

MINUTES OF MEETING
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP

The Board of Commissioners of Springfield Township met in regular monthly meeting on Wednesday evening, March 13, 2024 at 7:40 PM at the Springfield Township Building for the purpose of transacting the general business of the Township. The meeting was also offered in a live streaming feature. All members of the Board were present. Commissioner Lee presided.

Mr. Lee asked Mr. Taylor if any remote public comments were received prior to the meeting. Mr. Taylor responded that no public comments were received.

Mr. Lee asked everyone to join the Board of Commissioners in a moment of silent reflection honoring the service men and women who have placed themselves in harm's way in order to help preserve our safety at home and overseas.

Mr. Lee led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion (Wilson-Cobb) carried unanimously dispensing with the reading of the minutes of the previous meeting and approving same as written and recorded in the official minute book of the Township.

Mr. Lee noted the presence of former Commissioner Mike Maxwell in the audience.

Mr. Lee announced that the Board of Commissioners conducted an executive session as part of its March 11, 2024 workshop meeting to discuss one litigation matter and one real estate matter.

Commissioner Lee announced that Magisterial District Justice Kate McGill was in attendance to administer the oath of office to newly promoted Sergeant Christopher Calhoun and Corporal Calvin Wiley. Chief Pitkow provided background information for both Sgt. Calhoun and Cpl. Wiley. Judge McGill then administered the oath of office to both gentlemen.

Chief Pitkow called recently retired Police Sergeant Bruce Nisbet to the front of the room. Chief Pitkow provided the highlights of Mr. Nisbet's career with Springfield Township. Commissioner Cobb read into the record Resolution No. 1633, a resolution honoring Bruce Nisbet for 33 years of dedicated service to the Springfield Township Community as a police officer.

Motion (Cobb-Wilson) carried unanimously to adopt Resolution No. 1633.

Commissioner Lee invited Wesley Holloway, a retired Public Works employee, to the front of the room to be joined by Commissioner McNamara. Commissioner McNamara read into the record Resolution No. 1634, a resolution honoring Wes Holloway for 35 years of dedicated service to the Springfield Township Community.

Motion (McNamara-Cobb) carried unanimously to adopt Resolution No. 1634.

Mr. Lee announced that Michael Grove, a retired Public Works employee, was unable to join the Board this evening as he recently moved to North Carolina. Commissioner McNamara read into the record Resolution No. 1635, a resolution honoring Michael Grove for 39 years of service to the Springfield Township Community.

Motion (McNamara-Ratsavong) carried unanimously to adopt Resolution No. 1635.

Mr. Lee invited Barb Senst, Co-Chair of the Springfield Township Opioid Action Committee, to address the commissioners. Mrs. Senst introduced student volunteers of the committee who addressed the Board regarding various program activities that are planned for the No Stigma/No Shame Day on April 20, 2024, and a Town Hall event planned for April 11, 2024.

Mr. Lee opened the meeting to public comment.

David Richardson, Flourtown, addressed the Board with regard to the variance request for a two-lot subdivision at 401 E. Mill Road. Mr. Richardson opposes variances that break up large lots in order to place houses on flag lots. He provided numerous reasons for his opposition.

Roy Chao, Flourtown, addressed the Board with regard to the 401 E. Mill Road variance request. Mr. Chao urged the board not to rescind its decision to oppose the variance request of 401 E. Mill Road.

Nofre Vaquer, Flourtown, addressed the Board with regard to the variance request of 401 E. Mill Road. Mr. Vaquer urged the Board to maintain its opposition to the variance request.

Tom Harkins, Flourtown, addressed the Board with regard to the variance request of 401 E. Mill Road. Mr. Harkins asked the Board not to rescind its opposition to the variance request of 401 E. Mill Road.

Mike Vecchione, Flourtown, addressed the Board with regard to the proposal of 401 E. Mill Road to place a driveway on Cedar Lane that would service a home on E. Mill Road. Mr. Vecchione stated his opposition to the proposal. The owners should be required to develop the property in accordance with the Township Code.

A discussion ensued among individual commissioners and several of the neighbors regarding assurances that have been offered by the owner of the property at 401 E. Mill Road and the potential to develop the lot more intensely if an alternate development is pursued.

