

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

MAY 22, 2007

The Special Meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Upper St. Clair, duly advertised and posted in accordance with law, was called to order at 7:00 P.M. on Tuesday, May 22, 2007 in the LGI Room, Upper St. Clair High School, 1825 McLaughlin Run Road, Upper St. Clair, PA 15241.

PRESENT: Commissioner Mertz President
 Commissioner Bates Vice President
 Commissioner Brown
 Commissioner Marsh
 Commissioner McElhinny
 Commissioner Shimer
 Commissioner Orchowski

 Mark S. Mansfield Senior Assistant Township Manager
 Matthew R. Serakowski Assistant Township Manager
 August G. Stache, Jr. Director of Finance
 Paul Besterman Director of Recreation & Leisure Services
 Charles P. McCullough Township Attorney
 Jason Jesso Township Engineer Representative
 Debi Bakowski Recording Secretary

EXCUSED: Douglas A. Watkins Township Manager

PUBLIC: Approximately 60 people

Commissioner Ched Mertz, on behalf of the entire Board, welcomed and thanked the audience for attending. Commissioner Mertz explained that the motivation for the meeting was to present updated information regarding the Proposed Community Recreation Center project. He then turned the meeting over to Mr. Jason Jesso, The Gateway Engineers.

PRESENTATION RE. BOYCE MAYVIEW ACTIVE AREA SITE PLAN

Mr. Jason Jesso, The Gateway Engineers, described the PowerPoint presentation on the Boyce Mayview active area site plan regarding the fields, the perimeter trails, suggested traffic flow and the pedestrian circulation.

PRESENTATION RE. COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER PROJECT

Mr. Jim Larsen, Larsen Architects, provided a PowerPoint presentation showing the outside recreation areas, the inside First Floor Plan along with the Second Floor Plan. The slides showcased the Proposed Community Recreation Center from several views and angles.

Mr. Warren Bulseco, WTW Architects, provided additional information regarding the building components. He stated that the center is being designed as a multi-generational facility and that the center will be a dynamic area for the entire community.

PRESENTATION RE. ESTIMATED COSTS/TIMELINE

Mr. Mark Edelman, EPM Architecture, discussed the Proposed Boyce Mayview Park Community Recreation Center project budget. The budget was broken down into the following sections: 1-A) Boyce Mayview Park site development construction budget and Boyce Mayview Park site Civil Engineering budget; 1-B) Community Recreation Center site development and demolition of Wooden Barn and Root Cellar buildings; 2-B) Outdoor pool area site development (including aquatics); 3-B) Community Recreation Center building construction; along with the projected soft costs budget. The estimated total project cost with a 5% contingency is \$27,447,985.

A timeline indicating each project, the estimated length of each project and the beginning and end dates for each project were detailed. This information is available on the Township website.

PRESENTATION RE. FEE ANALYSIS

Mr. Jim Miele, Fee Structure Task Force, reviewed the background of the Fee Structure Task Force and the extensive process that the Fee Structure Task Force completed to help determine the Fee Membership Analysis. Mr. Miele provided information on Selected Market Rate comparisons and Sample Annual/Seasonal Resident Fees.

PRESENTATION RE. TAX IMPLICATIONS

Mr. August Stache, Jr., Director of Finance, described the amount of debt to be incurred and the calculation of annual debt service costs. He presented the calculation of the tax impact/debt service costs, with fundraising of \$2,000,000 included, in three separate ways. First, the tax impact calculations were shown on a total Real Estate tax increase for the Debt Service. The second calculation showed the effect of funding of the Debt through an Earned Income Tax rate increase only. The third calculation for the tax impact of the Debt Service was calculated with 50% coming from Real Estate Taxes and 50% coming from Earned Income Taxes. With the average real estate mileage assessment in Upper St. Clair at \$175,000.00, the cost per household would equal \$82.43. The average income of an Upper St. Clair household is approximately \$176,000.00 making the cost per household equal to \$150.48. Combined, the tax impact on the average Upper St. Clair household would be an additional \$232.91 per year.

Mr. Stache then answered resident's questions regarding his presentation.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Mr. Harry Kunselman, 345 Oaklawn Drive, expressed his concern regarding the membership fee structure for the Proposed Community Recreation Center. He stated that after the newness wears off, memberships typically decline. He questioned that when this does happen, would the 30-year amortization schedule be able to be met without increasing tax revenues.

Mr. James Villanova, 1915 Murdstone Drive, stated his concerns to the Board with respect to the various activities that are proposed to be available as they may be over-planned for the types of memberships that are anticipated. He believes the Township should conduct a survey questionnaire with the residents of Upper St. Clair as well as to the residents of surrounding

communities that are anticipated to participate at the Proposed Community Recreation Center. He suggested the membership fee structure should be based on the responses from the survey.

Mr. Frank Procaccini, 1308 Woodlawn Court, requested clarification with respect to a \$5 million difference of what was presented at a Special Board of Commissioners meeting in the fall of 2006 at \$22.5 million and what is now being presented at \$27.5 million.

Ms. Karen Williams, 1547 Glenwood Drive, stated that she had been a member of the citizens Ad Hoc Advisory Group and how her skepticism regarding the Proposed Community Recreation Center was challenged when she participated in an outing to a comparable Community Recreation Center in Ohio. Ms. Williams stated that she is supportive of the Proposed Community Recreation Center and commends the Board of Commissioners for remaining focused in keeping the community aware and involved with the development of this project.

