

BUCKINGHAM TOWNSHIP

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BUCKINGHAM TOWNSHIP
Board of Supervisors
Work Session Agenda
June 22, 2022
6:00 p.m.

- 6:00 p.m. **“Buckingham Friends School – Gymnasium & Science Center”,**
Land Development, Township File LD 2022-01, Edward Murphy, Esq.
- 6:30 p.m. **“TPS, LLC”,** 4284 Burnt House Hill Road, Township File SA 2021-02

Manager's Items

Executive Session

Buckingham Township Board of Supervisors
Work Session
Minutes

The work session of the Buckingham Township Board of Supervisors was held on June 22, 2022 in the Township Building, 4613 Hughesian Drive, Buckingham, Pennsylvania.

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|--------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Present: | Paul Calderaio | Chairman |
| | Jon Forest | Vice-Chairman |
| | Maggie Rash | Member |
| | Dana S. Cozza | Township Manager |
| | Daniel Gray | Township Engineer |
| | Craig A. Smith, Esquire | Township Solicitor |
| Not Present: | Luke Rosanova | Bucks County Planning Commission |
| | Gary Weaver | Township Water/Wastewater Consultant |

The Work Session commenced at 6:00 p.m.

“Buckingham Friends School – Gymnasium & Science Center”, Land Development, Township File LD 2022-01

Edward Murphy, Esquire, Mr. Greg Glitzer, Gilmore & Associates, Inc., and Mr. Paul Lindenmaier, Buckingham Friends School Head of School were present.

Mr. Murphy explained the Land Development plan had received a favorable recommendation from the Planning Commission, is scheduled before the Zoning Hearing Board on July 18th for requests of relief, and then planned to return to the Board of Supervisor’s for plan review on July 27, 2022.

Mr. Glitzer displayed conceptual renderings of the proposed buildings and explained the revisions made since the Board last saw them. Mr. Glitzer pointed out the science building is now designed as a stand alone building (it was previously attached to another building), with a porch and overhang looking over the woods integrating with the existing natural features of the site for outdoor learning, and a canopy over the existing sidewalk.

Mr. Murphy said the Planning Commission had questioned use of the science center, with concerns regarding fire hazards and toxin disposal, and had been reassured by Mr. Lindenmaier that the center will be used for an elementary science program and not to be concerned.

Mr. Glitzer displayed conceptual pictures of the gymnasium, showing elevations with the building set into the grade which falls away in the back; making the gymnasium more than two stories tall in the back to give it full height for athletic use. Mr. Glitzer said the gymnasium has a connector to the arts building. Mr. Glitzer noted the roof of the building is oriented for solar, and the rendering depicts the fit out of solar panels. Mr. Lindenmaier

clarified the school may consider adding solar to other buildings in the future, with sustainability being the driving principle of the process.

Mr. Murphy said the Planning Commission had inquired if the gym would be used for outside tournaments, and the reply was no, it will be used only by the school students. He said the Planning Commission was in favor of the elevations represented.

Mr. Murphy said that all matters in the Knight Engineering review are being addressed, and are “will complies” plus a couple of waiver requests.

Mr. Murphy explained there are two elements to the Zoning Hearing Board application that were a matter of concern from the Planning Commission. Mr. Glitzer said the site has several septic systems serving the complex, with a drip irrigation, an inground system, and a seepage pit in the footprint of the new gym which will be removed. Mr. Glitzer explained they had tested for a sand mound in a flat area in a natural clearing in the woods that has good slopes, and the absorption area was tested by the Bucks County Department of Health; however, the area falls within the limits of the 100’ perimeter vegetation preservation requirement in the zoning ordinance and would require disturbance with an intrusion of about 80’. Mr. Murphy said the Planning Commission had asked if other areas had been tested, and the answer was yes, but this area is the best one due to the slopes. Mr. Glitzer said the other areas tested would impact the woods, as they already see that trees located in the existing drip irrigation area are in danger of not surviving. Mr. Glitzer explained the new system will replace the existing seepage pit and will have 2 EDU’s, 800 gallons per day, servicing full occupancy of the gym. Mr. Calderaio asked if there would be a locker room, and Mr. Glitzer replied “no”. Mrs. Rash asked if the science building would use the upper buildings current septic, and Mr. Lindenmaier replied “yes”. Mr. Lindenmaier also stated that the school does not plan to increase the number of students, but is currently at full capacity.