John Lawton, Flourtown, commented on the development proposal for 401 E. Mill Road. Mr. Lawton stated he lives next door to the subject property and noted that he developed his property in compliance with the Township Code.

Mr. Lee, Chairman of Public Safety Committee, reported:

Motion (Lee-Cobb) carried unanimously to authorize the Springfield Township Opioid Action Committee to utilize the official seal of the Township of Springfield for the limited purpose of advertising the activities and events associated with the 2nd Annual No Stigma / No Shame Day on Saturday, April 20, 2024, and the Town Hall event that is planned for April 11, 2024. The seal shall not be utilized for any other purpose.

Mr. Wilson, Chairman of the Community Development Committee, reported:

Motion (Wilson-McNamara) carried unanimously to adopt Resolution No. 1636, a resolution granting a waiver to the land development review process to permit the Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania to construct an 1800 sq. ft. modular research laboratory at the Bloomfield Farm Property, 301 E. Northwestern Avenue. The waiver is conditioned upon the applicant obtaining all required building permits and performing stormwater management to the satisfaction of the Township Engineer.

Motion (Wilson-McNamara) carried unanimously to adopt Resolution No. 1637, a resolution granting preliminary/final subdivision approval for the properties located at 700 and 702 Preston Road, Erdenheim. The subdivision will result in the transfer of 4,503 square feet of land from 700 Preston Road to the side yard of the property at 702 Preston Road. No new construction is planned.

Motion (Wilson-Ratsavong) carried unanimously to adopt Resolution No 1638, a resolution authorizing participation in a multi-municipal planning grant to study the feasibility of implementing traffic calming and multi-modal improvements on Cheltenham Avenue, from Paper Mill Road to Ogontz Avenue. The Montgomery County Planning Commission has agreed to prepare the application on behalf of Cheltenham and Springfield Townships, and the City of Philadelphia.

Motion (Wilson-McNamara) carried unanimously to accept a letter dated March 11, 2024 from Gerald Rath, Esq., on behalf of the owners of 40 and 42 Grove Avenue, Flourtown, extending the 90-day subdivision/land development plan review period through April 11, 2024. The subject of the application is a lot line adjustment that proposes to transfer 2,936 square feet of land from 42 Grove Avenue to the property at 40 Grove Avenue. The extension of time will allow the applicant the opportunity to revise their plans to comply with the Springfield Township Code.

Mr. Cobb, Chairman of Administrative, Fiscal Affairs and Zoning Committee, reported:

Motion (Cobb-Ratsavong) carried unanimously to approve the February check reconciliation in the amount of \$615,395.13, and the March bill listing in the amount of \$454,572.15.

Mr. Cobb announced that the Springfield Township Zoning Hearing Board will meet on Monday, March 25, 2024 at 7:00 PM at the Springfield Township Building. Mr. Cobb read into the record the Zoning Hearing Board agenda.

Motion (Cobb-Ratsavong) to rescind the Board's opposition to the zoning petition submitted by Andre Stephano and Beth Lesko, owners of the property located at 401 E. Mill Road, Flourtown, based upon representations made by counsel for the property owners at the March 11, 2024 meeting of the Board of Commissioners. Mr. Stephano and Ms. Lesko must still appear before the Zoning Hearing Board to present their case and if successful, will be required to obtain subdivision/land development approvals in accordance with the Township's Subdivision of Land regulations.

Mr. Cobb noted that he has spoken to many of the neighbors on Cedar Lane and E. Mill Road and they have all stated their opposition to the variance that is being requested by the owners of 401 E. Mill Road. He stated his belief that the Board has the responsibility of supporting the neighbors. He does not believe there is any hardship being presented by the owners.

Ms. Ratsavong stated she will be voting to rescind the opposition, but that does not mean she supports the variance petition. She believes it is a "policy vs. what we wish to see" situation.

Mr. Lee stated he will vote to continue with the opposition. He said it was not an easy decision, and a great deal of thought went into his decision.

Mr. Morris stated he believes Mr. Cobb performed due diligence in this matter, and he plans to support Mr. Cobb by voting against rescinding the opposition.

Vote on the motion: 1-6; Ratsavong in favor. The motion did not carry.

