

## **FLORENCE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**February 13, 2013**

**8:00PM**

### **CALL TO ORDER & FLAG SALUTE**

Council President Sandusky called the meeting to order and led the Salute to the Flag.

A Moment of Silence was held in honor of John Masiko, former Florence Township Chief of Police.

### **SUNSHINE STATEMENT**

The Opening Statement was read by the Township Clerk: Notice was sent to the Register News for information; posted on the municipal bulletin board; placed on the web-site on January 3, 2013; and advertised in the Burlington Co. Times on January 6, 2013.

### **ROLL CALL**

Present: Frank Baldorossi, Ted Lovenduski, Paul Ostrander, David Woolston, Jerry Sandusky

Also present: Mayor Craig H. Wilkie (8:10pm); Richard A. Brook, Township Administrator; Thomas A. Sahol, Assistant Administrator; Kelly Grant, Esq., Township Solicitor; Joy M. Weiler, Township Clerk

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Council President Sandusky opened the meeting to the public.

John Fratinardo, 4 Yockus Lane, said he read about the Duffy School project and the township purchasing an adjacent property to be included in the project. He wanted to know the purchase price of the property. Assistant Administrator Sahol said that he did not have the exact amount in front of him but he believes it was around \$170,000. Council President Sandusky said that it was purchased using COAH funds, not taxpayer's money. Administrator Brook said he would be more than willing to meet with Mr. Fratinardo and sit down and discuss the specifics. He explained that Duffy School takes up an entire block except for two lots. One of the lots is where the purchased home is. The Duffy School dwarfs the property. To make the site better all the way around, it was determined that the home could be purchased and off street parking could be expanded to make it a nicer location all the way around. The previous developer tried four times but was unable to get the tax credits through the state. The COAH money is money that has been received from commercial developers and private developers such as K. Hovnanian and Pulte Homes. The majority of it comes from large commercial developers and large residential subdivision developers. The money is placed in an Affordable Housing Trust Fund and it can only be spent for the overall implementation of the municipality's affordable housing plan. Those funds were used to purchase the property. The overall property including the former Duffy School is designed as one for the submission to the State of NJ for the tax credits. Mr. Fratinardo asked how the purchase price was decided?

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Administrator Brook said that an appraisal of the property was done by the Township Tax Assessor. Mr. Fratinardo said he looked on a website (Zillow) that placed the price of the property at around \$159,000. He said he is concerned about the difference in the amounts. Administrator Brook explained that the Tax Assessor was told to provide his professional opinion on the value of the property and he invited Mr. Fratinardo to meet with the Assessor to discuss it. Mr. Fratinardo said he believes that COAH money is taxpayer's money because when he bought his house part of that money went to COAH. Administrator Brook again invited Mr. Fratinardo to come and meet with him and the Tax Assessor.

Mr. Fratinardo said he received a letter from someone who also lives in the Greenbriar community. This person said he had gotten reassessments for the entire development. Administrator Brook explained that a resident named Jay Kaplan contacted the Assessor and said that he represented himself and a large group of others in the development who felt the assessments were still too high. Mr. Kaplan has a background in accounting. He did provide comparative rates. The Tax Assessor did look at the information and felt that there was some merit to the claim. He did what is called a compliance plan that brings the numbers closer to what they should be. He told Mr. Kaplan that he would contact the county and get the approval. Administrator Brook said the township was at risk of losing appeals, so it decided to put the plan in place.

A Motion was made by Ostrander, seconded by Lovenduski to close the public comments. Roll call vote – all ayes.

**BUSINESS**

**Township Water & Sewer Engineer:** Nothing at this time.

**Township Engineer**

**Wawa Store: Release Maintenance Bond**

**Roma Bank: Release Maintenance Bond**

Administrator Brook said that a Performance Bond was in place and a Maintenance Bond was put in place for at least another two years. Dan Guzzi of Guzzi Engineering reviewed both properties and recommended that the Maintenance Bonds be released because all the site improvements were done properly.

It was the MOTION of Baldorossi, seconded by Lovenduski to approve the release of the Maintenance Bonds. All ayes. Resolutions will be prepared for the next meeting.

**Assistant Township Administrator**

**Ordinance: Grading Plans and Engineer Review**

Assistant Administrator Sahol said he provided a draft ordinance for grading plans being required when a pool is installed.

