

**MINUTES OF MEETING
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP**

The Board of Commissioners of Springfield Township met in regular monthly meeting on Wednesday evening, November 8, 2006 at 8:00 PM in the Springfield Township Building for the purpose of transacting the general business of the Township. All members of the Board were present. Mr. Standish presided.

Mr. Standish opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion (Schaum-Gillies) carried unanimously dispensing with the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting and approving same as written and recorded in the official Minute Book of the Township.

Mr. Standish announced that Jeff Hoffmann, of the Solicitor's office, would be substituting at the meeting for Sean Kilkenny, who had to attend to other business. Former Commissioner Jane Roberts was acknowledged in the audience.

Mr. Standish announced that at the conclusion of the business meeting, the Board would conduct a public hearing to consider amending the Springfield Township Zoning Code through proposed amendments to the AAA Residential Zoning District. Mr. Standish asked individuals who had questions or comments related to that topic to hold those comments until the public hearing.

John McGranaghan, 208 Penn Oak Road, thanked the Commissioners for their service the community. He acknowledged the interest of some to make a trail connection of Springfield Township to the Forbidden Drive trail in Philadelphia. His concern is where the trails are proposed adjacent to private property. He noted that in a recent presentation from a County representative, they indicated the trail was safe, but spoke of wanting to provide an easy escape for a trail user if they found themselves trapped between two portions of fencing. Mr. McGranaghan found those statements to conflict each other. Mr. McGranaghan asked that the Board be more assured as to the exact design of the Flourtown connector trail before agreeing to permit the construction of the trail. He also noted his concern with the construction of a Flourtown connector trail and how that may lead to the construction of the larger Cresheim trail. Mr. Standish indicated that the Board may consider voting on the concept of the construction of the Flourtown connector trail with more details to follow. Mr. Standish stated that he believes the Flourtown and Cresheim trails are separate projects. Mr. Dailey indicated there appears to be some confusion created by the Cresheim trail web page wherein it seems to read that the Township endorsed the trail, and not just the concept of the study. Ms. Lunn agreed that the Township had only endorsed the feasibility study. Ms. Lunn stated that she generally supports trails and agreed to serve on the steering committee for the Cresheim trail. She would follow up to provide clarification on the Township's position as posted on the Cresheim trail webpage. Mr. Gillies suggested that there were no Township funds involved in the Cresheim trail and he believes the scope of the trail has increased from the time the Township endorsed the feasibility study.

Leslie Graham, 1713 Newbold Lane, indicated that the Cresheim trail web page stated that LaSalle College High School, Westminster Seminary and Arcadia College supported the Cresheim trail. She is in the process of confirming same, but has confirmed that LaSalle has not supported the Cresheim trail. Ms. Graham acknowledged the conduct of two meetings related to the Cresheim trail, but there was no opportunity for public comment in order for the community to express their concerns for the construction of the trail. Ms. Graham was advised to contact the design architect, Bob Thomas, for details on the trail.

Auggie Scaffidi, 102 Penn Oak Road, inquired who would vote on the construction of the Flourtown connector trail. Mr. Standish indicated the Board of Commissioners planned to vote on the construction of the trail over Township-owned property and Township rights of way. Mr. Scaffidi suggested there was a rumor that the trail would be a revenue producing project for the Township. The Commissioners expressed no knowledge of same.

Peter Sharp, 104 Penn Oak Road, inquired whether the Township vote would involve the portion of the Flourtown trail adjacent to the Acme property. Mr. Standish indicated that portion of the trail was between the property owner and Montgomery County, and not an issue before the Board. With regard to the future of the Cresheim trail, Mr. Sharp inquired if the Board of Commissioners is opposed to the trail, why wouldn't they send that message to Montgomery County. In conclusion, Mr. Sharp expressed his concern that the trail would infringe upon wildlife, and would create future maintenance costs for the Township. Mr. Sharp stated he is concerned for the general safety of his family.

Coleen Scaffidi, 102 Penn Oak Road, also expressed concern for the safety of her family, and her displeasure that the local residents would need to sacrifice their lifestyle for others to utilize the trail.

Jim Ginuski, 110 Penn Oak Rd., stated his agreement with the previous speakers and elaborated on the safety concerns for neighboring properties of the proposed trails. Ms. Lunn suggested that the area is currently being used as an unofficial trail, and it was her impression that once improved it would be less of a hangout for less desirable activities.

Pam Quisito, 204 Penn Oak Rd., also agreed with the previous speakers. She is concerned that the Flourtown connector trail would be a vehicle for activities which would adversely affect the immediate neighbors. Current use is by local residents only and that is OK with her, but she is not interested in inviting others to utilize the trail. Her main concern is the ability for trail users to view down into the adjacent properties. Mr. Gillies asked whether her concern was with the Flourtown connector and connection into Buttonwood Road. Ms. Quisito indicated it was, but also the incremental improvements from the Flourtown trail to a larger trail.

