

MINUTES OF MEETING
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP

The Board of Commissioners of Springfield Township met in regular monthly meeting on Wednesday evening, July 11, 2007, at 8:10 PM in the Springfield Township Building for the purpose of transacting the general business of the Township. All members of the Board were present. Mrs. Lunn presided. A Court reporter was present at the meeting.

Mrs. Lunn opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion (Schaum-Peirce) 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.

Mrs. Lunn recognized past Commissioners Robert McGrory and Jane Roberts, who were in attendance at the meeting.

Special Reports - None.

Correspondence - None.

Mr. Paul Trembl, formerly of Springfield Township, now residing in the Pittsburgh area, addressed the Board of Commissioners and read from a prepared statement. Mr. Trembl stated that he is a survivor of childhood sexual abuse as perpetrated by Joseph Axford, of Oreland, from 1972 - 1975. Mr. Trembl was a resident of Oreland and was working with Mr. Axford, who was the Director of Parks and Recreation for Springfield Township. Several locations, both publicly and privately owned, were identified as locations where the abuse took place. Mr. Trembl indicated that he reached out to another individual who stated he too was abused by Mr. Axford, but this individual was not as comfortable speaking publicly about his abuse. In January 1994, Mr. Trembl confronted Mr. Axford in his residence in the Upper Dublin section of Oreland. Mr. Trembl stated that Mr. Axford offered no rebuttal to the confrontation. Mr. Trembl met with both the Springfield Township and Upper Dublin Township police departments and provided statements regarding the earlier alleged criminal acts. Mr. Trembl stated that he also underwent a polygraph test, which indicated his statements were truthful. The concern for Mr. Axford's access to Springfield Township facilities was brought to the attention of the Township Manager, Don Berger, in the Fall of 1993. Subsequent to that meeting, Mr. Berger requested and received correspondence from Mr. Axford stating that he would remove himself from recreational activities within Springfield Township. Based upon information provided to and from attorneys for both Springfield Township and the Trembls, the Trembls were under the understanding that the Township had severed contacts with Mr. Axford. On June 25, 2007, the Trembls received a phone call from a local family member indicating that the Oreland Park had been dedicated in the name of Joseph Axford. At the request of the Trembls, the Township removed the new park sign on the premise that the park would remain as the Oreland Park. Mr. Trembl suggested he felt

that what he had done in 1993/94 would have caused the Township to sever contacts with Mr. Axford in the future. In conclusion, Mr. Treml indicated his goal was to share this information with the community and let others know that sexual abuse is survivable. Mr. Treml urged anyone who may need help, to do so immediately. (Mr. Treml's complete written statement is available through the office of the Township Manager)

Ms. Colleen Treml, wife of Paul Treml, asked those in attendance to feel free to contact them about any information discussed at the meeting. Mrs. Treml also presented documents from 1993-1994 to the Court Reporter. Two representatives from the Montgomery County Victim Services were introduced and these individuals had materials on means to seek help and counseling.

Mr. Kilkenny, Township Solicitor, thanked Mr. and Mrs. Treml for coming before the Board of Commissioners and sharing the troubling information. He indicated that the Board had placed on the agenda a resolution suspending the Board's prior resolution renaming Oreland Park. He noted that as legal counsel he advised the Board not to comment on the issues raised by the Tremls. Mr. Kilkenny stated that the Board of Commissioners is zealously committed to protecting the children of Springfield Township. The Board directed his office and Township staff to explore broadening current policy of background investigations for individuals working for the Township who work with children such as in parks and recreation, library employees, and individuals or leagues who wish to utilize Township recreational facilities. Additionally, a new policy in conjunction with more rigorous permitting processes for those individuals and/or leagues who wish to utilize the Township's facilities will be considered.

Bruce Kullman, 302 Lyster Road, suggested he was not interested in the Township assessing residents for the cost of improvements to the Black Horse Inn building. Mr. Kullman believed there should be more opportunity for public input on the construction project.

Luann Phillips Carroll, 1775 Fort Washington Avenue, Maple Glen, indicated she lived in Oreland as a child through young adult-hood and was a neighbor of Paul Treml. Ms. Carroll was present at the meeting to vouch for Mr. Treml's character. Ms. Carroll believed that any statements made by Mr. Treml were truthful. She applauded the Tremls for coming forward to help protect the children of Springfield Township and asked the Township to take necessary steps to see that the abuse will not occur again.

Neil Schofield, 816 Downs Road, indicated his belief that the Township was complacent with regard to taking action against Mr. Axford. He commended the Tremls for actions taken in 1993 and believes the Township must take responsibility for any potential problems that have occurred over the past 14 years. Mrs. Lunn indicated that the current Board of Commissioners had been elected long after these issues were brought to the attention of the Board of Commissioners. Mrs. Treml agreed the current Board had no knowledge of the situation.

