

June 6, 2012
7:00 PM

The regular meeting of the Monroe Township Planning Commission was called to order by Vice Chairman Brymesser. The pledge of allegiance was said by all.

ATTENDANCE

Sheldon Brymesser, Vice Chairman	Kirk Stoner, County Planning
Sharon Nelson, Secretary	Mike Pykosh, Solicitor
Nancy Codner, Member	Marjorie Metzger, Secretary
Dave DeNicholas, Member	Mark Bruening, Engineer

MINUTES

On the motion of Ms. Nelson, and seconded by Mr. DeNicholas, and by unanimous vote of the members it was duly RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the May 2, 2011 regular meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE None

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION None

NEW BUSINESS

SOUTH MIDDLETON TWP. MUN. AUTH. – LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Lance Hoover of Glace Associates and Bob Kissinger present. The land development plan is for the waste water project. The township engineer's comments have been received and they are working on resolving the outstanding issues. They will provide a complete package within the next week or so.

Engineer's Comments:

The township engineer's comments dated June 1, 2012 were reviewed. Some additional calculations must be done for the flood and storm water management.

Board Comments:

Ms. Codner asked if any new building will be in the wooded area. Mr. Kissinger said everything will be constructed in the open area, about 50' off the tree line. He doesn't think there will be one tree removed for the project.

Mr. Bruening mentioned there is a special exception request to be reviewed by the Zoning Hearing Board for this project. The Planning Commission does not act on the land development plan until the special exception is acted on by the Zoning Hearing Board.

Mr. DeNicholas asked if a wetland study was completed. Mr. Hoover said there was one done about three years ago, and another one completed about 9 months ago. It will show up in the next plan submission. Mr. DeNicholas asked if there would be a permit from DEP for the floodplain work, and Mr. Bruening said yes.

Mr. Stoner asked what the price of the project is, and Mr. Hoover said around \$14.3 million.

Mr. Brymesser asked where the new construction will take place. Mr. Kissinger said at the top the solid handling facility will be moved, plus tanks and a building added.

Mr. Brymesser asked about pedestrians and bike traffic once the project is complete. Mr. Kissinger said they are thinking about closing the lower gate. Foot traffic will probably be permitted behind the reed beds, but the upper area will be fenced off. We can't endanger the public. It is private property. We will be coming to the township with something for the newsletter.

Ms. Nelson was concerned with access during flooding if the gate is closed. Mr. Kissinger said the low point of the creek bank is near our access to the treatment plant. It actually turns into an island during flooding and they use a foot bridge. The gate would be open during hours of 8 AM – 4 PM, Monday through Friday so people could pay their bills. The gates can be opened for emergencies, and the emergency companies have access to our facilities. Mr. Bruening suggested putting an advisory sign at the intersection of Leidigh and Criswell concerning the cul-de-sac, and telling the EMA people.

Mr. Pykosh asked when construction will begin. Mr. Hoover said the NPDES permit requires a project to be awarded by September 30, 2012. We expect construction to begin late December 2012, early January 2013. We will be going through two winters and wet seasons. It is about a two year project.

Mr. Pykosh asked if the bids are out now. Mr. Hoover said no, they expect to advertise in July or August. We like to have about six weeks bid time.

Mr. Brymesser asked if there will be any down time while connections are being made. Mr. Hoover said at the most it would be about ½ hour to switch a unit. We are taking all the steps to prevent any sewer overflow.

Mr. Brymesser asked if the capacity will increase and if there will be more EDU's available. Mr. Hoover said the plant will have a capacity of 1.5 million gallons per day, which now it is 750,000. There would be more EDU's available.

Ms. Codner asked why SMTMA is located in Monroe Township. Mr. Kissinger said he understands in early 1970's the federal government mandated that a regional plant be constructed to solve the problems. A 75% grant was received from the federal government and a 10% grant was received from FHA. EPA was involved, and they looked at the area and between EPA and FHA they decided on the low point of the stream and they picked the site for the plant.

Plan:

On the motion of Ms. Nelson, and seconded by Mr. DeNicholas, and by unanimous vote of the members it was duly RESOLVED to table the South Middleton Township Municipal Authority land development plan.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY - WIND

Mr. Stoner provided a copy of a draft model ordinance from Cumberland County. It is up to each township to figure out what they want for their own township. This area is not well suited for wind energy. There are two types of wind, the accessory wind which is located in back yards, and principal wind, which is the major power companies. The big area to consider is the height restriction. You can't stay at the 35' regulation, but more in the area of 100-150' for these windmills. Other setbacks in the ordinance are needed so the windmill can't fall and hit a house or other structure. It must also be decided in what zone to allow them. Another concern that has been raised is noise, and Mr. Stoner said there is no noise to a windmill.

Mr. DeNicholas said residential area setbacks are extremely important. He is concerned with damage and liability. How do you keep children or adults away from the windmills? Where do we really want them, and what about the height? He is not against anything that will help energy consumption on this planet, but we have to be careful.

Mr. Brymesser was concerned that if a windmill had to be set so far away from the structure, by the time the energy was generated and went through the lines, the volts would be reduced. It would be defeating the purpose. He mentioned the windmill that was erected at Joe McCorkels property, and it is being taken down. We should find out why. Ms. Nelson also suggested finding out the height of this windmill.

Mr. Stoner asked how high Mr. Brymesser's silo is, and the response was 72'. Mr. Bruening mentioned the communication tower in White Rock is about 180' high. Ms. Codner mentioned the need for red lights on a tower that high.

Mr. Stoner said the likely area for a principal use would be on the south mountain. The township would need a policy. The use must be provided for, but somewhere else could be decided on.

Ms. Codner asked for any figures or percentages on how windmills perform, and how many are out of order and how often and how much maintenance they require. Mr. Stoner had no numbers but said there are regulations in the proposed ordinance on decommissioning windmills if they become inoperable for so long.

Mr. Bruening suggested requiring bonding for this use.

Mr. DeNicholas said there are so many variables. He is more concerned with high density areas, children and adults. Like Bill Castle, he is not one to tell people what to do with their land, but do something in the safest way without being too onerous. That is the tone he would like to set. There is potential for loss of life.

Ms. Codner suggested requiring a certain amount of insurance to cover liability. Mr. Pykosh said the township would not want to keep track of insurance, or how they would police something like that.

Mr. Bruening mentioned the use by right, such as towers. Utilities can do what they want. Mr. Pykosh mentioned the Federal Communications Act and he would have to review it. There is also the question of someone coming in and leasing a big piece of land and paying the owner so much for each windmill, depending on how much electric could be generated.

Mr. Brymesser mentioned considering allowing them as a conditional use. Ms. Nelson said that was used with the solar energy proposal. Mr. Brymesser said wind power is not practical for Monroe Township. He suggested each Board member review the model ordinance, and make their recommendations or suggestions, and be ready to go over the proposal at the next meeting.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION None

STAFF COMMENTS

Ms. Codner questioned why the Allenberry conditional use continues to receive extensions from the Supervisors. Isn't there a limit. Mr. Bruening said according to the state and Governor, all approvals are guaranteed until July 2013. The Board at this point has no choice.

ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marjorie E. Metzger, Administrative Assistant