

**LOWER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2024**

SUPERVISORS:

Danielle A. Duckett, Chairman
Michael Twersky, Vice Chair
Janine Martin
Tessie McNeely-absent
Jimmy Chong

STAFF:

Mimi Gleason, Township Manager
Jamie Worman, Assistant Township Manager
Michelle Farzetta, Office Manager
Neil Stein, Esq., Solicitor
Fred Zollers, Director Public Works
Paul Kenny, Police Chief
Jim Hersh, Township Engineer, Gilmore
Chad Dixson, Traffic Engineer, Bowman Company
Melinda Haldeman – Finance Director
John Farrell – Project Manager-via zoom

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

The Chair called the hybrid meeting to order at 7:04pm at the Lower Gwynedd Township Building and virtually on Zoom and led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

The Board of Supervisors (BOS) met in executive session on February 19th and prior to tonight's meeting to discuss matters of personnel and real estate.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Michael Vander Zwan, 6 Richards Way, asked for updates regarding the cell towers. Ms. Gleason stated that Rise Up is looking for an alternative location on township property for the tower proposed at the township building. She added that Gwynedd Mercy Academy is off the table. Ms. Duckett noted that we are allowing Rise Up to do their due diligence in locating a property that will fill in the gaps. After an appropriate amount of time then the township will re-evaluate. Mr. Vander Zwan also asked for a status regarding the proposed tower at Penllyn Woods. Mr. Stein stated that the conservation easement has been amended and we are negotiating the lease. Mr. Twersky explained that no one really wants a tower in their view. He continued that we are committed to building the tower, we just need to find the best option. Mr. Vander Zwan then asked about the 2024 priorities discussed at the December 2023 BOS meeting. He wanted to know when they would be available to the public and if the cell towers were in the list of priorities. Ms. Gleason said yes, they are included, and the staff is working to finalize the list. She explained that the tree map presented was preliminary, as she wanted to see if the format being used was okay with the BOS. That preliminary tree map is in the meeting packet for the December

meeting. Once the priority list is complete it will be on the BOS meeting agenda and posted on the website.

BUILDING AND ZONING

Presentation of preliminary/final land development for Gwynedd Mercy University's Frances M. Maguire Healthcare Innovation Center (#2303LD)

Gwynedd Mercy University (GMU) is proposing a land development project for a 62,000 square foot healthcare facility with a new parking lot, restoration of an existing parking lot, walkways, landscaping, and lighting improvements. Christen Pionzio from HRMM&L reviewed the project with the BOS.

Ms. Pionzio stated that she has spoken with Gilmore, Bowman and Mr. Comly and they have worked through the review letters. She also noted that the questions raised by Gilmore's arborist have been resolved but a new letter was not issued in time for the meeting. Mr. Hersh confirmed. Ms. Pionzio requested to review the proposed waivers. Mr. Twersky questioned the waiver request requiring the installation of sidewalk and curbing along both frontages (Sumneytown Pike and Evans Road). He confirmed that without the waiver the improvement would be required to be installed by the applicant at their expense, but instead they're requesting this requirement be waived and that they provide a trail easement instead. Ms. Pionzio replied that they are offering a trail easement along Evans Road as they already have an extensive trail system through their campus that connects to Township trails. The trail can't be extended past the culvert on Evans Road and will just end in this location, which doesn't seem feasible to them. Mr. Twersky questioned why the Township would agree to the easement without there being a financial obligation on behalf of the university to install the trail. The BOS is asking that GMU agree to incur the cost for a trail if the township should decide to connect the trails. Steven Freeman, Director of Campus Projects and Construction, stated that GMU had no issue with installing a trail at their expense should the Township request it. He explained that they do that all the time.

The biggest waiver GMU is asking for is related to tree replacement. Ms. Pionzio stated that they hired an arborist, gave him the limits of disturbance, he then evaluated and tagged all the dead, dying and healthy trees. Ms. Pionzio explained that upon the completion of the arborist report the replacement number was drastically reduced. They started at 7,031 caliper inches (503 trees) only 122 trees are healthy which now equals 1,457 caliper inches. They can replace 1,127 caliper inches; however, they are short 330 caliper inches. Therefore, Ms. Pionzio stated that they hired the Evolution Sustaining Group for their help on how they can improve the carbon metric tonnage for carbon reduction. They looked at lighting around the whole campus and EV charging stations. The lighting on campus will be replaced with LED lights, which is a total of 3,511 fixtures. They will also be adding 4 dual port EV charging stations along the front of the building. Ms. Pionzio stated that the charging stations are not only for students, but faculty members, and this will be an event space as well, so visitors can use the EV stations too. Ms. Pionzio stated that with all the upgrades they are at 363 metric tons of carbon reduction. GMU is excited about these environmental initiatives they will be implementing.

The Planning Commission (PC) has recommended the project for approval based on the following conditions...

1. The applicant provides a 15' wide trail easement along Evans Rd.
2. The applicant complies with all review letters from Gilmore, Bowman and Lower Gwynedd Fire Marshal, Al Comly.
3. The PC recommends granting all waivers conditioned that the applicant installs 4 dual EV charging stations, increase the roof steel load capacity to support future solar panels and convert all lighting on campus to LED by 2025.

The BOS thanked all those in attendance from the University. Ms. Pionzio said she will work with Mr. Stein to draft a Resolution for approval at the March 12, 2024, BOS meeting.