Ms. Young, 400 Hemlock Road, asked if the Township had performed any due diligence before the erection of the Joseph Axford Park sign. Mr. Kilkenny indicated that

the Township received a petition/request from the community desiring the renaming of the park.

Maria Lepps, 221 Lyster Road, expressed her concerns with the tax dollars being directed to the renovation project at the Black Horse Inn. Ms. Lepps indicated her belief that the costs of the project should be solely through private donations.

David Cerami, formerly of 25 Park Avenue, Orelan, indicated his belief that the Board of Commissioners had previous knowledge of Mr. Axford's activities. Mr. Cerami suggested that the Board of Commissioners review past activities of past boards. He also thought it might be appropriate to provide direct notice to families of those currently participating in recreation programs managed by Mr. Axford.

Harry Ledwith, 501 Enfield Road, indicated he personally participated in the athletic programs in the past and had no issues with Mr. Axford, nor did he ever hear of any related problems. Mr. Ledwith did not feel it was appropriate to demonize individuals. Mr. Ledwith asked how the Township planned to fund the Black Horse Inn renovation project currently, and in the future. He expressed his appreciation for the value of the Black Horse Inn, but did not believe the burden for financing the project should be placed on all residents. He thought that a referendum might be an appropriate means to decide funding issues. The Township Solicitor indicated that there are very limited categories of questions that can be placed on a referendum and did not think this type of question was appropriate.

Neil Schofield, 816 Downs Road, readdressed the Board. Mr. Schofield suggested he believed that, when Mr. Schaum presided, Mr. Schaum indicated that no additional Township tax dollars would be spent on the Black Horse Inn project. Mr. Schofield said the position of the Board must have changed. He expressed his understanding that grants had been received to help pay for the Black Horse Inn renovations, but that indeed the Township must spend the money and provide matches for the grants. In that regard, he believed there was a Township budget line item of \$675,000.

James Gordon, 106 Ulmer Avenue, indicated he thought it was ridiculous to spend funds to renovate the Black Horse Inn. He suggested that there was very little interest in the building for many years until it was to be demolished for development.

Robert McGrory, 501 East Mill Road, asked what the total value is for the renovation project. It was his understanding that the cost varied between \$2.4 and \$2.6 million depending upon whether an apartment would be included in the project. Mr. McGrory reviewed the value of the grants vs. the value of private assistance provided towards the renovation project. He expressed his concern for the costs of awarding a contract even if reduced to \$1,035,000. He noted his personal experience with his own residence, which is historic in nature, and the costs associated with maintaining his home. He noted that the Township was asked to save the Black Horse Inn building, which it did, but there was no mandate to spend any additional funds on the building.

Mike Adams, 308 Lyster Road, stated that he was glad the Black Horse Building was saved, but is concerned with the Township spending funds to renovate the building.

Neil Schofield, 816 Downs Road, addressed the Board once again and inquired whether the Township had the funds necessary to move forward with phase 2 of the renovations. Mrs. Lunn indicated that the Township did have those funds. Mr. Schofield inquired whether the Township would utilize additional capital funds in the future. Mrs. Lunn indicated that the Township had not created a plan in that regard. Mr. Schofield inquired whether uses had been identified for the building. He was told that currently, there were plans for offices and space for the Historical Society.

Andrew Glendinning, 916 Andorra Road, stated that he is a member of the Black Horse Inn Advisory Committee. He reviewed his early interest in the renovation of the building for the good of the neighborhood. Mr. Glendinning indicated that he is excited about the future of the building including the prospects of the requisite fundraising.

Mary Anne Griffin, 38 West Mill Road, stated that she is a member of the Friends of Historic Bethlehem Pike and discussed the importance of the renovation of the Black Horse Inn building, but adds importance to the efforts of the Flourtown Erdenheim Enhancement Association and other Bethlehem Pike revitalization efforts.

Jane Roberts, 1106 Churchill Road, indicated that she is a former Township Commissioner and also a member of the Friends of Historic Bethlehem Pike. Mrs. Roberts is also very concerned with the use of taxpayer funds. When revitalized, the Black Horse Inn should produce income to the benefit of the community. She is astonished with the private fundraising effort to date and noted that the renovation project had been discussed for many years and did not believe anyone should be surprised by the current plan to renovate the building.

Bruce Kullman, 302 Lyster Road, indicated his interest in understanding the business before the Board of Commissioners and what they will vote on with regard to the Black Horse Inn building. He is not taking away from any efforts of those working on the Black Horse Inn project. He wished to state that he did not want any of his tax money being spent on the project.