Mr. Bill Babcock, 3410 Brookdale Drive, expressed his support in favor of the Proposed Community Recreation Center from the beginning but questioned that should the bid packages come in significantly opposite of that of the architects estimates, would the Board be prepared to reduce some of the elements of the facility to meet the \$27.5 million.

Mr. Mark Hamilton, 1910 Murdstone Road, raised concern regarding property values in the Township. He believes there will not be a significant impact from the Proposed Community Recreation Center. Mr. Hamilton suggested a referendum and if the majority ruled he would be in favor of the Proposed Community Recreation Center.

Mr. Bill Lang, 1117 Galaxy Circle, expressed his concern for the development of walkways to the entrance of the Proposed Community Recreation Center. Mr. Lang also emphasized the traffic speeds that vehicles exceed along Mayview Road and Bernsberry Narrow which are already a danger to pedestrians.

Commissioner Mertz explained that the Board of Commissioners is in the process of developing a traffic calming policy for Upper St. Clair. Mr. Mertz directed that residents may access the Township's website for more information regarding situations in their neighborhoods that may apply to the Traffic Calming Policy.

Mr. Jason Jesso, The Gateway Engineers, stated that a walkway is being designed to go around and through the Proposed Community Recreation Center where a pedestrian and biking access entrance will be just past Skyridge Drive. Mr. Jesso advised that there currently are no plans to put sidewalks along Mayview Road.

Mr. David Brown, 2678 Gloucester Drive, voiced his concern regarding the issue of a referendum and stressed his belief that a referendum would allow the Community to determine whether or not the Proposed Community Recreation Center should be built. Mr. Brown also questioned if the borrowing base would be increased as the \$22.5 million figure from last fall has increased to \$27.5 million and if the Township is still under its borrowing base with the increased amount.

Mr. McCullough explained the issue of a referendum and why it is not necessary for the Township to utilize a referendum. Since the Township does not need to increase its debt load to

be able to afford to build the Proposed Community Recreation Center, a referendum is not warranted.

Commissioner Mertz requested the Board of Commissioners to express their individual views on whether they support the Township moving forward with the Proposed Community Recreation Center.

Commissioner Bates stated that he is in favor of the Proposed Community Recreation Center. Commissioner Bates acknowledged the Ad Hoc Advisory Group members which are residents of the Township. He further explained how their research and dedication has made the development of the Proposed Community Recreation Center the most open process the Township has pursued. Commissioner Bates reiterated Mr. McCullough's explanation as to why the Township does not have to propose a referendum to the community because the spending limit is under the debt ceiling that the State of Pennsylvania permits.

Commissioner Shimer gave his opinion on the positive influences the Proposed Community Recreation Center's impact would have for the Township and its residents. Commissioner Shimer defined the referendum question. He explained the avenue of referendum would mean the Township would have to raise the debt limit and since this is not the issue, the Commissioners are therefore saving the taxpayers money by not going to a referendum.

Commissioner Orchowski reiterated that the consensus of the Board is to move ahead in a positive and informative manner with every aspect of the Proposed Community Recreation Center. Commissioner Orchowski stated that initially he was also in favor of a referendum but it was only until he understood the requirements of the State of Pennsylvania and that referendum is not a consideration in this matter.

Commissioner Marsh expressed that the fees for the Proposed Community Recreation Center need to be established. Commissioner Marsh insists that a non-resident will be paying more than a Township resident and that the next steps will be determining the fee structure for memberships.

Commissioner Brown explained also that a referendum was not necessary as the Township was not going to raise the borrowing base. Commissioner Brown continued that the Commissioners are elected to educate the taxpayers and make decisions in the best interests of the community.

Commissioner McElhinny encouraged residents to view the Township website to review the proposed membership fee structures and explained that there are several membership rates and daily rates to choose from for those who may not want to pay the yearly fee.

Mr. Harvey Rubin, 1892 Tilton Drive, spoke regarding the issue of the property value increase effect and how the delaying of this project will raise the cost of the Proposed Community Recreation Center.

Ms. Shellie Yeung, 389 Oaklawn Drive, stated that the development of the Proposed Community Recreation Center will have a positive impact on the Community. Ms. Young believes that the tax costs are minimal compared to the rising costs of health care. She commented that the Proposed Community Recreation Center will be a key to prevention of heart disease and diabetes for all ages.

Ms. Maryanne Burke, 1308 Greystone Drive, stated that she believes the Commissioners have been diligent in keeping the Township residents apprised of all aspects for the Proposed Community Recreation Center. She feels it will have a positive impact on the Township and its surrounding communities.

Ms. Danielle Miele, 1745 Waterford Court, as a current high school senior student, expressed her concerns with respect to how the Board seemed to disregard the minority of the residents that are opposed to the Proposed Community Recreation Center.

Mr. Ed Linus, 1204 Skyridge Drive, said he was skeptical when the Ad Hoc Committee first approached him to be a member with respect to the Proposed Community Recreation Center. Now that he has become educated through the process, he fully supports the Board to continue.

Commissioner Mertz thanked all for attending and advised the public that the Board of Commissioners will process all the concerns proposed by the comments both positive and negative from the residents in moving forward with the Proposed Community Recreation Center. He encouraged the residents to continue to attend all the Board meetings to remain informed and offered that the information regarding the Proposed Community Recreation Center is also available on the Township's website and in the Township Library.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:58 PM.

Lisa B. Cummings
Administrative Assistant
June 12, 2007