

**Towamencin Township  
Board of Supervisors  
Work Session  
August 12, 2020  
7:30 PM**

**Present:**

H. Charles Wilson III, Chairman  
Laura Smith, Vice Chairman  
Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Treasurer  
Richard Marino, Secretary

**Staff:**

Robert A. Ford, Township Manager  
Jack Dooley, Esq., Township Solicitor  
Tom Zarko, Township Engineer  
Niral Modi, IT Staff  
Paul T. Dickinson, Chief of Police

**Present Remotely:**

Daniel Bell, Asst. Treasurer/Asst. Secretary  
Colleen Ehrle, Assistant to Township Manager  
Brooke Neve, Finance Director/Assistant Township Manager

**Absent:**

Chairman Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM and led the assemblage in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Wilson summarized the severe impact of Tropical Storm Isaias to the region and Towamencin Township. The Township experienced its worst flooding in at least 20 years, receiving approximately eight inches of rain. At the height of the storm, the Township had 14 roads closed for flooding (several of which never flooded before) and at least three bridges submerged. Our police, public works crews, and volunteer firefighters responded admirably under the most extreme conditions. The true tragedy of the storm was the tragic loss of 5-year old Eliza Talal, one of the Township's most innocent residents. There was a moment of silence for Eliza and her family.

Chairman Wilson noted a planned vigil, organized by community volunteers, was scheduled to be held Friday, August 14<sup>th</sup>, with a GoFundMe page set-up for the family.

**Opening Comments**

Chairman Wilson made the following announcements:

- Due to the COVID-19 Emergency, the meeting is being held via Zoom video communications. The public was invited to participate remotely and e-mail questions to info@towamencin.org prior to the meeting.
- A “Movie in the Park” event is scheduled for Thursday, August 13<sup>th</sup> at Fischer’s Park. The animated feature “Toy Story 4” will start at dusk, approximately 8 pm. In accordance with the Governor’s directives, attendance is limited to 250 participants and will be controlled through the distribution of wrist bands when entering the orange fenced area.
- The Township’s summer concert series continues with the following dates:
  - August 20<sup>th</sup> - Lolly and Yoyo
  - August 27<sup>th</sup> - Shot of Southern
  - September 10<sup>th</sup> - Don’t Call Me Francis

Residents are encouraged to continue to check the Township website should it become necessary to postpone these events again.

**Public Comments**

None

**Approval of Minutes: July 22, 2020**

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved the July 22, 2020 minutes.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell  
 Voting No: N/A  
 Abstaining: N/A  
 Absent: N/A

**Zoning, Subdivision and Land Development**

**Conditional Use Hearing - Core 5 Warehouse Facility (Wambold & Allentown Roads)**

A land development plan, associated with this application, proposes the development of three (3) industrial buildings with a total of 591,360 square feet. The applicant is proposing to place parking spaces “in reserve” to be constructed in the future if needed. The provision to reserve parking for future use requires conditional use approval by the Board of Supervisors. A conditional use is a use that is permitted subject to compliance with a set of conditions or requirements set forth in the zoning ordinance.

Chairman Wilson introduced Township Solicitor Jack Dooley, who opened the hearing by presenting the associated hearing exhibits. Michael J. Clement, Esq., representing the applicant, Core 5 Industrial Partners, LLC., presented to the Board. John Anderson, engineer for the applicant, provided witness testimony. A court reporter was present via Zoom to make a complete

and formal record of the hearing. Solicitor Dooley concluded the hearing noting the Board would render a decision within 45 days.

**Preliminary and Final Plan Presentation – Core 5 Warehouse Facility (Wambold & Allentown Roads)**

This is a land development application for a 73.8 acre site located on Wambold Road, near its intersection of Allentown Road. The proposed development includes three (3) industrial buildings with a total of 591,360 square feet and associated site improvements.