Mr. Murphy said that the school is anxious to get started, and was trying to avoid having to go to the Zoning Hearing Board due to the additional time that would be required for the process. He said they had suggested that by surrounding the new septic system with a trail, it could be considered a “teaching trail” and thereby would be permitted to encroach into the perimeter, however the Planning Commission opposed that concept.

Mr. Murphy said the second part of the Zoning Hearing Board application regards a large tree which will need to be removed. Mr. Glitzer explained there is a 44” caliper chestnut oak tree located in front of the existing gym, which given its size, is a protected specimen tree according to the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Glitzer said they had made provisions to preserve the tree, and intended to follow best practices including hand excavation and setting the new gym wall away from the tree, however they are now seeing rot at the base of the tree, and displayed a picture showing the extensive rot.

Ms. Manicone said there is dieback in the upper canopy of the tree, and that even if construction activity goes according to plan, the tree may be a risk and cause a hazardous situation due to its size. Ms. Manicone recommended zoning approval for the tree to be

removed, and replaced by 15 trees of a certain caliper to be planted prior to occupancy for the new facility. The Board agreed with Ms. Manicone's recommendation.

Mr. Murphy said that concluded their update, and they hoped to see the Board for plan review later in July following the Zoning Hearing Board meeting.

“TPS, LLC”, 4284 Burnt House Hill Road, Township File SA 2021-02

William Benner, Esquire, Mr. Tom Borghetti, Holmes Cunningham Engineering, and Mr. Ted Schieffer, Property and Business Owner of TPS, and T. Schieffer Contractors, were present.

Mr. Benner described the proposed project as a Land Development plan to build a pole barn at 4284 Burnt House Hill Road, which will be the headquarters for Ted Schieffer Contractor, Inc. Mr. Benner said that Mr. Schieffer's current business in the township has outgrown its location, and this property will make a more efficient business operation.

Mr. Benner said the plan was submitted about a year ago, and has evolved to a point where Knight Engineering has identified that in order for the business to utilize the property as designed, they will need to request a variance from the Zoning Hearing Board for the amount of impervious surface. Mr. Benner said they have designed the plan to show the minimum amount of impervious surface that they can in order to accommodate their business on the parcel, and request the Board's opinion whether they are favorable towards the variance request being granted, or opposed to it.

Mr. Schieffer explained the company's present main location is in Buckingham Township near the north entrance of the airport on Old Easton Road, and the business has outgrown the lot. He said this property came up for sale a couple of years ago, so they bought it in order to expand the business. Mr. Schieffer said there is a small garage on the property, however it will not fit the equipment they have, and they need a pole barn for storage of equipment and to make minor repairs out from the weather. Mr. Schieffer explained they are a heavy highway contractor, with the majority of work including public projects for paving, concrete and excavation. He explained they bid jobs from townships, municipalities, PennDOT approved prequalified contracts, and school districts, and have a good reputation. They enjoy being in Buckingham Township as it is a central location to their jobs and they have a good relationship with the professionals in the area.

Mr. Schieffer continued that when the property became available, he bought it as it is difficult to find industrially zoned parcels in the township. He said he didn't know about impervious surface limits or coverage at the time, but now has learned that the property only had 35% allowed impervious surface when he bought it. Mr. Schieffer said they plan to restore the old farmhouse on the property and use it as an office, and believes that with landscaping, sidewalks and improvements in the right-of-way they will enhance the neighborhood.

