

WORK SESSION  
May 20, 2009

A Work Session of the Whitpain Township Board of Supervisors was held on Wednesday, May 20, 2009 at the Whitpain Township Building, 960 Wentz Road, Blue Bell, PA at 7:30 PM for the purpose of reviewing the agenda of the May 20, 2009 Supervisors' Meeting. Chairman Joseph J. Palmer was present with Supervisors Brian W. Young, Anthony F. Greco, William L. McKernan III and Adam D. Zucker. Joseph Bagley, Esq. from the Township Solicitor's office, Township Manager Phyllis C. Lieberman, Assistant Township Manager/Township Engineer Roman M. Pronczak, Director of Finance John Marcarelli, Police Chief Mark Smith, Director of Public Works Ronald J. Cione, Director of Code Enforcement Michael E. McAndrew, and Director of Parks and Recreation Kurt W. Baker were also present. Fire Marshal David M. Camarda was absent. Two members of the public were present.

The Supervisors reviewed the agenda discussing the scheduling of meetings for the month of June 2009, a presentation by students at Blue Bell Elementary School, approval of the minutes of the May 5, 2009 Supervisors' Meeting, approval of the Treasurer's Report for April 2009, a confirming motion to rescind the awards for the 2009 Road Resurfacing Maintenance Program due to an advertising error, a confirming motion to advertise for the 2009 Road Resurfacing Maintenance Program, a motion to authorize Land Concepts to proceed with design services associated with the Whitpain Township Detention Basin Naturalization Project, in the amount of \$20,200 , and several Zoning Hearing Board applications.

Mrs. Lieberman then advised the Supervisors that representatives from the Realtors Alliance would be addressing the Supervisors at the public meeting about the Township's policy regarding off premises directional signs.

Mrs. Lieberman and Mr. Pronczak showed the Supervisors the new version of signs that the WVWA wishes to erect. The Supervisors still did not like the size of the lettering of the Township's name.

Mr. Pronczak then advised the Supervisors of the results of the survey for the name change to Penllyn Blue Bell Pike. There were 59 letters sent and 44 responses. Of those responding, 12 wanted no change, 10 wanted it renamed to Blue Bell Pike, 20 wanted it renamed to Blue Bell Road, and 2 wanted it renamed to Penllyn Pike. Mr. Pronczak noted that the postmaster said that mail would only be forwarded for a certain period of time. After that all addresses had to be changed. The Supervisors said we will keep the name the same and to send a letter advising that to the residents.

Mrs. Lieberman noted that Gambone Development was asking the Zoning Hearing Board for another extension for their townhouse development on Township Line Road near

Penllyn Blue Bell Pike. They said that they are asking for it because of the economy and the fact that age restricted developments are not selling at this time. The last time that an extension was requested, the Zoning Hearing Board said that it would be the last extension granted. This was a site that had many different requests for use in the past and this use was reached with the consensus of all of the neighbors. The Solicitor for the Zoning Hearing Board wanted to know if the Supervisors wished to opine on matter. After some discussion, the Supervisors said they were comfortable in letting the Zoning Hearing Board make that decision on its own.

A request has been received to allow the Phil's 5K Run again this year. The Police Department wanted to be sure that it was OK with the Supervisors since one complaint from a resident had been received before. Because the road is only closed for an hour and residents are accommodated, the Supervisors said that it was all right.

The Supervisors then discussed one personnel matter and two legal matters.

The Supervisors then left for the public meeting

The Work Session was not reconvened.

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Phyllis C. Lieberman  
Whitpain Township Manager

## #10-2009

The second monthly meeting of the Whitpain Township Board of Supervisors was held Wednesday, May 20, 2009 at the Whitpain Township Building, 960 Wentz Road, Blue Bell, PA. Supervisors Joseph J. Palmer, Brian W. Young, Anthony F. Greco, William F. McKernan, III and Adam D. Zucker were present. Township Manager Phyllis C. Lieberman, Township Engineer/Assistant Township Manager Roman M. Pronczak, Assistant Township Solicitor Joseph Bagley, Finance Director John Marcarelli, Police Chief Mark A. Smith, Code Enforcement Officer Michael E. McAndrew, Public Works Director Ronald J. Cione, Park and Recreation Director Kurt W. Baker, and Recording Secretary Michele Alifano were also present. Fire Marshal David M. Camarda was absent. There were approximately 50 members of the public in attendance.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the meeting was called to order by Chairman Joseph Palmer at 8 p.m.