Michael J. Clement, Esq., along with John Anderson and the applicant's traffic engineer Benjamin Guthrie, presented the development plan to the Board. Mr. Anderson reviewed the layout of the development, noting the three future warehouses, storage and designated parking locations. Mr. Anderson then reviewed the truck traffic circulation with respect to entrance/exits and the local roadways. After the development overview, Mr. Clement stated he would not review all the consultant review letter comments, as the applicant has agreed to comply with the majority of them, but the focus would be on specific comments where relief or additional information is needed, namely tree removals and stream-bed stabilization. Mr. Clement noted the applicant received favorable reviews from both the Township and Montgomery County Planning Commissions.

Mr. Anderson noted there are 1548 trees (over 6" in diameter and over a foot above ground) which would need to be removed as part of the development, with approximately 400 planned tree replacements. The applicant proposes a fee in lieu of \$252,000 to address the required tree replacement.

In addition, the applicant offered a \$47,500 stream restoration contribution in reference to the ordinance requirement to stabilize the existing stream bed. In order to stabilize this stream bed, it would require a stream encroachment permit issued by the US Army Corps of Engineers and DEP. These permits can take up to 18 to 24 months, due to the extensive testing involved. Mr. Anderson reviewed the property improvements, noting the development would actually reduce the flow into the stream over time. Mr. Anderson reviewed the stormwater management modifications and designs to the site.

After the developer presentation, Towamencin resident representatives - Jackie Swanson, Janine David, Lisa Picozzi and Sheryl Ciotti, who reside on neighboring roads, including Kimberly Way, Katherine Way and Sterling Way - presented a slide presentation depicting the ongoing traffic concerns their neighborhood encounters currently. The focus of the resident presentation was citing examples of the continued truck traffic, specifically tractor-trailers ignoring the current truck ban along the stretch of Derstine Road, northbound from Allentown Road to municipal limit. On November 14, 2018, the Board adopted an ordinance enforcing the ban. According to the presentation, the trucks obstruct lines of site for local commuters, cause backups when navigating turns on to Derstine Road from Allentown Road, and create other unsafe conditions. The residents documented various scenarios encountered, including the local bus stop on Derstine Road, which provides service to over 30 children in the area. Due to the blind spots caused approaching this intersection, along with the hard turn, the truck traffic endangers the children waiting at the stop.

The group summarized that the community infrastructure can not handle the current truck traffic, let alone any more flows from the anticipated Core 5 development. The residents added the future 309 Connector is not a solution as the construction completion is several years out. It is the expectation that the future 309 Connector would redirect the majority of truck traffic to the major arteries, providing relief to these neighborhood roads.

The residents, Board of Supervisors, Chief Dickinson, and applicant representatives went back and forth discussing the various traffic concerns, enforcement efforts, and methods to improve the area. The applicant noted this warehouse use is intended for national distribution, not local deliveries. The property is marketed by highlighting the close proximity to 1-476. Mr. Guthrie noted that 90 percent of anticipated traffic created by this development is expected to circulate to and from the turnpike, avoiding the Derstine Road/Allentown Road intersection at issue.

Supervisor Marino acknowledged the resident concerns and commended them on their detailed presentation. He cited his goal is a two-way ban of truck traffic on Derstine Road, forcing trucks onto Clemens Road, then onto Forty Foot Road. Supervisor Smith noted regardless of whether or not the project moves forward, talks need to be revived between Hatfield and Towamencin Township staff and officials to get a collective two-way ban in place. Supervisor Littley agreed about putting pressure on Hatfield Township to be a good neighbor in this scenario, but also recommended that the resident group reach out to State Representative Liz Hanbidge. Representative Hanbidge can use her power in Harrisburg with regard to funding efforts to improve the local traffic. Supervisor Bell acknowledged the need to strike a balance between addressing the residents noted safety concerns and to support the property owners' rights to develop a property within the appropriate zoning district.

Chairman Wilson expressed the consensus of the Board was to address the truck traffic ban, regardless of the land development plan presented this evening. He asked the applicant for an estimated construction completion timeline. Mr. Clement noted 10 to 12 months. Chairman Wilson responded that this would give the Board time to work on diverting the truck traffic off Derstine Road with the goal of a total two-way truck ban.

