Michael Twersky, Vice Chair
Janine Martin
Tessie McNeely-via zoom
Jimmy Chong

STAFF:

Mimi Gleason, Township Manager
Jamie Worman, Assistant Township Manager
Michelle Farzetta, Office Manager
Neil Stein, Esq., Solicitor
Fred Zollers, Director Public Works
Paul Kenny, Police Chief
Jim Hersh, Township Engineer, Gilmore
Chad Dixon, Traffic Engineer, Bowman Company
Melinda Haldeman, Finance Director
John Farrell, Project Manager/EMC

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

The Chair called the hybrid meeting to order at 7:05pm at the Lower Gwynedd Township Building and virtually on Zoom and led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

The Board of Supervisors (BOS) met in an executive session February 24, 2025, and prior to tonight's meeting to discuss matters of real estate, and litigation.

The Lower Gwynedd Environmental Advisory Council is hosting a community battery and techno trash recycling event at the Township Building on Saturday, March 8th from 9 am-11 am.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There was no public comment.

BUILDING AND ZONING

Presentation by the applicant for 821 N. Bethlehem Pike's Zoning Hearing Board application

The parcel at 821 N. Bethlehem Pike is zoned in the D-Business District. This parcel is a retail strip along Bethlehem Pike with three structures in the back leased to independent businesses. Two of the buildings are used for storage and the third is being used for storage, as well as a rental car business. The applicant and tenant are scheduled for a hearing at the March 13th Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB) meeting. They are seeking the necessary relief to continue running their business. The applicant and

tenant are asking the BOS to consider a list of conditions to be placed against the application in lieu of sending Mr. Stein in opposition to the application. Mr. Stein is providing a stipulation agreement with the conditions for the BOS to review. Peter Friedman was in attendance representing both the applicant and tenant, Bob Beckett. Mr. Beckett, who runs Action International, explained his business as a ride share with no staff on site. Twelve cars are stored there with lock boxes in use. Improvements have been made to the property, and it is now a holding facility for vehicles. Dick Stanton, 321 Arbor Lane, stated that he lives near this business, and it causes no problems. Matthew Kiley, 849 Foxfield Road, asked for clarification of the issue. Mr. Kiley attended the previous BOS meeting also asking for clarification of the notification process for the ZHB applications. The BOS stated the mailings are sent out to those who are within 500 feet of the property, information is posted on the website and in the newspaper. The BOS listened to the information provided, but no motion was made on the item by the BOS at this time.

Discussion about the feedback received from the January 30th open house about the apartments and retail proposed for the Spring House Corporate Center on Norristown Road

John Farrell provided a detailed presentation on the feedback gathered at the January 30th open house for the proposed apartments and retail at the Spring House Corporate Center. Mr. Farrell emphasized the BOS's efforts to gather accurate information and address concerns. Mr. Farrell explained the status of the property, the proposed redevelopment plan, and the potential benefits and impacts on the community. There are currently two office buildings on the property, one would remain and the other would be torn down and replaced with an apartment building.

The zoning amendment proposal for 321 Norristown Road includes redeveloping the almost vacant office building into a mixed-use project with 350 apartments and 46,000 sq. ft. of retail space. The BOS reminded everyone that their developments would not exist without zoning changes. Concerns raised included traffic impacts, density, single point of ingress and egress, traffic issues, emergency access, the impact on the school district and the appropriateness of the location. Al Comly the Fire Marshal assured adequate fire safety measures, and Chad Dixon, the Township's Traffic Engineer, confirmed ongoing traffic studies, but also mentioned that PennDOT would have the final say, as they have control over Norristown Road. The developer, BET Investments, responded by revising the plan to increase setbacks and add emergency access. The BOS mentioned that the development aligns with the township's comprehensive plan, which includes mixed-use rentals, as requested in the surveys sent out.

Many residents attended the meeting to provide their input on the proposed project. Suggestions were a smaller number of apartments, including walking trails to blend the development of the community, looking at other options for the property, and looking at the long-term effects of developments that have been built and are being built in the surrounding area.

The BOS has three options for the rezoning, scheduling a public hearing, stopping the ordinance process, or exploring revisions to the proposed ordinance. Ms. Duckett stated that information about this project, examples of traffic studies, as well as feedback from the comprehensive plan surveys would be posted on the website in the coming weeks. Ms. Duckett then made a motion to have BET make some amendments to the design based on the feedback received so that it will fit better within the township. Ms. Martin seconded the motion. Motion passed 4-0. (Mr. Twersky recused himself)

GENERAL BUSINESS

Consider approval of the text for the following historical markers

The Historic Advisory Committee (HAC) has recommended text for historical markers for Bethlehem Baptist Church, Gwynedd Corners, the Penllyn School, Penllyn Village and Spring House Village. This item was tabled at the February 11, 2025, BOS meeting to allow for public review of the marker text on our website and social media. One comment was received from a resident regarding the marker for the Penllyn School. There is also a grant opportunity through the Hometown Heritage Marker Program to help fund the costs for purchasing and shipping the markers. The HAC will look into this with staff to see if it is a good fit for our markers. The BOS made individual motions for each marker.

