

## **Upper Makefield Board of Supervisors**

### **March 19, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

The March 19, 2024 public meeting of the Upper Makefield Township Board of Supervisors was called to order by Chair Yvette Taylor at 7:30 p.m. In attendance were the following members of the Board of Supervisors: Chair Yvette Taylor, Vice Chair Ben Weldon, Treasurer Braun Taylor, Member Tom Cino and Member Tim Thomas. Also in attendance were Assistant Township Manager Judy Caporiccio, Township Solicitor Mary Eberle, Esq., Township Engineer Amanda Fuller, P.E., Planning & Zoning Director Denise Burmester, and Chief Mark Schmidt.

#### **CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Ms. Taylor led in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance which was followed by a moment of silence.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ms. Taylor made the following announcements:

- The Township's Government Channel for Verizon customers is now 2121. If you are not able to view Channel 2121 because you do not have an HD Set Top, contact Verizon to request a free upgrade by signing into your My Verizon account or by calling 1-800-Verizon (1-800-837-4966).
- Township offices will be closed for the holiday on Friday, March 29.

Mr. Cino announced that the Planning Commission will be reviewing a Sketch Plan for the property located on the corner of Taylorsville Road and Rt. 532 at their next meeting. It is a public meeting scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on March 20 at the Township Building.

Mr. Thomas announced a Trash Pickup Day in Upper Makefield on Saturday, March 23 from 9 a.m.-11 a.m. Please email [tthomas@uppermakefield.org](mailto:tthomas@uppermakefield.org) if interested in participating to ensure enough supplies, bring gloves and wear boots. Schedule changes or cancellations due to weather will be posted on the Township website.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Joe Linus, Traditions, expressed concern about the size of a new bridge designed to meet future traffic projections, its impact on the community, and encroachment on historic structures and parks in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey. He submitted a petition signed by neighbors opposing construction of a new bridge and suggested a walking bridge as a replacement.

Priscilla Linden, 50 Dillon Way, Traditions, read a statement she intends to present at the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission meeting on March 25 encouraging alternatives to new bridge construction, such as repair or reconstruction of piers and approaches as needed, widening lanes and pedestrian paths, and encouraging inclusion of PennDOT and NJ DOT in long term traffic planning.

Suzanna Dougherty, 1263 General Washington Memorial Boulevard, noted the magnitude of the current bridge issue. As residents living close to the bridge, her family has noticed a drastic increase in traffic volume, speed and noise since the Scudders Falls Bridge toll was implemented, which has made walking in the area and crossing the roads difficult. She thanked the Board for their work on this issue.

#### **WASHINGTON CROSSING BRIDGE UPDATE**

Ms. Taylor provided an update that since the last meeting, the Supervisors and the Township have continued their efforts related to the Washington Crossing Bridge project. A meeting was held with the executive director and executive staff of the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission (DRJTBC) to relay the Township's concerns, and we are awaiting responses. An open invitation to a

Township meeting was extended to the DRJTBC. Federal, State and County elected officials were contacted to seek their support and advocacy. Residents were encouraged to continue their communications with the Township and the DRJTBC and to attend the monthly meetings of the DRJTBC.

#### **Resolution No. 2024-03-19-01 - Washington Crossing Bridge**

A motion was made by Mr. Cino and seconded by Mr. Thomas to approve Resolution No. 2024-03-19-01 formally articulating grave concerns regarding the intention of the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission to study the replacement of the historic Washington Crossing Bridge. The Township insists on being provided with all information regarding the need for bridge replacement that is in the possession of the Toll Bridge Commission and insists upon involvement in any further deliberation. The Board expressed appreciation for the community involvement and encouraged residents to continue to submit written comments for the Board's consideration and to also communicate directly with the Toll Bridge Commission as this will be a long process. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Mr. Cino and seconded by Mr. Weldon to authorize the Assistant Township Manager to share this resolution with elected officials, including our Congressman, State Senator, State Representative, County Commissioners, the DRJTBC and Hopewell Township, New Jersey, to continue to garner their support. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

#### **Historic Designation of Washington Crossing Bridge**

Ms. Taylor provided background that Jeff Marshall, formerly of Heritage Conservancy, has worked with Upper Makefield Township for many years in both the Open Space Program and the Historic Preservation Program. The Township reached out to him for his opinion on the historical attributes of the Washington Crossing Bridge, and he advised that the State had already, in 1985, determined that the bridge was eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Township would like to finalize the process of having the bridge listed, and Mr. Marshall suggested that step 1 would be updating information in order to move forward.

