

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

The Board of Commissioners of Springfield Township met in regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, June 10, 2009 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. Harbison presided.

Mr. Harbison asked everyone to join the Board of Commissioners in a moment of silence honoring the service men and women who have placed themselves in harm's way in order to help preserve our safety.

Mr. Harbison led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion (Schaum-Standish) 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. Harbison recognized past Commissioner Jane Roberts in the audience.

Special Announcement

Mr. Harbison announced that the Board of Commissioners would be receiving a formal presentation on the status of the Cresheim Trail from Robert Thomas of Campbell Thomas and Company, the consultant hired by the trail committee. For the convenience of those in attendance for business other than the trail, the Commissioners would conduct their first public comment period before the presentation on the trail, and conduct a comment period with regard to the trail as a part of that presentation. No public comments were received on general Township business.

Mr. Harbison then introduced Robert Thomas, of Campbell Thomas & Co. Robert Thomas and James Innes, Chair of the Cresheim Trail committee, addressed those in attendance. Mr. Thomas noted that while the Cresheim Trail is not a County trail it is noted on the Montgomery County trail network map. Mr. Thomas provided a very brief overview of a variety of trails that are either complete or in some state of progress throughout Montgomery County. A more detailed review of the Cresheim Trail proposal was presented. Mr. Thomas traced the trail from Chestnut Hill below Germantown Avenue through Springfield, Cheltenham and back into Springfield. The trail principally follows an existing PECO right of way that one time was an abandoned railroad. Mr. Thomas noted that the trail committee has a license with PECO to install the trail within their property, however, to date it has not been executed by either party. Connection trails were also briefly discussed in the area of Arcadia University, Holy Sepulchre Cemetery and Erdenheim Farms. The Cresheim trail has been divided into four phases, with cost estimates for each. The phases are: Phase I, Wissahickon Creek to Bethlehem Pike, 1.8 miles, \$537,000; Phase II, Arcadia University, .7 miles, \$330,000; phase III,

Bethlehem Pike to Paper Mill Road, 2.2 miles, \$1.2 million; phase IV, Paper Mill Road to Stenton Avenue, 3.1 miles, \$4.8 million. The feasibility study includes a lengthy list of County, State and Federal grants that may be available to help assist in the cost of construction. Mr. Thomas noted that Cheltenham Township expressed interest in the project in January 2009, however, made no commitment to assist in the funding of the project. Mr. Thomas suggested that the next major step would be to approach PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for significant funding of the trail, however, PA DCNR will require easements and rights of way in place in the segment of the trail for which funding is being requested.

Mr. Standish inquired why certain segments of the trail were designated as phase I or II. Mr. Thomas noted that these segments are connecting to existing trails and it may be easier to progress through the approval process.

Ms. Peirce inquired what fraction of the trail is within the PECO land. Mr. Thomas estimated that approximately 90% of the trail is within the PECO property.

Mr. Dailey asked how the committee would address the railroad land that has already reverted back to individual property owners in Flourtown, and inquired why those individual property owners were not specifically contacted for a meeting. Mr. Thomas acknowledged that not all the land had been acquired, but that he attended several meetings where the property owners to which Mr. Dailey was referring were specifically invited. Mr. Dailey asked whether they had met with the Springfield Township School District. Mr. Thomas indicated they had met with staff but not the School Board.

Mr. Harbison acknowledged that the Flourtown Gardens and a section adjacent to the route 309 and Willow Grove Avenue would be the most challenging sections of the trail.

Mr. Dailey inquired how the trail committee would address environmental concerns such as stormwater management. Mr. Thomas noted that the specific surface of the trail had not been identified, but that a combination of porous paving and regular paving can be considered.

Mr. Gillies opined that the trail committee seemed fairly committed to the design of the trail since it had not changed much since the initial discussion. While Mr. Thomas agreed for the most part, he did note that the trail was modified in the vicinity of the Harkins property at the 309 expressway and E. Willow Grove Avenue.

Mr. Harbison asked if the availability of the Lloyd estate would provide an alternate route beyond the Harkins property. Mr. Thomas said it was certainly something to be considered now that the property might be available.

Mr. Gillies asked how insurance requirements will be met for the trail. Mr. Thomas indicated that easement agreements will call out that the property owners are

indemnified and held harmless. This insurance is normally provided by the Commonwealth, the County or local municipalities. Mr. Gillies suggested that the trail not be given any further consideration until issues in the vicinity of the Harkins property, Route 309 expressway at Willow Grove Avenue, the Flourtown Gardens, and the School District property are resolved.