Mr. Gillies stated that he believes over the course of time, there is a more clear understanding of the funding requirements by the Township. Mr. Berger was asked to review the costs associated with phase 1, 2 and 3 of the renovation project. Mrs. Lunn reviewed the Township funding to date which included \$225,000 cash expenditures as well as a \$350,000 pledged match to receive the State appropriation of \$500,000.

Mr. Dailey expressed his concern with funding sources for the phase 3 improvements, and if those funds are not available for phase 3, what would occur.

Robert McGrory, 501 East Mill Road, stated that the first architectural firm hired by the Township, Kise, Straw, and Kolodner, performed an historic significance assessment of the Black Horse Inn building. The architects discussed historical

significance in the terms of age, who may have lived in the building, or designers of the building. The architects regretfully indicated that the Black Horse Inn had only one criteria, that being age. Mr. McGrory indicated that approximately \$1,000 per square foot to renovate the building is a lot of money for any renovation. Mr. McGrory suggested that the Black Horse Inn building be warehoused until someone outside of the Township provides the requisite funding to renovate the building.

William Supplee, 19 Bridge Street, opined that saving the Black Horse Inn building was a good idea, however, he was concerned with the costs associated with the renovation. Rather than direct funds to the renovation project, he suggested redirecting the funds to the improvement of Township parks. Mr. Supplee asked how the renovations might benefit Township residents and suggested that the information on the renovation project was not communicated well to the community.

Mrs. Lunn, Chairwoman of Internal Affairs and Environmental Resources Committee, reported:

Motion (Lunn-Gillies) carried unanimously to approve the June check reconciliation in the amount of \$676,452.79 and the July bill listing in the amount of \$886,459.77.

Mrs. Lunn announced that Springfield Township residents recycled 240.1 tons of materials with a householder participation rate of 82%. The net savings for the month was \$219.46.

Motion (Lunn-Peirce) carried unanimously authorizing letters be sent to locally elected State officials asking that they support the creation of a State-wide sex offender law. Mrs. Lunn indicated that both the State House of Representatives and the Senate are considering bills establishing the State-wide law creating child protection zones.

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

Motion (Schaum-Gillies) carried unanimously to appoint Abramo "Abe" Capace to the position of police patrol sergeant.

Motion (Schaum-Harbison) carried unanimously to appoint Rebecca Mersky to the position of police patrol corporal.

Mr. Schaum noted it was the pleasure of the Board of Commissioners to interview six members of the Township Police Department for the two positions. The Commissioners congratulated all the candidates on their successes to date and thanked them for their service to the community.

Motion (Schaum-Lunn) carried unanimously to reappoint Peter Wilson, Tom McClelland and Jennifer French to new three year terms of service as members of

the Springfield Township Shade Tree Commission. The new terms of service shall expire July 13, 2010.

Mr. Gillies, Chairman of Library Committee, reported:

Mr. Gillies announced that the Springfield Township Library will be receiving three significant pieces of furniture and equipment to be installed in early August. The equipment includes a main circulation desk, a reference desk, and furniture required to create the community access computer bank. It was decided that it would be safer and more efficient to close the library from August 2 through August 15 in order to install the equipment. Mr. Gillies outlined the means by which residents might still have access to materials within the Township library.

Mr. Standish, Chairman of Community Development Committee, had no report.

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

Motion (Peirce-Harbison) to award a contract to Smith Construction Inc., of Bensalem, PA, for their low bid base price of \$1,390,000, with the application of six deduct alternates, reducing the price to \$1,151,900, plus the value engineering report provided by Smith Construction Inc., dated June 19, 2007, as revised, but retaining the new floor framing above room #107, further reducing the price by \$116,578, for a contract net bid price of \$1,035,322.

Mr. Gillies inquired whether the Board was going to first approve the funding thresholds for phase #3 prior to awarding the contract for phase #2. Mr. Gillies asked to amend Ms. Peirce's motion for the construction of phase #2 contingent upon the Board approving the cost and funding plan as outlined by the Black Horse Inn Advisory Committee, but revised on July 11, 2007, by the Board of Commissioners, with a total project cost of \$2,673,000. Mr. Gillies had previously presented Board members with a copy of his financial spreadsheet.

Ms. Peirce did not accept Mr. Gillies' amendment to her original motion. Mr. Dailey asked why the Township would not set benchmarks for future fundraising related to future phases of construction of the Black Horse Inn project. Mr. Dailey reviewed the project costs and fundraising projections for phases 2 and 3.

Motion (Schaum-Gillies) to table Ms. Peirce's motion to award a contract to Smith Construction Inc. Vote: 4-3, Harbison, Lunn, Peirce opposed. Motion approved.