An announcement was made regarding the dates for the upcoming regular Board of Supervisors' meetings which are scheduled for Tuesday, June 2, 2009 and Tuesday, June 16, 2009 at 8:00 p.m.

At this time, a presentation was given by the grade students of Mrs. Sandra Swanger from the Blue Bell Elementary School, entitled Project Citizen, the purpose of which was to identify problems or issues in the local community, and to brainstorm solutions that could be improved through the use of government actions. The children involved in this project were Deanna Boggs, Edward Burkart, Brooklyn Coleman, Liliana Farinas, Gabriela Ferrio, Carissa Flores, Maya Golden, Daniel Hopkins, Alexis Horton, Mervana Jacob, Anna Kane, Donovan Kennedy, Charlene Mitchell, Ashley Ok, Destini Paige, Cynthia Pando, Kannan Ramanathan, Tiffany Revels, Gillian Southworth, Jeremy Spittle, Gregory Voight, Matthew West, Isaac Wilson, and Benjamin Wolfe, along with the assistance of their school librarian, Ms. Lisa Ruff.

The children decided to focus their efforts on making the entering and exiting of the school's grounds safer for vehicular and pedestrian traffic by proposing the speed limit on Symphony Lane, at the intersection of Skippack Pike, be posted at 15 miles per hour. The presentation exhibited the hazardous conditions that exist during arrival and dismissal times at the school. Originally, the students had considered requesting a blinking school zone light at the intersection, but they subsequently learned that this type of signal did not meet PennDOT criteria. The children also learned through Sergeant Cathy Penecale that there is no posted speed limit on Symphony Lane, and if the Township does not have legislation governing the speed, the speed is set at 25 miles per hour under Pennsylvania state law.

Chairman Palmer congratulated the children on the outstanding quality of their presentation and on their desire to make their local community a safer place. He then

explained the process of enacting an Ordinance to the members of the audience. A motion was made by Mr. McKernan, duly seconded by Mr. Greco to direct Township staff and the Township solicitor to draft an Ordinance that will establish the rate of speed on Symphony Lane at 15 miles per hour. Chairman Palmer called for any discussion. There being none, the motion unanimously passed.

A motion was made by Mr. Young, duly seconded by Mr. Zucker to approve the minutes of the May 5, 2009 Supervisors' Meeting. Chairman Palmer called for any discussion. There being none, the motion unanimously passed.

A motion was made by Mr. Greco, duly seconded by Mr. McKernan to approve the Treasurer's Report for the month of April, 2009. Chairman Palmer called for any discussion. There being none, the motion unanimously passed.

A confirming motion was made by Mr. Zucker, duly seconded by Mr. Greco to rescind the awards for the 2009 Road Resurfacing Maintenance Program due to an advertising error. Chairman Palmer called for any discussion. There being none, the motion passed unanimously.

A confirming motion was made by Mr. Young, duly seconded by Mr. McKernan to advertise for the 2009 Road Resurfacing Maintenance Program. Chairman Palmer called for any discussion. There being none, the motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Mr. Greco, duly seconded by Mr. Zucker to authorize Land Concepts to proceed with design services associated with the Whitpain Township Detention Basin Naturalization Project, in the amount of \$20,200, in accordance with their proposal dated April 14, 2009. Chairman Palmer called for any discussion. Mrs. Hildy Richelson requested an explanation of this item. Mr. Pronczak responded that there is an existing basin on Lewis Lane that would need to modification in order to develop the water quality, as well as another which will most likely be located on Township owned property near Wentz Run Park. There being no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

At this time, the Board of Supervisors considered the Zoning Hearing Board applications for the month of May, 2009. Chairman Palmer explained that when applications are filed, the Board has the opportunity to review the cases and make any recommendations they see fit if a compelling circumstance should arise that would prove helpful in the decision making process. He stated that typically, the Board remains neutral on Zoning Hearing Board cases.