Mike Harkins, 1799 Willow Grove Avenue, indicated that he is not an opponent of trails, but has been opposed to the Cresheim Trail proposal as the trail approaches his property. He suggested that this section of the trail is very costly to build and will not be pleasing to use. He asked that the committee consider alternates through the Lloyd estate.

Bernie Homer, 1704 Church Road, inquired as to the width, structure and purpose of the trail. Mr. Homer was told that the trail would be approximately 10 ft. in width, the structure was not determined but will run from crushed stone to asphalt, and the purpose of the trail is for recreational purposes.

Joseph Ruggieri, 201 Spruce Road, stated his opinion that regardless of the use of the trail, the trail is not wanted through the Flourtown Gardens.

Charlie Karl, of Pine Road, expressed his support of the trail and discussed the attractive nature of the area between Cheltenham Avenue and the route 309 expressway. He pledged his willingness to assist in any volunteer efforts in maintaining the trail.

Carolyn Kelly, Penn Oak Road, noted her opposition to the trail. She discussed the problems with a hard surface, litter, safety, liability, and lighting. Mr. Thomas reviewed possible solutions to the questions raised by Ms. Kelly.

Mr. Schaum remarked that it was his understanding that as of this date, the use of the railroad right of way adjacent to the Flourtown Country Club is not an option that has been agreed to by the Board of Commissioners.

Mike Lawrence, 1202 Malinda Road, inquired who funded the trail study and who might fund the project. Mr. Thomas indicated there were several sources that funded the study, and moving forward to the project, funds might be available through Montgomery County, the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and Federal transportation enhancement grants. Mr. Lawrence indicated that initially he was in favor of the trail, but as he has learned how various friends and families are adversely affected by the trail, he is no longer supporting same. Mr. Lawrence also suggested that one entity should be responsible for maintenance to be assured that it is done uniformly and correctly.

Dolores Shields, 404 Penn Oak Road, indicated that she participated in a small group to review the trail bed back in 2004 between Flourtown and Oreland, and it appears that the trail is significantly different today than it was then. Mr. Standish indicated he participated in that walk as well, and indeed it is a different trail.

Joan Anderson, 308 Penn Oak Road, indicated that she is not necessarily opposed to trails and has used trails through the area, however, she is not interested in a trail through the Flourtown Gardens.

Dan Moscovici, 1503 Church Road, stated that when he is interested in using a park, he needs to go outside of the Township. He believes that the trails would improve property values, are good for exercise, and will help connect communities.

Adina Birnbaum, 15 West Mill Road, suggested that her family has enjoyed the use of the abandoned right of way to the rear of her property. Now that the area has been improved as a trail, she feels her children can utilize the trail on their own. She has not had an issue with litter and is comforted by the use of the trail by the community.

Christine Kendler, of Philadelphia, offered herself as a resource as it relates to contact with State and regional equestrian groups.

George Benz, 8458 Trumbauer Drive, inquired how the Township will proceed with further consideration of the trail. Mr. Harbison suggested there were many options: (1) the Board could approve portions of the trail, (2) the Board could approve the trail with the exception of the difficult areas, and (3) the Board could approve the trail subject to conditions set forth by the Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Harbison, Chairman of Internal Affairs and Environmental Resources Committee, reported:

Motion (Harbison-Schaum) carried unanimously to approve the May check reconciliation in the amount of \$627,013.79 and the June bill listing in the amount of \$619,190.07.

Mr. Harbison announced that during the month of May, Springfield Township residents recycled 185.4 tons of materials with a householder participation rate of 80.1%. The net cost for the month was \$292.52.

Mr. Gillies presented a spreadsheet on information from the RecycleBank Corporation that will be distributed to the entire Board.

Motion (Harbison-Peirce) carried unanimously to adopt Resolution No. 1206, a resolution authorizing the execution of an Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement with other Montgomery County communities for legal services to review the new PA DEP stormwater requirements. Mr. Harbison explained the goal of the requirements.

Motion (Harbison-Schaum) carried unanimously to appoint Donald Berger, Township Manager, as the Township liaison to the County-wide earned income

tax collection task force. Mr. Harbison explained the purpose of the County-wide tax collection task force.

Motion (Harbison-Peirce) carried unanimously to reappoint James Quigley, Paul Schmidt, and Mara Baird to new three year terms of service as members of the Springfield Township Environmental Advisory Commission. The new terms of service shall expire May 12, 2012.

Mr. Gillies, Chairman of Library Committee, had no specific report, however, he noted that the Summer reading sessions have begun at the Library and encouraged everyone to participate.

