

TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES – OCTOBER 28, 2019

The regular meeting of the Planning Commission of the Township of Lower Makefield was held at the Municipal Building on October 28, 2019. Mr. Wallace called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Those present:

Planning Commission: Chad Wallace, Chair
 Craig Bryson, Vice Chair
 Ross Bruch, Secretary
 Anthony Bush, Member
 Adrian Costello, Member

Others: James Majewski, Director Planning & Zoning
 Barbara Kirk, Township Solicitor
 Andrew Pockl, Township Engineer
 John B. Lewis, Supervisor Liaison (joined
 meeting in progress)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Bush moved, Mr. Wallace seconded and it was unanimously carried to approve the Minutes of October 7, 2019 as written.

#671 – PENNSYLVANIA AMERICAN WATER COMPANY QUARRY ROAD BOOSTER PUMP STATION REPLACEMENT – SPECIAL EXCEPTION

Tax Parcel #20-016-002

R-1 Residential Low Density Zoning District

Proposed Utility Use for the Installation of an above-ground water booster pump station to replace the existing underground pump station

Mr. Craig Darosh, Project Manager, Pennsylvania American Water Company, and Mr. Jeff Skinner, engineer were present. Mr. Darosh stated they are proposing to replace the below grade booster pump station along Quarry Road as there is extensive structural failures and corrosion. He stated they are planning to replace that with an above-ground station directly behind the existing station. He stated it is in between Creamery and Dolington Roads. He stated you cannot see the existing station because it is below grade. He stated they are before the Planning Commission because they need approval for a setback Variance and a utility use by Special Exception.

Mr. Skinner showed a picture of the existing station, and he showed the roads surrounding the station. He stated there are hatches for the underground vault behind some arborvitae. He stated the vault is 30' by 10' with three large pumps to boost the water pressure from one pipe to another to service properties along Quarry Road including water for the schools and Residential areas. He stated the pumps are in need of replacement. He stated the system is underground in a vault that is twenty-three years old.

Mr. Lewis joined the meeting at this time.

Mr. Skinner stated there are issues with dealing with equipment in an underground vault in a tight, confined space; and PA American is looking to install a new, above-ground system in a 30' by 10' building. He stated it will be installed directly behind the existing system. He stated the existing system will be required to be in service until the day that they switch over to the new system so that water service is maintained through the community.

Mr. Skinner stated they are presenting the Development Plans for the site so that the Planning Commission can give a recommendation to the Zoning Hearing Board as to the Special Exception required for a utility facility within an R-1 Residential Zoning.

Mr. Skinner stated there is an existing system there, and it is contained within an Easement on property that is now owned by Lower Makefield Township. He stated the property was owned by the Snipes family when the Easement was first obtained. Mr. Skinner stated the site also has an existing Sanitary Sewer Easement that runs underneath where they are proposing to put the booster station. He stated last week they went before the Sewer Authority, and they obtained their approval for vacating that. Mr. Skinner stated it is a vacant Easement that was installed to extend sewer service up to the homes on Dolington Road; however, those homes have since obtained sewer service from a different direction so the Easement is no longer needed.

Mr. Skinner stated the existing station is under the proposed rain garden, and the new station will be right behind it. He stated they are also proposing a 10' wide driveway to allow for the trucks servicing the facility to access the property once or twice a week. Mr. Skinner stated there will be no traffic other than that one vehicle so the impact of the driveway to Quarry Road will be minimal.

Mr. Skinner stated they are proposing to fence in the site which is needed to maintain security for any utility system. He stated they will have a rolling gate along the driveway as well so that when it is not being serviced, the facility will be locked. Mr. Skinner stated they are proposing screen plantings as required by the Township for buffer requirements. He stated there is an existing buffer behind the site that they will maintain as well to minimize the impact of the station on the surrounding area. He stated there is only one home that is directly across from the facility, but that home faces out onto Creamery Road. That home has a driveway that comes out onto Quarry Road fairly close to where the PA American driveway will be going in; but with one vehicle a day, which would not be during rush hour, they do not feel that should be a problem.

A slide was shown of the aerial view of the existing area. Mr. Skinner noted an emergency generator on the aerial; however, he stated the generator is no longer at that location as it was just there temporarily when the aerial photo was taken. He stated the generator is now sitting behind the hatches and the existing arborvitae. Mr. Skinner stated the generator will be relocated behind the shed so that it will not visually impact the Quarry Road view, and the building will be blocking it.

Pictures were shown of the site from various roads in the area.

Mr. Skinner stated the new system will be connected to the existing pipes that run along Quarry Road.

Mr. Skinner stated they will have a rain garden to minimize the stormwater run off since it will now be an above-ground structure with a driveway. Previously with the the underground system, there was no run off from the site. Mr. Skinner stated they are presently getting infiltration rates to finish the design for volume control.