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Mr. Borghetti distributed renderings of the plan, and described the property features, noting it is located at the intersection of Landisville and Burnt House Hill Roads with a primary access from Landisville Road. He said there is an existing office structure, barn, and other small sheds. Mr. Borghetti said there is not currently a sidewalk or buffer on either road frontage, however there is a curb and widening along Burnt House Hill Road. He explained the previous operator, Landscape Design Group / Montemurro Builders worked throughout the site and operated within the right-of-way; adding that Mr. Schieffer intends to dedicate the right-of-way to the township as part of the project.

Mrs. Rash asked what amount of impervious was shown on the plan displayed, and Mr. Borghetti replied approximately 50%, adding that the depth of the stone is unknown; that there could be a skim coat of stone for trees and drainage. Mr. Gray said that the Zoning Ordinance permitted up to 35% impervious surface coverage, and the prior owner operated a nursery with burlapped trees and pea gravel areas to control weeds. Mr. Benner explained that during due diligence he met with Mr. Myers, Zoning Officer, who produced historical photographs by which he concluded that the amount of impervious on the property had increased without authorization, which brings them to the status of the property today of near 50%, which invokes the need for a variance.

Mr. Smith asked if they wanted to stay at 50% impervious; and Mr. Borghetti replied their current plan shows 54.7%, adding that some of the improvements along the right-of-way will be to connect to adjacent properties. Mr. Smith confirmed then that they are saying the property currently has 50% impervious, legally or not, which they want to increase to 54.7%. To which Mr. Forest added that they are legally allowed 35%. Mr. Borghetti responded confirming Mr. Smith's statement.

Mr. Borghetti continued the project description, saying they coordinated with Mr. Gray, Ms. Manicone and the Total Skills applicant to provide a 6' asphalt connecting path along Burnt House Hill Road, which will narrow near the large mature trees around the corner and then return back to 6' along Landisville Road to the neighboring property. He said the plan includes a significant buffer along Burnt House Hill Road, and they have oriented the 50' proposed pole barn with the rear of the building facing the buffer and screening for the residents. Mr. Borghetti said the front of the building would have lighting projecting away from residents and the street. Mr. Borghetti added they intend to renovate the existing office in the farmhouse. He also added they plan to install a privacy fence along the entire Burnt House Hill Road frontage and Landisville Road frontage to provide screening and which will be closed outside of operational hours.

Mr. Borghetti described the proposed stormwater management will be in the upper left corner area and will be planted as a buffer/stormwater management feature as coordinated with Ms. Manicone. He further said they will fill in gaps in the buffer similar to the buffer being provided with the Total Skills application.

Mr. Benner stated that the impervious surfaces are designed to be the minimum amount needed for large commercial construction vehicles in which to maneuver. Mr. Schieffer explained they need space to turn a vehicle around; such as large dump trucks with

trailers and a lowboy tractor with a large trailer to haul bulldozers and such, or the property will not work for his purposes. Mr. Schieffer said they have Buckingham Township's snow plowing contract and are happy to help, want to stay nearby and make improvements to the community. Mr. Schieffer said their property on Old Easton Road is not large enough for their needs. Mr. Calderaio asked why they didn't look into the property limitations before they bought it; and Mr. Schieffer replied they had the opportunity to acquire the property before it came on the market; adding there are few properties that come up for sale that are zoned for industrial purposes.

Mr. Schieffer explained the entrance from Burnt House Hill Road would only be used by the office personnel via a residential driveway; and the Landisville Road entrance would be wider for use by trucks and passenger vehicles. Mr. Schieffer said the property would be used by four office employees, equipment storage and repair inside the pole barn. Mr. Calderaio asked if there would be larger trucks (i.e., tri-axle dump trucks) using the property than the former landscaping business used, and Mr. Schieffer said yes. However, the volume would be less. Mr. Schieffer also stated there would not be any soil or debris tracked onto the road from his site.