Ms. Ratsavong, Chair of Parks and Recreational Resources Committee, reported:

Motion (Ratsavong-McNamara) carried unanimously to engage the services of MKSD Architects, Allentown, PA, to provide Community Research, Data and Needs Analysis, Facility Programming and Conceptual Design Services for the Springfield Township Recreation Center Project. The engagement shall be consistent with the MKSD proposal dated December 1, 2023, last revised February 5, 2024, for a 20,000 square foot (estimated) facility. The final terms of the engagement shall be reflected in an agreement that is to be in a form acceptable to the Township Solicitor. The fee for the current scope of work shall not exceed \$100,747.50.

Ms. Ratsavong stated that the selection of MKSD Architects was a very careful and deliberate process starting with the solicitation of a Request for Proposals in October 2023. 11 proposals were received. Five (5) firms were invited to interview with the Board and committee on January 4, 2024.

The committee continued their evaluations at their February 1 meeting, and unanimously recommended the engagement of MKSD Architects at their March 7 meeting.

Ms. Ratsavong thanked the committee for their work in this regard, and also thanked members of the public for becoming involved.

Ms. Ratsavong announced that on March 1, 2024 bids were opened for the Cisco Park Playground Improvement Project. The project includes removal and disposal of the existing fence, playground equipment and asphalt trail, a concrete perimeter curb for the playground surfacing, a paved asphalt walking trail, ADA accessible parking spaces, and signage. Only one bid was received from Ply-Mar Construction Company, Inc. in the amount of \$83,396.

Motion (Ratsavong-Wilson) carried unanimously to award a contract to Ply-Mar Construction Company Inc. for their bid price of \$83,396 to perform the Cisco Park Playground Improvement Project.

Ms. Ratsavong announced that a new 55' batting cage will be replacing the existing 35' batting cage at the softball field at Veterans Park.

Mr. May, Chairman of Environmental Resources Committee, reported:

Mr. May announced that during the month of February 2024, Springfield Township residents recycled 139.5 tons of material with a householder participation rate of 78.3%. The net cost for the month was \$23,534.68.

Mr. May reminded residents that single use plastic bags are not suitable for recycling as part of the Township's curbside recycling collection program. In addition, plastic bags and liners should not be used to place recyclables out for collection by Township crews. Plastic bags slow the sorting process speeds at material recovery facilities, which increases processing costs paid by the Township.

Motion (May-Cobb) carried unanimously to appoint Gail Farmer, Flourtown, to fill an unexpired term of service as a member of the Springfield Township Environmental Advisory Commission. Ms. Farmer's term of service shall expire June 14, 2024.

Mr. May announced that the appointment of Ms. Farmer creates a vacancy as an associate member of the Environmental Advisory Commission. Interested residents were directed to send a letter of interest or resume to the attention of Michael Taylor, Township Manager, 1510 Paper Mill Road, Wyndmoor, PA 19038 or via email.

Motion (May-Wilson) carried unanimously to authorize the Township Manager to execute a proposal dated March 4, 2024 from Celentano Energy Services to perform a Solar Photovoltaic Feasibility Study for the placement of solar panels at the Springfield Township Municipal Campus. Mr. May described the scope of work. The fee for services shall not exceed \$2,000 and is payable as a fixed fee upon completion and acceptance of work.

Ms. McNamara, Chair of Public Works and Facilities Committee, reported:

Motion (McNamara-Cobb) carried unanimously to authorize the advertisement of Public Bids for the Township's 2024 Highway Resurfacing Program. A total of 10 streets are proposed to be milled and resurfaced in 2024 at an estimated cost of \$310,109.00.

Motion (McNamara-May) carried unanimously to authorize the execution of an Additional Services Agreement with BL Companies, Inc. to perform groundwater sampling at the former Tank Car Corporation of America property, 1725 Walnut Avenue, Oreland. The purpose of the sampling activities is to document the presence and migration patterns of volatile organic compounds in the vicinity of three existing groundwater monitoring wells. The total cost of the work is \$5,800.

Mr. Wilson asked why the new testing is necessary. Mr. Taylor responded that the Township is proceeding through the DEP's Act 2 voluntary remediation process and the additional testing is part of that process.

Mr. Morris, Chairman of the Cultural Resources Committee, had no report.

Mr. Lee opened the meeting to public comment. No public comment was received.

Motion (Wilson-Ratsavong) carried unanimously to adjourn at 9:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Taylor
Secretary