Mr. Standish, Chairman of Internal Affairs Committee, reported:

Motion (Standish-Harbison) carried unanimously to approve the October check reconciliation in the amount of \$1,167,460.18 and the November bill listing in the amount of \$603,597.45.

Mr. Standish announced that the Board plans to present and adopt the 2007 budget according to the following schedule:

Budget Hearing	12/13/06	8:00 PM
Budget Adoption	12/19/06	8:00 PM

All meetings will be held in the Springfield Township Building.

Mr. Standish presented the preliminary budget for 2007 by indicating that the balanced operating budget was \$17,691.93 with a real estate tax rate of 3.440 mills, and an earned income tax rate of 1.0 %. As a result of the preliminary 2007 budget, the “typical” taxpayer might realize a net reduction of \$4.26 to the combined real estate tax and services fees. The 2007 budget proposes to maintain the real estate tax rate of 3.440 mills. The refuse service fee will be reduced by \$2.73 and the sanitary sewer rental will be reduced by an average of \$1.53 per household. Mr. Standish announced that the proposed 2007 budget would be made available for inspection in the office of the Township Manager and at the Library beginning 12:00 noon on November 10, 2006.

Mr. Gillies confirmed that the budget was a preliminary budget and that the Board will continue to discuss same. Mr. Gillies opined that there was additional movement available in the preliminary budget in the favor of Township residents.

Motion (Standish-Harbison) that the Board of Commissioners approve the concept of permitting Montgomery County to install the Flourtown connector trail within the Township right of way along both West Wissahickon Avenue and Mill Road, as well as constructing the trail over Township owned property known as the Bysher Avenue ballfields and a portion of the Flourtown Country Club. The approval would be subject to Springfield Township and Montgomery County entering into the requisite right of way and/or license agreements to permit the trail to be constructed as stated in this motion. Mr. Dailey asked that the Board of Commissioners consider the following comments that he received from area residents before the Township would enter into right of way agreements and/or license agreements:

1. The County provide a walk-thru tour of the proposed trail;
2. The County shall provide land survey information to provide assurance that the trail is being properly located;
3. A six foot privacy fence be installed adjacent to private property;
4. The Buttonwood Road leg be cindered and not paved;
5. The concerns related to all portions of the trail including West Wissahickon Avenue, Township property, Comly property, and Mill Road, be resolved;
6. The fence adjacent to the Flourtown Country Club be six feet in height and that a shorter fence be installed on the opposite side of the trail adjacent to the Flourtown Fire Company and the Comly property;
7. Disappointment in the process by which the County designed the trail without comments from the neighbors; and
8. Organizers of the Cresheim Trail project also secure public comments.

Mr. Gillies believes the residents provided compelling arguments against the Flourtown Trail. From the workshop meeting, he did note that some West Wissahickon Avenue residents were in favor and others were not, but that the trail would be located in the public sidewalk area in their front yards. He believes there is too much accommodation necessary to make the trail suitable and suggested that the Township indicate to the County that the Township is not interested in the Flourtown connector trail. Ms. Lunn indicated her understanding that a privacy fence would also be installed along a portion of the Black Horse Inn property in conjunction with the Flourtown connector trail. Mr. Dailey expressed his disappointment that he did not know of the plans to install a trail along West Wissahickon Avenue in the vicinity of the new Beneficial Bank. Ms. Lunn agreed and reviewed her thoughts that the bank was being built too close to West Wissahickon Avenue.

Motion (Schaum-Dailey) to table the vote on the Flourtown connector trail until such time as more information is made available to the public on the trail.

Ms. Lunn indicated that the Board tabled the vote last month in order to receive public comment. She expressed her concern that Montgomery County would pull their support of the Flourtown trail. She did acknowledge there were valid comments made with regard to security along the trail. Mr. Harbison stated he would like to vote on the trail concept, but does believe the concerns outlined by Mr. Dailey need to be addressed. Mr. Standish noted that the first motion presented was not to approve the trail, but asked for more definition of the details, and indeed the public comments received need to be incorporated into a final approval.

Vote on the motion to table the vote on the Flourtown connector trail was: in favor Dailey, Gillies, Schaum; opposed, Harbison, Lunn, Peirce, Standish. Vote on approving the Flourtown connector trail subject to right of way and/or license agreements: in favor, Harbison, Lunn, Peirce, Standish; opposed Dailey, Gillies, Schaum.