Mr. Schieffer said they gave a lot of consideration to the buffer in relationship to the neighbors. Ms. Manicone described the buffer to contain a combination of deciduous flowering trees within a 50' zone, which they switched from bushes to trees. She said there would be a buffer along Burnt House Hill Road, with somewhat of a buffer along Landisville Road, and a rain garden.

Mr. Forest asked how big the pole barn would be, and Mr. Schieffer replied about 20' tall to the peak, 50' x 100' in footprint (5000 square feet), with 3 bays. Mr. Borghetti said they designed a fence which will connect to the back of the building, extend to the fully enclosed trash enclosure and connect to the existing barn. Mr. Schieffer said they need to fence in the commercial equipment, and it will have a residential look; vinyl material, not a stockade style. Mr. Gray noted that the homes in Buckingham Square are at a higher elevation, and will see over the buffer trees. Mr. Borghetti said there is a 5' grade change from the road to the site, that the fence will sit about 11' higher than a passenger car, and with the houses also having a fence and trees, they shouldn't see anything from the first-floor elevation, however they might from their 2nd floors. Mr. Borghetti said from the path they will only see buffer trees and the bottom of the fence. Ms. Manicone said the evergreen trees will mature to 40-50', the flowering trees 8-10' tall and the canopy trees will be 2-1/2 to 3" caliper. Mr. Schieffer said they will plant 12-14' shade trees that will be aligned with the Total Skills' trees closer to the roadway, with more flowering trees near the sidewalk.

Mr. Calderaio said he had some concerns regarding the large trucks which would be using Landisville Road, which is not a big road.

Mr. Forest noted the telephone poles along Burnt House Hill Road had sprinkler heads on them that were used by the former landscaping business, and Mr. Schieffer said they would need to remove them to install the sidewalk and buffer.

Mr. Smith confirmed that the variance request would be from the 35% permitted impervious surfaces (with 50% existing, legally or illegally) and requesting to increase the permitted impervious surfaces to 54%. Mr. Benner confirmed that is the request.

Mr. Forest said looking at the aerial photo of the property, he can see stone with grass growing through it, and open property except for the house and sheds. He did not see 50% of impervious surface from the photo. Mr. Forest said if they only needed 37-38% impervious surface, that would be different, but 54% made him uncomfortable. Mr. Benner explained there was a survey and calculation of the existing impervious; adding that their intent is to keep the area in crushed stone which qualifies as impervious according to the survey. He said there also was storage on the property, which has been removed, but counted as impervious.

Mrs. Rash said she, also, was uncomfortable with the proposed increase to 54%.

Mr. Calderaio thanked the applicant and his professionals for their discussion.

Day in The Park

Mrs. Cozza requested possible dates in August or September that the Board would like to schedule the Day in The Park, Grand Opening of Holicong Park. Mrs. Rash noted it needs to be on a weekend if the kids have gone back to school. Mrs. Cozza asked if the Board would like food trucks, and Mr. Forest said it may be difficult to get one on a weekend.

The Board agreed the event should be on a weekday near the end of August, before school begins, and be held during the day with some activities. Thursday, August 25th was agreed upon.

7:30 p.m. The Work Session adjourned.

8:45 p.m. The Work Session resumed and the Board retired into Executive Session to discuss the Rosner litigation, police personnel matters and the Veit tract purchase.

9:20 p.m. The Work Session adjourned.

Approved by the Board of Supervisors on the 27th day of July, 2022.

Buckingham Township Board of Supervisors

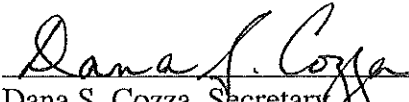


Paul Calderaio, Chairman

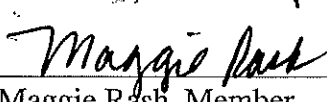


Jon Forest, Vice-Chairman

Attest:



Dana S. Cozza, Secretary



Maggie Rash, Member

Minutes respectfully submitted by Lori Wicen.