The Board of Supervisors took no action regarding the following applications to the Zoning Hearing Board:

**NO. 1812-08:** Application filed by Village Crossing Blue Bell, LLC as owner of the property located at 721 Skippack Pike, Blue Bell, PA 19422, for variances from the terms of Article XXVI, Section 160-182.2 and to amend ZHB Decision No.1379-01 at the subject property:

1. To allow the free-standing monument sign to be increased from 40 sq. ft. to 52.5 sq. ft. decreasing the base from 3' to 19" and increasing the number of tenants on the sign from 6 to 8, and a panel for the center's name.
2. To allow 18.6 sq. ft. of sign area on the left side of the awning and to allow 19.55 sq. ft. of sign area on the front of the awning for Stonebridge Bank.
3. To allow a 5.1 sq. ft. façade sign for WSFS Bank.
4. To allow a 5 sq. ft. façade sign for Harleysville Bank.
5. To allow a 4 sq. ft. sign on the front of the awning for Alison at Blue Bell.
6. To allow each tenant to choose either a 5 sq. ft. wall mounted plaque sign or an 88" x 84" awning with a 17.75 sq. ft. sign on the sides.
7. To allow all existing window and door signs to remain.

The zoning classification of the subject property is "C" Commercial District.

**NO. 1827-09:** Application filed by Whitpain Associates, LLC d/b/a Korman Communities as owner of the property located at 1350 Jolly Road, Blue Bell, PA 19422, for variances from the terms of Article XXVI, Sections 160-182.2.A and 160-180.B to allow five (5) eighteen (18) sq. ft. leasing banners along Jolly Road. The zoning classification of the subject property is "R-1" Residence District.

**NO. 1829-09:** Application filed by TD Bank N.A. as owner of the property located at 1799 Swede Road, Blue Bell, PA 19422, for the following relief at the subject property:

1. Variances from the terms of Article XXVI, Section 160-182.2.C and ZHB Decision No. 1001-94 to allow an advertising sign "America's Most Convenient Bank" on the back of the triangular free-standing identification sign.
2. Variances from the terms of Article XXVI, Section 160-182.2.C and ZHB Decision No. 1001-94 to allow 4 TD Bank initials on door handles.
3. Variances from the terms of Article XXVI, Section 160-182.2.C and ZHB Decision No. 1001-94 to allow an interior TD Bank wall sign.
4. Variances from the terms of Article XXVI, Section 160-182.2.C and ZHB Decision No. 1001-94 to allow TD on the Directory Sign on the front of the building.

The zoning classification of the subject property is "C-1" Commercial District.

Mr. Young called for any old or new business for discussion from the Board. There was none. He then called for any old or new business discussions from the audience.

Mr. James Ridge, President of the Suburban Realtors Alliance, gave a brief presentation on behalf of the realtors that conduct business within Whitpain Township. The request was for the Board of Supervisors to consider amending the portion of the Zoning Code which governs directional real estate signs, and Mr. Ridge specifically called for a waiver of the permit requirement, and the corresponding \$40 fee. He stated that the requirement places a substantial burden on sellers that reside in the Township, as well as the professional realtors who represent them. Additionally, the requirement has been seen to have a direct negative impact on sales in the already difficult economic market.

Ms. Anna Standing, a professional realtor as well as a Whitpain resident, stated that she became aware of the sign requirements when she received a fine for an illegal directional sign. She believed that a \$40 permit fee and a \$500 fine for violations was excessive. She commented that the Suburban Realtors Alliance has worked with other local Townships, and they have been able to successfully negotiate the easing of restrictions. Ms. Standing emphasized that research has proven that potential buyers have attended open houses due to the visibility of the signage. She also stated that the average number of days on the market for homes listed in Whitpain Township is 200, and that out of 455 residential units listed over the past year, only 228 had sold. Due to these challenges, the Alliance is prepared to submit a proposal to the Board of Supervisors for their consideration.

Mr. Young asked if Ms. Standing knew of other Townships that did not charge a fee for sign permits. Ms. Standing stated she did not. Mr. Young advised Ms. Standing and Mr. Ridge to forward their proposal to Whitpain Township staff and the Board for consideration.

Mr. Young called for any further comments from the floor. Mr. Bob Whittock asked for an update on the status of the railroad crossing near the intersection of Skippack Pike and Belfry Drive that had been discussed at a previous Board meeting. He specifically inquired as to whether or not the Township had heard back from Representative Harper regarding the issue, as her office was asked to intervene in hopes of getting the railroad to make the necessary repairs. Mr. Cione stated he had not yet heard a response from Representative Harper, and the railroad had lost all credibility with the Township, but that he would follow up again on the matter.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m. upon motion by Mr. Young.

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony F. Greco  
Secretary