Following discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Cino and seconded by Mr. Weldon to accept the proposal of Jeff Marshall to provide updated research to include the Washington Crossing Bridge on the National Register of Historic Places for an amount not to exceed \$2,000. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND BILLS PAYABLE**

A motion was made by Mr. Cino and seconded by Mr. Thomas to approve the March 5, 2024 meeting minutes. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Mr. Cino and seconded by Mr. Weldon to approve the March 19, 2024 Bills Payable List in the amount of \$157,335.23. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

#### **PLANNING & ZONING ISSUES**

##### **Hammer Zoning Hearing Board Application, 1047 River Road**

Applicant Darci Hammer provided an overview of the application requesting numerous variances including those for impervious ratio, construction in protected floodplain soils and Right of Way setback requirements for the construction of a pool, patio, shed and additional parking. She explained that the project includes calculations for future projects as the family intends to live in the house long-term with projects to occur in phases. Phase 1 is to address the immediate safety concerns by creating more parking to allow for a turnaround so cars do not back directly into the street. She explained that challenges are present because the property has two different zoning districts with different impervious percentages, and River Road cuts through the property. It is currently non-conforming. Ms. Hammer

is also requesting a variance to allow the impervious service ratio to be calculated without subtracting the area of Rights-of-Way and Ultimate Rights-of-Way.

Larry Young, P.E., provided clarification regarding impervious calculations and the stormwater management system.

The Board expressed understanding of the intentions of the application but relayed strong concern about increasing impervious ratios and potential flooding. They encouraged the applicant, Design Engineer Charle Shoemaker and Architect Gary Tilford to consider continuing their Zoning Hearing Board application and to rework the plan to reduce impervious percentages.

A motion was then made by Mr. Cino and seconded by Mr. Thomas to authorize the Solicitor to appear before the Zoning Hearing Board in opposition of the application if the applicant chooses to move forward with the Zoning Hearing on April 9. Motion carried by a unanimous vote.

### **Daniel Zoning Hearing Board Application, 1262 Eagle Road**

Ms. Burmester relayed that the applicant has requested that this item be continued to a future date.

### **SOLICITOR'S REPORT**

There was no Solicitor's Report.

### **ASSISTANT MANAGER'S REPORT**

#### **Affirm Environment Advisory Council Chair**

Ms. Caporiccio noted that in accordance with the ordinance establishing the Environmental Advisory Council, the Board of Supervisors affirms their Chair. A motion was then made by Mr. Cino and seconded by Mr. Weldon to affirm Cathy Magliocchetti as Environmental Advisory Council Chair for 2024. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

### **ENGINEER'S REPORT**

Ms. Fuller noted that the bids for the 2024 Road Program are being prepared and will be placed on an upcoming agenda for authorization to advertise.

### **BOARD AND COMMISSION REPORTS**

Ms. Taylor announced that the following minutes were included in Board packets:

- Environmental Advisory Council – October 10, 2023
- Historical Advisory Commission – August 24, 2023 and November 2, 2023
- Park & Recreation Board – February 12, 2024
- Planning Commission – February 12, 2024

### **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

Ms. Taylor announced that the following department reports were provided:

- Planning & Zoning Department
- Finance Department
- Fire Department
- Ambulance
- Fire Marshal
- Police Department
- Public Works Department

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

John Reed, 16 Old Cabin Road, asked for clarification of the impact an historic designation has on a bridge.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Mr. Cino and seconded by Mr. Weldon to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, .

*Judy Caporiccio*

Judy Caporiccio  
Assistant Township Manager  
Approved: April 2, 2024