- **Bethlehem Baptist Church – to be located at 225 Penllyn Blue Bell Pike (now China Grace Christian Church)** Carmina Taylor, a former resident of Penllyn mentioned that the proposed text for the marker is different from the current text on the temporary marker. Ms. Martin clarified that the temporary sign went up for the church’s anniversary celebration. This was prior to the HAC finalizing the permanent marker text. Ms. Duckett made a motion seconded by Ms. Martin to approve the Historical marker for Bethlehem Baptist Church. Motion passed 5-0.
- **Penllyn School** – There was a conversation about the word “equity” in the last sentence of the proposed text for this marker. Both Ms. Taylor and the resident that commented on the marker feel that “equality” would be a more appropriate word. Leola Hubbard, 920 Pershing Road also agreed that “equity” should be changed to “equality”. Gloria Jones, 1007 Pershing Road, and a member of the HAC, stated that all the information on the marker has been validated. She has spoken with three former students at the segregated school and the wording should remain as it is. Ms. Duckett mentioned that equality is the treatment of everyone the same, while equity is the provision of resources based on need. Both are related to fairness, but equity is more likely to lead to fair outcomes. There was a conversation regarding the wording with a motion to table this for a future meeting. Ms. Jones asked for this not to be tabled, as doing so would make this more complicated. Ms. Duckett made a motion to change the wording of the last sentence from “equity” to “equality”, seconded by Ms. Martin. Motion passed 5-0.
- **Penllyn Village**- There were no questions or comments about this marker. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. Martin to approve the Historical Marker for Penllyn Village. Motion passed 5-0.
- **Spring House Village** - There were no questions or comments about this marker. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. Martin to approve the Historical Marker for Spring House Village. Motion passed 5-0.
- **Gwynedd Corners** -Ms. Duckett announced that this marker will be tabled due to a word choice in the proposed marker. More research is going to be done to validate the information. Ms. Martin made a motion, seconded by Ms. McNeely to table the approval of this marker. Motion passed 5-0.

Resolution #2025-09 Authorizing submission of Montco 2040 Implementation Grant Program application for the Marion Avenue Culvert Replacement Project in the amount of \$66,740.

February 25, 2025

Township staff are requesting approval for the submission of a Montco 2040 Implementation Grant for the Marion Avenue Culvert Replacement Project. The grant would be \$66,740 with a township match of \$16,620 with a total project cost of \$83,090. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky, to authorize the submission of the Montco 2040 Grant application for the Marion Avenue Culvert project in the amount of \$66,740.00. Motion passed 5-0.

Consider license agreement for Parsons Glenn open space

The Parson Glenn Community Association has been performing the maintenance to the open space on Parsons Lane. This agreement, prepared by our Township Solicitor, Mr. Stein, will allow the HOA to continue maintaining this space. There were no questions or comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chong to approve the licensing agreement with Parsons Glenn Community Association. Motion passed 5-0.

Finance Director's Year in Review for 2024

Ms. Duckett thanked Ms. Haldeman for all her work and tabled this item until the next meeting.

Approval of invoice report-February 25,2025

The BOS received the invoice report for checks dated February 25, 2025, totaling \$276,075.73. There were no questions or comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. Martin to approve the invoices dated February 25, 2025. Motion passed 5-0.

Township Engineer Report - February 2025

The BOS received the February 2025 report from Gilmore and Associates. There were no questions or comments.

Traffic Engineer Report - February 2025

The BOS received Bowman's report for February 2025. There were no questions or comments.

Approval of minutes - February 11, 2025

The BOS received the minutes from the February 11, 2025, BOS meeting. There were no questions or comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chong to approve the February 11, 2025, meeting minutes. Motion passed 5-0.

SUPERVISOR LIAISON REPORTS

The BOS received the liaison reports for the EAC and the Parks and Recreation Board. There were no questions or comments.

STAFF UPDATES

There were no updates from staff.

SUPERVISORS COMMENTS

Ms. Duckett thanked everyone who attended the meeting.

Board of Supervisors Minutes

February 25, 2025

Adjournment

Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky, to adjourn the meeting at 10:40pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Farzetta

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