

April 11, 2013
8:05 PM

The Agriculture Securing Hearing of the Monroe Township Board of Supervisors was called to order by Chairman Castle. The purpose of the meeting was to hold a hearing on the request to include 132.54 acres owned by the Pennsylvania Agricultural Education Center in the agriculture security area of Monroe Township.

ATTENDANCE

A.W. Castle, Chairman
Phil Kehoe, Vice Chairman
Samuel Simmons, Supervisor

Michael Pykosh, Solicitor
Mark Bruening, Engineer
Marjorie Metzger, Admin. Asst.
Greg Rogalski, Zoning Officer

PROCEDURE

Mr. Pykosh explained the hearing is being held to consider the application of the Pennsylvania Agriculture Education Center to allow their property to be admitted into the agriculture security area of Monroe Township. The property is 132.54 acres. The Monroe Township Planning Commission and the Agriculture Security Advisory Committee had held their meetings and made their recommendations.

BOARD'S EXHIBITS:

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| <u>Board's Exhibit #1</u> | Letter of January 2, 2013 – acknowledging receipt of application. |
| <u>Board's Exhibit #2</u> | Application |
| <u>Board's Exhibit #3</u> | Pennsylvania Code Section 7 PA code 1381.26 – Factors to be considered by local government |
| <u>Board's Exhibit #4</u> | Cumberland County Land Capability Classification |
| <u>Board's Exhibit #5</u> | List of mapping units that qualify as Prime Farmland Cumberland/Perry Counties |
| <u>Board's Exhibit #6</u> | Aerial map of parcel in question |
| <u>Board's Exhibit #7</u> | Monroe Township map of parcels designated for Farmland Preservation |

<u>Board's Exhibit #8</u>	Plan of hoover engineering of Diehl Farm for lot in question – color coded for soil type
<u>Board's Exhibit #9</u>	Monroe Township comprehensive Plan (2007)
<u>Board's Exhibit #10</u>	Deed from Raymond E. Diehl and Genevieve A. Diehl to Pennsylvania agriculture Education Center date December 3, 2012, and recorded as instrument number 201237711
<u>Board's Exhibit #11</u>	Proof of Publication of Notice of Hearing published January 15, 2013
<u>Board's Exhibit #12</u>	Proof of Posting letter dated January 14, 2013
<u>Board's Exhibit #13</u>	Letter of January 31, 2013 – indicating that non objections or modifications were filed with the Township
<u>Board's Exhibit #14</u>	Favorable Decision of the Agricultural Security Committee dated February 20, 2013, with certified receipts
<u>Board's Exhibit #15</u>	Favorable Decision of the Planning Commission dated March 7, 2013, with certified receipts
<u>Board's Exhibit #16</u>	Favorable Decision of the Cumberland County Planning Department dated February 21, 2013
<u>Board's Exhibit #17</u>	Second notice of Public Hearing of April 11, 2013
<u>Board's Exhibit #18</u>	Correspondence to Applicant and Township with Second Public Notice
<u>Board's Exhibit #19</u>	Correspondence of Monroe Township (Marjorie Metzger) confirming posting of Second Advertised Notice

APPLICANT'S TESTIMONY

Richard Gensler and Harry Barrick present.

Mr. Castle said this area has been agriculture for a long time and a training facility to help educate the people in farming is a good idea. Monroe Township has a long standing interest in farming and preserving what we have. The FFA and 4-H are our kids and our community. He is overjoyed to vote for this. This request is another reason for the Locust Point Bridge.

Mr. Kehoe asked about the background of the education center and the timing of it. Mr. Gensler said they plan to work in conjunction with FFA and 4-H groups. They are being pushed in some school districts and they have no place to go. There is more to agriculture than the classroom. The kids will be incorporated into the working farm. Mr. Kehoe was thinking about an official building, an education center. Mr. Gensler said no.

Mr. Simmons mentioned he discussed this matter with Agriculture Security Advisory Committee. He thanked the PA Education Center for what they are interested in doing. When he worked for the Agriculture Security program, he suggested purchasing a farm and have people farm it to see what farming is all about. He applauds their efforts. He hopes it is opened up to families to see what farming is like.

Mr. Kehoe said it is a sad state of affairs when agri-tainment is needed to educate and get exposure for the agriculture purpose. It is business to promote.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Wilbur Wolf said he is fortunate to have grandparents on farms. It is a very good thing to have this come to the Township. He questioned what entity the PA Agriculture Center is. Mr. Gensler said it is a non-profit corporation.

Mr. Wolf asked if it will be exclusive farming, or will there be any non-farming activities anticipated on the property. Mr. Gensler said everything that takes place on the property will be associated with agriculture. There may be a little tractor show, or garden tractor pulls for the kids, or a plowing contest. The farm community also has recreation activities.

Mr. Wolf asked about the land in the 100 year flood. Mr. Gensler said it will be kept mowed and cleaned up. Mr. Wolf asked if the stream cover would be allowed to regroup on the stream side, and Mr. Gensler said yes.

Mr. Wolf asked about the area that had been used for camping and the stream cover was removed. Mr. Gensler said it would be returned to the prior conditions. Mr. Castle said they will have to comply with all federal, state, county, and township rules and regulations.

Mr. Kehoe asked if there would be a camp ground. Mr. Gensler said that may be approached at some time down the line as a fundraiser. Mr. Castle said there are pretty strict rules on that use. Mr. Rogalski said it is not a permitted use in that zone.

Reza Azizkhan asked for the dimensions of the building. Mr. Gensler said there is a barn on the property currently that will probably be removed because it is too far gone to save. There is another concrete footer the size of 50' x 100', which was the steer pen. It will be used for a storage building. There may be a new building also, probably the same size of 50' x 100'.

Mr. Wolf asked what the wet lands will be used for, between the mill race and Yellow Breeches Creek, which is not accessible. Mr. Bruening said the barriers can be moved to allow access. Mr. Wolf said there is about 12 acres between the mill race and the creek. Mr. Gensler said it is flood plain, and will just be maintained, or possibly make hay. Mr. Wolf said he wants to make sure it will be normal agriculture activities. He will keep an eye on it to make sure it represents the spirit of the agriculture security area.

DELIBERATION & DECISION

On the motion of Mr. Castle, and seconded by Mr. Simmons, and by unanimous vote of the Supervisors it was duly RESOLVED to adopt Resolution 2013-06, which adds the 132.65 acres to the agriculture security area of Monroe Township.

ADJOURN

The Agriculture Security Hearing was concluded at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marjorie E. Metzger
Admin. Asst./ Secretary-Treasurer