Public hearing to consider an ordinance amendment to temporary sign regulations in Title VI, the Zoning Ordinance, in the Township Code

Mr. Stein opened the hearing by stating that this is a public hearing for a proposed amendment to Chapter 1292 Signs of the Lower Gwynedd Zoning Ordinance as it relates to temporary signs, excluding real estate signs. The information provided was transcribed by a court reporter and will be available upon request. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chong, to adopt Ordinance #543, with clarification of each sign being no more than 8 square feet. Motion passed 4-0.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Discussion about recommendations for Township projects to be submitted to Montgomery County for 2050 Transportation Project Priorities

Mr. Dixon presented a list of ten priority projects for the new Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) county comprehensive plan titled Montco 2050: A Comprehensive Plan for a Changing World. These projects will be used to develop new transportation priorities. This list needs to be submitted by Friday, March 1st. Mr. Dixon asked the BOS if there were any changes they would like to make to this list. There were no changes requested.

Authorization to advertise an ordinance amending Chapter 282 of the Township Code revising the structure of the Historic Advisory Committee

The Historic Advisory Committee (HAC) ordinance #532 was set up with a formal structure with specific regulatory responsibilities and authority. The goal of the HAC was for them to tell important and interesting stories from Lower Gwynedd's history in various engaging ways. However, the formal structure makes the HAC's work counterproductive. Therefore, the HAC is asking for a new structure. Members would be appointed to one-year terms, membership could change from year to year depending on the story being told or events being organized, and members would be free to discuss events and topics in between the monthly meetings. Staff are seeking authorization to advertise an amendment to Chapter 282 of the Township code revising the structure of the HAC. This amendment will then be brought to the BOS at the March 12, 2024, meeting for approval. Ms.

Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. Martin, to advertise an amendment to Chapter 282 of the Township code. Motion passed 4-0.

Resolution #2024-09 authorizing submission of MontCo 2040 grant for Penllyn Station Trail

The staff is seeking authorization to submit a grant application in the amount of \$250,000. The grant will be for the Penllyn Train Station Trail Connection Project. The estimated total for the project is \$444,418, with the township providing a 47.75% match to complete the project. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. Martin, to approve Resolution #2024-09 authorizing submission of the MontCo2040 grant. Motion passed 4-0.

Review of Township Engineer's Report - February 2024

Mr. Hersh provided the engineers' report for the month of February. Mr. Twersky asked for an update regarding the project on Johns Lane. Mr. Hersh said they had a preconstruction meeting and have relocated the construction entrance. Work is scheduled to begin in March. Mr. Twersky asked if it would be possible to have letters sent out to the residents on John's Lane letting them know when construction would be starting. Mr. Hersh said he will reach out to the developer to get an accurate start date. Ms. Worman stated it would not be a problem to send communication out to the residents. He also asked for an update on precision watches. Ms. Worman stated that Kelli Scarlett, from Keystone, will be attending the next Building and Zoning meeting to give an update on the status of the construction.

Review of Traffic Engineer's Report - February 2024

Mr. Dixon provided the traffic engineer's report for February. There were no questions or comments.

Resolution #2024-10 authorizing signers for Citadel Account

RFP's were requested from several local banks for the Payroll Account, Sewer Checking and General Fund Checking accounts. After reviewing the information, staff decided on Citadel Credit Union. Resolution #2024-10 names the signers for the three accounts. The signers will include the five BOS, the Assistant Township Manager, and the Township Manager. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Twersky, to authorize the signers of the Citadel account.

Review of financials YTD/Fund and cash balances - January 2024

The BOS received the fund and cash balances, as well as the YTD financials for January 2024. The only question was why there was a negative balance in the recreation fund. Ms. Haldeman clarified that the fund transfer had not occurred yet.

Approval of invoices

The BOS received the warrant report for all checks dated 2/27/2024 totaling \$414,129.97. There were no questions or comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Ms. Martin, to approve the warrant report. Motion passed 4-0.

Approval of minutes - February 13, 2024

Board of Supervisors Minutes

February 27, 2024

The BOS received the minutes from the February 13, 2024, BOS meeting. There were no questions or comments. Ms. Duckett made a motion, seconded by Mr. Chong, to approve the February 13, 2024, meeting minutes. Motion passed 3-0. (Ms. Martin abstained)

SUPERVISOR LIAISON REPORTS

The BOS received the Liaison Reports for the EAC, the Park and Recreation Board and the Planning Commission. There were no questions or comments.

STAFF UPDATES

Mr. Farrell gave an update on the Ingersoll House. He has met with Lei Berry to discuss marketing materials and an open house schedule. There was also conversation regarding promoting an auction.

SUPERVISORS COMMENTS

Ms. Martin mentioned that there will be an Easter Egg Hunt on March 23rd.

Mr. Chong said he is looking forward to the Egg Hunt.

Mr. Twersky thanked the first responders. He also congratulated the police for Lower Gwynedd ranking number 47 on the list of safest towns to live in.

Ms. Duckett mentioned that there will be a joint meeting with the EAC on Thursday, February 29, 2024. She also thanked the police for keeping us safe.

Adjournment

Ms. Duckett made a motion at 8:22 pm to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. Martin. Motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully

Michelle Farzetta

Office Manager