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

Motion (Standish-Heller) carried unanimously to authorize the execution of a revised Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program Allocation Agreement with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania which allocates a second \$500,000 appropriation to assist with the renovations at the Black Horse Inn. A local match of \$500,000 is also required before any State funds can be utilized. Mr. Gillies suggested that no general fund tax dollars will be utilized in the most immediate phase of renovations and that the appropriation would not exceed \$130,000.

Motion (Standish-Schaum) carried unanimously to award a contract to DePaul & Co., of Philadelphia, for their low bid price of \$146,162 to supply and install the base bid improvements and alternates 1 through 3 for the Oreland Pedestrian and Streetscape Project. Mr. Standish reviewed the scope of the improvements and also noted that five bids were opened on June 2, 2009.

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

Motion (Schaum-Gillies) carried unanimously to authorize the office of the Township Solicitor to take action in a Court of proper jurisdiction in order to collect expenses related to a fuel oil spill from the Chestnut Hill Rehab Center (aka Montgomery Rehab Center), 8601 Stenton Avenue, Wyndmoor.

Ms. Peirce, Chwmn., Communications & Cultural Resources Committee, reported:

Ms. Peirce announced that one of the new services being provided through the Springfield Township enhanced website is an email alert system. Residents were encouraged to subscribe to this service through the Township website in order to receive the latest Township news and information. Ms. Peirce described the various categories of news that might be received through the email alerts.

Mr. Dailey, Chairman of Zoning Committee, reported:

Mr. Dailey asked that the topic of park and recreation grant opportunities be discussed at next month's meeting. He also asked that information from the Montgomery County Department of Health with regard to preventing mosquito infestation be placed on the Township website.

Mr. Dailey announced that the Zoning Hearing Board will next meet on Monday evening, June 22, 2009, at 7:00 PM in the Springfield Township Building. Mr. Dailey summarized the Zoning Hearing Board agenda.

Motion (Dailey-Standish) carried unanimously to authorize the office of the Township Solicitor to appear at all future Zoning Hearing Board meetings in opposition to the Latonia Bell petition requesting a use variance and a variance to the off-street parking requirements related to the operation of a day car center at 926 Bethlehem Pike, Erdenheim.

Mr. Heller, Chairman of Community Development Committee, reported:

Motion (Heller-Gillies) carried unanimously to engage Michael Baker Jr., Inc. to perform construction inspection services related to the Bethlehem Pike streetscape improvement project. Proposals from four engineering firms were reviewed based upon criteria related to their specialized experience and technical competence in inspecting similar projects. The cost to engage Baker is a price not to exceed \$66,008.50.

Motion (Heller-Schaum) carried unanimously to adopt Resolution No. 1207, a resolution accepting dedication of Susan Circle, a portion of Paper Mill Road, specified drainage easements, and sanitary and storm sewer lines from Abington Glen Inc., owners and developers of the Truscott Woods subdivision, also known as Susan Circle.

Motion (Heller-Gillies) carried unanimously that in conjunction with Section 512 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, the Board of Commissioners waive the formal land development review process as it relates to the installation of an approximately 810 sq. ft. rear patio for outdoor seating at Halligan's Pub, 1619 Bethlehem Pike, Flourtown. The waiver was granted conditioned upon the owners securing all requisite permits, complying with conditions set forth by the Springfield Township Zoning Hearing Board, and resolution of any outstanding recommendations from the Springfield Township Planning Commission.

Chris Tomlinson, 26 Haws Lane, addressed the Board of Commissioners related to a letter received by the Commissioners from the Township Treasurer related to delays in depositing and posting taxes and users fees collected by her office. Mr. Tomlinson inquired as to the reason for the delays and the current status. Mr. Harbison indicated that the reason for the delay was a delay in the appointment of the Treasurer earlier in the year. As a result, receipts and deposits were backlogged, however, at the end of May 2009, the deposits were up to date and actually ahead of previous years. Mr. Tomlinson

stated that he was aware that stacks of checks were in the Treasurer's office and the office was open to the general public and expressed concern for the security of the Township's funds. He asked why this matter was not discussed by the Board at a previous public meeting. Mr. Harbison opined that Mr. Tomlinson's comments were merely political grandstanding, and not appropriate to be discussed at a Township business meeting. Mr. Harbison noted that the Board of Commissioners is responsible to manage the funds and the situation, and since the backlog no longer exists, the matter has been resolved.

There being further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald E. Berger, Jr.
Secretary