Chairman Wilson then polled the Board on the issues related to the tree removal and stream stabilization efforts. The applicant proposed a \$252,000 in lieu of fee for the tree removals, and a \$47,500 fee to address the stream stabilization. The Board was agreeable to the noted contributions, as well as, the waiver and deferral requests outlined in the CKS July 9<sup>th</sup> review letter. Township Engineer Tom Zarko did not have any concerns with the applicant's deferral and waivers requests, as they were routine for a development of this type and size.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board authorized staff to prepare preliminary and final plan approval resolutions - considering the noted contributions and wavier and deferral requests - to be placed on a subsequent Board agenda.

- Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell
- Voting No: N/A
- Abstaining: N/A

Absent: N/A

At approximately 10:20 pm, the Board of Supervisors and staff took a 5-6 minute recess.

**Resolution 20-35: Preliminary Plan Approval – Franklin Street Storage**

This land development plan proposes the consolidation of six parcels in to a single 2.2 acre lot for the development of a 102,720 square foot self-storage building. The site is located on Franklin Street, adjacent to Bustard Road and is located within a C-Commercial zoning district, as well as, the Village Overlay District. The applicant made a formal presentation to the Board of Supervisors at their July 8<sup>th</sup> meeting.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved Resolution 20-35, Preliminary Plan Approval Franklin Street Storage.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell  
Voting No: N/A  
Abstaining: N/A  
Absent: N/A

**Resolution 20-36: Final Plan Approval – Franklin Street Storage**

Per the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, a land development plan is generally a two-step process: a preliminary plan, followed by a final plan. The preliminary plan is usually intended to provide a more generalized plan of development. The final plan provides design details for immediate development.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved Resolution 20-36, Final Plan Approval Franklin Street Storage.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell  
Voting No: N/A  
Abstaining: N/A  
Absent: N/A

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

**Public Works Committee**

The Public Works Committee meets on a monthly basis to scope projects and identify efficiencies related to Township infrastructure, properties, and equipment. The Committee met on July 28<sup>th</sup>. Supervisor Marino provided an update.

Roadway Maintenance Program – David Tomko, Township resident and Director of Operations at Doylestown Township, provided an overview of software (RoadBotics) used at Doylestown Township. He noted that staff at Doylestown is satisfied with the information provided and they have integrated the data into their asset management database. He recommended the program to Towamencin as a more efficient method for evaluating roads. Township Engineer Tom Zarko noted he was working on getting a firm price for the program, but had received a preliminary estimate of \$15,000. Once received, the Board of Supervisors will review for authorization.

Rittenhouse Road Culvert Replacement Project Update – The project was complete. The Township Engineer met with an engineer representing the insurance company for an outstanding claim, associated with the incident that damaged the culvert. Mr. Zarko noted the bridge had experienced flooding with the recent tropical storm with some damage to the guiderail. Mr. Zarko also noted that Public Works staff did a great job with clean-up post storm. The culvert would be inspected again by his staff.

Central Drive Storm Drainage Improvement Project – The Board recently approved the supplemental cleaning proposal of a number of the storm sewer lines. The contractor started the flushing service earlier this week and would continue into the following week. After the debris is removed, the contractor will re-televise the effected runs at no additional cost to the Township.

Curb Repair Notifications - Township staff prepared the residential curb replacement notices in advance of the 2021 Paving Contract. The committee discussed several comments/complaints that arose after receiving their notifications. It was agreed that more information should be provided on the Township's website and newsletters. A group of affected residents had scheduled a Zoom meeting with Township staff and a contractor, who was working with the residents collectively.

2020 ADA Ramp Replacement Work – Mr. Zarko noted the intend to award was issued to the low bidder and he has been in discussion with the contractor regarding project requirements. The Committee agreed CKS should be more involved in the layout and inspection of the ramps to avoid potential construction issues.