Mr. Gillies asked if Ms. Peirce would entertain an amendment to her original motion, that in phase 3 there would be no Township contributions to the construction and would require a payback of \$200,000 to the Township from private funding sources for construction phases 1 and 2. Ms. Peirce did not accept the amendment. Mr. Gillies inquired whether Ms. Peirce would entertain an amendment to original motion that as a part of phase 3 construction, no Township funds would be contributed and that the

payback to the Township for construction phases 1 and 2 would be between \$0 and \$200,000. Ms. Peirce did not accept the amendment. Mr. Dailey asked why it was not appropriate to make a commitment of future Township funding towards phase 3 of the construction project. Ms. Peirce suggested she was not interested in binding future Township boards in their ability to fund the project. Ms. Lunn indicated that the Black Horse Inn structure was a Township cultural and historic asset and, as a Township asset, has real value to the community. Mr. Harbison suggested that the issue was not completely a financial decision and that it is important to respect the history of the Township. The Township cannot save all the old buildings, and therefore, there is a need to make sound financial decisions. Mr. Harbison did not believe that boarding up the building for future renovation efforts was appropriate, nor should the Board bind future Boards based on current Board decisions. He did believe it was important to set benchmarks and appreciates having 50% of the funds available before moving forward with any future phases of construction. Mr. Gillies expressed his concern for the potential of reappropriating funds from the Township capital reserve fund in order to move the construction project along. He believes it is necessary to create a check valve for how much the Township will contribute to phase 3 construction at the Black Horse Inn.

Mr. Schaum stated that he believes that an earlier comment attributed to him wherein he stated the Township was limiting the funding from the capital reserve account for this project, and that the Township would be reimbursed from outside sources was correct.

Motion (Peirce-Lunn) vote 4-3, Daily, Gillies, Schaum opposed, to adopt a business plan for the Black Horse Inn dated July 2, 2007, revised July 6, 2007, including four tables. The tables are summarized as (1) project development costs, (2) project fundraising, (3) projected operating income and expenses, and (4) projected annual income statement. Prior to considering additional renovations such as the potential phase 3 "interior improvements", a minimum of 50% of the additional required funding must be received or under contract prior to the Township proceeding with the renovations.

Motion (Peirce-Harbison) vote 5-2, Daily and Schaum opposed, to award a contract to Smith Construction Inc. of Bensalem, PA, for their low bid price of \$1,390,000, with the application of six deduct alternates, reducing the price to \$1,151,900, plus the value engineering report provided by Smith Construction Inc., dated June 19, 2007, as revised, but retaining the new floor framing above room #107, reducing the price by \$116,578 for a contract net bid price of \$1,035,322.

Motion (Peirce-Schaum) carried unanimously to create an alternate member position on the Black Horse Inn Advisory Committee. The alternate position shall function similar to all other alternate positions on Township advisory committees. In summary, the alternate member participates in all discussions of the committee, but may only cast an official vote when one of the full members is absent or unable to participate in the official vote.

Motion (Peirce-Schaum) carried unanimously to appoint Monroe Buckner, Weiss Avenue, as the alternate member on the Black Horse Inn Advisory Committee.

Motion (Peirce-Harbison) carried unanimously to suspend the adoption of Resolution No. 1152, a resolution that renamed Oreland Park, on Alison Road, in Oreland.

Mr. Dailey, Chairman of Zoning Committee, reported:

Mr. Dailey announced that the Zoning Hearing Board was scheduled to next meet on Monday evening, July 16, 2007, at 7:00 PM in the Springfield Township Building. Mr. Dailey summarized the Zoning Hearing Board agenda.

Motion (Dailey-Standish) carried unanimously authorizing the office of the Township Solicitor to represent the interest of the Board of Commissioners in opposition to the Zoning Hearing Board petition of Whole Life Charter School, of 1033 Arboretum Road, Wyncote. The Charter School is requesting a variance to permitted uses within the D Residential Zoning District, and a variance to the required number of off-street parking spaces from 43 to 7. Whole Life Charter School is interested in leasing a portion of the Grace Lutheran Church, located at 801 E. Willow Grove Avenue, to operate a charter school.

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

Motion (Harbison-Schaum) carried unanimously to authorize the sale of three retired police vehicles, two snow plow hitches, one sandblasting cabinet, and one riding lawn mower, at the Montgomery County Consortium of Communities public auction to be held at the Danella Construction yard in Norristown, on August 4, 2007.

Richard Myer, Upper Dublin Township resident, asked if the Township had any experience in other preservation projects similar to the Black Horse Inn. He was pleased that the Township was remaining involved in the renovation project.

John Alviti, 7-B Grove Avenue, indicated that he has read articles that “destination” structures are important to historical structures. The destination structures tend to reflect the common people of that era.

Mike Adams, 308 Lyster Road, indicated that he did not wish to discount the preservation effort at the Black Horse Inn, but believes it is important to create financial benchmarks with regard to the preservation projects.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald E. Berger, Jr.
Secretary