A Survey Plan of Snipes which was done in the 1990s was shown, and Mr. Skinner stated this is how they found that there was an existing Sewer Easement on the property which they had to get vacated.

Mr. Majewski stated this will not have any impact on the proposed Plans for the Snipes Tract, and it is outside the limit of disturbance.

Ms. Kirk stated the paperwork submitted shows that there was a Deed of Easement granted to PA American Water when it was owned by the Snipes. She asked if now that the new shed will be behind the existing pump station, does the existing

Easement cover that land. Mr. Skinner stated the existing Easement does not fully cover their expansion, and they will be looking to expand the Easement and create a new Agreement with the Township for that. Ms. Kirk asked if they will have that accomplished before they go to the Zoning Hearing Board, and Mr. Darosh stated the direction they were given was to get the other approvals first. Mr. Darosh stated the original Easement was 50 by 16, and they are looking to have approximately 80 by 80 total. Mr. Darosh stated they could extinguish the original Snipes Easement and get a new one for 80 by 80 from the Township.

Mr. Skinner stated they have received the review from the Township engineer, and they will comply with all comments except with regard to the issue that there is a Variance required for minimum Lot width; and since this is an Easement, they do not feel that is required. Mr. Pockl stated he agrees with Mr. Skinner. Mr. Skinner stated the Plans were created as a demonstration for the Zoning Hearing Board of what the development would look like. He stated they are prepared to make all the revisions and the Plans will be resubmitted with the drainage calculations to the Township engineer for approval.

Mr. Bryson asked if they have to go through Land Development; and Mr. Majewski stated they requested a Waiver from having to go through Land Development, but the Board of Supervisors at that time had a number of questions specifically about the extinguishment of the Sewer Easement and what the Planning Commission thought about the Plan. The Board of Supervisors also thought it was premature to request a Waiver from Land Development until they went through the Zoning Hearing Board process.

Mr. Majewski stated this may come back before the Planning Commission as a Land Development or it may just go to the Board of Supervisors as a Waiver of Land Development so if the Planning Commission has any issues, they should raise them now.

Ms. Kirk stated she attended the Sewer Authority meeting on Thursday night where the request to vacate the Easement was submitted, and the Sewer Authority recommended approval to extinguish the Sanitary Sewer Easement which is technically owned by the Sewer Authority although the property is owned by the Township. Ms. Kirk stated she has already had discussions with the engineer, and they are going to be doing the necessary documents for the extinguishment of the Sanitary Sewer Easement.

Mr. Bush asked the status of the relocation of Dolington Road, and Mr. Majewski stated the estimate is that it would cost approximately \$1 million so the likelihood of that being accomplished is very slim; however, this lay out does take into consideration that the proposed right-of-way for that would not impact on this Easement. Mr. Majewski stated when it was set up approximately twenty-three years ago, they took into account the possible re-alignment of the road when they developed the Easement.

Mr. Pockl stated predominantly the site will just be an above-ground shed, and they will not be storing equipment on the property or doing anything else outside. Mr. Skinner stated it is just water getting boosted, and the pressure getting increased. He stated there are no chemicals being added, and there is no chemical storage.

Mr. Costello stated the only vehicles there would be maintenance vehicles. Mr. Skinner agreed, adding the vehicle would not stay there, and they would just be checking on it.

Mr. Pockl stated he assumes the rectangle behind the building is the emergency generator for the new building, and Mr. Skinner agreed.

Mr. Majewski stated one of the items that was brought up was what the structure would look like, and a slide was shown of what they are proposing. Mr. Majewski stated they are proposing stone at the bottom, and it will have a barn-like look above with colors to be selected by the Township. Mr. Skinner stated it is a pre-fabricated building that gets dropped on a full foundation.

Mr. Bryson asked if it will be heated, and Mr. Darosh stated it will be. He stated the service is already there.

Mr. Wallace asked if they have to check on this once a day, and Mr. Darosh stated probably more like once or twice a week is more realistic especially since it is a new station. Mr. Skinner stated they will monitor it via computer constantly; and if there is an issue they are immediately notified. Mr. Wallace asked how long it would take to do repairs like that, and it was noted it could take one day at the most.

Mr. Bryson moved, Mr. Costello seconded and it was unanimously carried to recommend to the Zoning Hearing Board approval of the Special Exception subject to compliance with the Township engineer review letter dated 10/23/19.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Majewski stated the next meeting is scheduled for November 11; and while the Township Building is closed that day, they could still meet if the Planning Commission is available if there is something they need to discuss. He stated they could also cancel that meeting and not meet until November 25 although that is the Monday before Thanksgiving. Mr. Majewski stated he is working on some additional Ordinance issues.

There being no further business, Mr. Bryson moved, Mr. Costello seconded and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ross Bruch, Secretary