Fischer's Park Pedestrian Bridge – Mr. Zarko noted the initial design submission was rejected due to the inconsistent design and aesthetics noted for the project. Revised design drawings were recently submitted and distributed to the Committee, who agreed with the updated design. Mr. Zarko will request formal shop drawings.

Fischer's Park Bathroom Vandalism – There have been multiple reports of clogged toilets with human waste outside the toilets. Posted signs were suggested to deter the vandalism, as well as, switching the toilets with auto-flush units. Mr. Hillmantel will get proposals for the new equipment.

Fairview Road Sanitary Sewer Lateral – Public Works investigated a resident complaint. Staff recommended the lateral be relocated to correct the problem.

Green Lane Road Speeding Complaint – Township Manager Robert Ford reviewed the complaint with the Committee. He provided the resident with procedures to petition the Board for a future sidewalk installation.

Fischer's Park Concert Preparations – Mr. Hillmantel reviewed the measures in place for the upcoming concerts, including: temporary fencing, circles provided on lawn for social distancing, and bathrooms would be cleaned hourly.

**Resolution 20-37: Master Casting Agreement**

This agreement allows for the incorporation of utility casting adjustments into PennDOT paving projects. Prior to a paving project, the Township is required to prep / raise our manholes, inlets, etc. This agreement would allow such work to be incorporated into the overall PennDOT project so that the Township, while still having to pay for the prep work, would not have to coordinate or oversee the work. Our Public Works Director reviewed the agreement and costs, and recommends that it be implemented. Execution of the agreement does not obligate the Township to implement it, but makes the opportunities available as an option. Starting this year, PennDOT has set the term of the agreement for 9 years with price changes every 3 years.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved Resolution 20-37, Master Casting Agreement.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell  
Voting No: N/A  
Abstaining: N/A  
Absent: N/A

**Ratification of Emergency Declaration – Tropical Storm Isaias**

As Tropical Storm Isaias was approaching the region, the Township's Emergency Operations Center was activated at 11:30 am, Tuesday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, with an emergency condition affirmed by the Township's Emergency Management Coordinator, Chief of Police, and Township Manager. Pursuant to the provisions of Section 7501 of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Services Code, as amended, officials declared the existence of a disaster emergency in Towamencin Township.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board ratified the Emergency Declaration for Towamencin Township associated with Tropical Storm Isaias.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell  
Voting No: N/A  
Abstaining: N/A  
Absent: N/A

**Resolution 20-38: Sale of Township Manager Vehicle**

According §1504 to the Second Class Township Code, the Board of Supervisors must authorize the disposal of personal property. Anything with a fair market value of \$2,000 or more needs to be

advertised and sold at auction. Due to significant repairs needed to pass inspection, the Township intends to dispose of the Township Manager vehicle through auction so that a portion of the costs can be recouped by the Township. The vehicle to be sold at auction is a 2002 Ford Explorer XLT.

On a motion by Supervisor Littley, seconded by Supervisor Smith, the Board approved Resolution 20-38, Sale of Township Manager Vehicle.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell  
Voting No: N/A  
Abstaining: N/A  
Absent: N/A

**Approval for Police Department Overtime – Enforcement of Derstine Road Truck Ban**

At the conclusion of the meeting, Chairman Wilson asked Chief Dickinson if he could quantify the extra time needed to enforce the truck ban along Derstine Road. Chief Dickinson responded that eight hours, per week, seemed reasonable.

On a motion by Supervisor Bell, seconded by Supervisor Littley, the Board authorized up to eight overtime hours, per week, for the Police Department to further surveil and enforce the truck ban along Derstine Road.

Voting Yes: H. Charles Wilson, III, Laura Smith, Daniel M. Littley, Jr., Richard Marino, Daniel Bell  
Voting No: N/A  
Abstaining: N/A  
Absent: N/A

There being no additional business, the meeting adjourned at 10:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Colleen Ehrle  
Assistant to Township Manager