Mr. Schaum, Chairman of Public Safety Committee, reported:

Motion (Schaum-Gillies) carried unanimously to amend the Springfield Township Code Section 107-35, Schedule XII, Special Purpose Parking, by establishing a handicapped parking space on the southern side of New Street located at a point 155 feet easterly of its intersection with Pleasant Avenue to a point 22 feet easterly thereof.

Mr. Gillies, Chairman of Library Committee, reported:

Mr. Gillies announced that there is an opening on the Board of Directors of the Free Library of Springfield Township. Any resident interested in serving on the Library Board should send a letter of interest or a Resume to the Board of Commissioners, c/o Township Manager, at the Springfield Township Building.

Mrs. Lunn, Chairwoman of Community Development and Environmental Resources Committee, reported:

Mrs. Lunn announced that Springfield Township residents recycled 213.8 tons of materials with a householder participation rate of 81.5%. The net cost for the month was \$5,366.08.

Mrs. Lunn encouraged residents to participate in the Township leaf reclamation program by placing their leaves and all yard and garden debris in the approved biodegradable paper bags for collection on their regular refuse collection day. Mrs. Lunn reviewed the benefits of participating in the program and identified locations where the biodegradable bags may be purchased.

Motion (Lunn-Peirce) carried unanimously to accept a letter dated November 3, 2006 from Michael W. Cassidy, Esq., counsel for the Danny Jake Corporation, extending the 90 day subdivision plan review period without limitation as to time. The subject subdivision is also known as the Boorse tract, 10 Camp Hill Road.

Mrs. Peirce, Chairwoman of Communications and Cultural Resources Committee, reported:

Motion (Peirce-Lunn) carried unanimously to engage Toole Recreation Planning, of Doylestown, to assist Springfield Township in the creation of a Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan consistent with the Township-issued Request for Proposal and the Toole proposal dated July 20, 2006. The cost for the engagement is \$50,000. The Township previously received a grant valued at \$25,000 from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Toole Recreation Planning was selected from four proposals and received the recommendation of the Township Park and Recreation Advisory Committee, and the Director of Parks and Recreation, and was approved by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Ms. Lunn asked if, as a part of the study, the Township would create a study group to help create the comprehensive plan. Ms. Peirce answered in the affirmative.

Mr. Dailey, Chairman of Zoning Committee, reported:

Mr. Dailey announced that the Zoning Hearing Board would next meet on November 27, 2006 at 7:00 PM in the Springfield Township Building. Mr. Dailey alerted all that the meeting is being held on the fourth Monday of the month, as opposed to the customary third Monday of the month. Mr. Dailey summarized the Zoning Hearing Board agenda. Mr. Dailey inquired whether the Board was interested in asking the Township Solicitor to attend the Zoning Hearing Board meeting related to Flourtown Offices LLC, 1408 Bethlehem Pike. Ms. Lunn indicated that she reviewed the site and would like the Solicitor in attendance. Mr. Standish suggested that perhaps the Planning Commission might help resolve the landscaping issues on the applicant's plans.

Motion (Lunn-Standish), vote in favor: Harbison, Lunn, Peirce, Standish; opposed - Dailey, Gillies, Schaum, to suggest to the Zoning Hearing Board that Flourtown Offices LLC visit the Planning Commission with regard to their proposal.

Mr. Harbison, Chairman of Public Works and Facilities Committee, reported:

Motion (Harbison-Gillies) carried unanimously to waive the formal land development review process for the proposed parking lot improvements dated November 6, 2006, as prepared by Boucher & James Inc., and the addition and renovation to the existing club house building as prepared by D-2 Solutions Inc., dated November 3, 2006. The waiver is subject to the comments to be received by the Springfield Township Planning Commission as a result of their review scheduled for November 21, 2006. Mr. Harbison provided a brief summary of the improvements and the process by which the improvements would be approved.

Jane Roberts, 1106 Churchill Road, addressed the Board. Mrs. Roberts indicated that she understands the concerns of families that may live adjacent to the trails, and that those concerns as stated are not unique to other trails that have been proposed. She suggested that not all residents are opposed to the proposed trail. The current trail is not accessible for public use or policing, and that those activities help curtail negative activities on the trails.

Neil Schofield, Downs Road, indicated that he is not interested in the Flourtown connector trail being constructed. He understands the stated concerns for safety and suggested that the Board listen to the local residents with regard to their concerns.

Coleen Scaffidi, 102 Penn Oak Rd., readdressed the Board and asked if the surroundings of other trails were the same as the surroundings of the Flourtown connector trail.

Neil Schofield, Downs Road, readdressed the Board with regard to the proposed 2007 budget. He asked if the Township might attempt to maintain the 2006 budget levels.

John McGranaghan, 208 Penn Oak Road, readdressed the Board and noted that the Township leaf mulch contains bugs and wondered if the Township might address same.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald E. Berger, Jr.
Secretary

DEB:cmh