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The problem is that sometimes when a pool is installed and it is improperly graded, the water runs to a neighbor's property and causes drainage issues. An applicant for an in-ground pool would be required to have a professional engineer complete a survey and indicate which way the water will flow and substantiate that it will not impact any adjacent properties. Once that was done, there would be a compliance inspection done to ensure it was built as designed and everything is as it should be. This would all need to be done before any certificates are issued by the Code Official. He said it is not a large dollar amount, especially when you consider the cost involved in installing an in-ground pool. It is a protective measure for neighbors.

It was the MOTION of Woolston, seconded by Lovenduski to introduce the ordinance next week.

### **Phase II Bikeway Project Grant**

Assistant Administrator Sahol provided Mayor and Council with a map and memo indicating that he has been meeting recently trying to bring the Bikeway Phase II to the table. It is the \$203,000 bikeway that would run from the existing bikeway to somewhere in the vicinity of Tall Timber. When he met with the engineers, they went over all of the county's concerns and comments. He said they found them to be a hurdle that they don't want to try and overcome because of time and money. He said the township can do a lot more and do a better path since the acquisition of the property on the corner of Bustleton Road and Cedar Lane. He thinks the path might get further along on the school side of Cedar Lane. He is proposing an alternate bike path location. It avoids the ditch and wet lands and aligns it with an existing corner at the school exit. It would be nice to get as far as the Tall Timber development. It would then become a walking section of the community. He is proposing the plan be modified slightly.

Councilman Baldorossi inquired if the path will cross Cedar Lane and go on the school side of the road and if it would go all the way to Tall Pines? Assistant Administrator Sahol said that is what is planned.

Councilman Ostrander asked if there would be lighting on the new sections? Assistant Administrator said it would not be installed as part of this phase. He is not sure if there is any lighting there already except for the ambient light from the school.

Councilman Baldorossi asked if eventually the path would go to the Wawa? Assistant Administrator Sahol confirmed that is the goal. It would be a way for kids to get to the WaWa from the school safely.

Assistant Administrator Sahol said that at a recent Recreation Committee Meeting there was discussion about Nykita Field. He provided a photo of the field and said he discussed the issue with Mayor Wilkie and Councilman Lovenduski.

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He said the little league president asked that the Township get as near as possible to what was once the outfield dimension so they can go up to about 18 or 19 year old level of play. They are trying to get around 330, but that would not be possible because it would be in the roadway. He gave the scenario of a 315 with a 360 center. The fence will be four feet high and a muted color. There will be some fencing to protect the dugout and perhaps spectator areas. The arch will be fenced also.

Councilman Baldorossi said that he thinks left field could be taken out a little further. Assistant Administrator said it was laid out this way to create symmetry in the field. He said the league would need to be consulted. Councilman Lovenduski said the age group is 15-18. He said they are playing American Legion ball. There was no place for them to play. He said it would be nice to be at 330 all the way around but it is just not possible. This is close to what is at the high school. The little league officials will need to be consulted. Assistant Administrator Sahol said the fence is four feet because it is safer to topple over a fence. Council President Sandusky said this could end up being the best field in town. Councilman Baldorossi said in the past the field was a meeting place for everyone.

Council President Sandusky commended Assistant Administrator Sahol for the letter he wrote to Cowan Systems, a trucking company located on River Road in Burlington, which was discussed at the last meeting. They have been asked to re-direct their trucks through Burlington Township and not through the center of Florence.

### **Roebing Museum**

Mayor Wilkie said the Township received a request from Roebing Museum about the items that are stored in the Community Center. Many of the items are not historic in nature toward the town, they are just general patterns. The Museum is trying to make them marketable for those who may be interested in them. He wanted to make sure Council approved of the Museum trying to sell the items. Everyone agreed it is a good idea.

### **Action**

On Premise Merchandise Raffle – Roebing Museum

April 13, 2013, 6pm-11pm, Roebing Fireman's Hall, Seventh Avenue & Main Street

It was the MOTION of Baldorossi, seconded by Woolston, to approve the application. Roll call vote: Baldorossi, Lovenduski, Ostrander, Woolston & Sandusky – all ayes. Motion carried.

### **Public Comments**

Council President Sandusky opened the meeting to the public.

Mr. Fratinardo said township Ordinance prohibits walking dogs on athletic fields. He said it needs to be enforced.

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Councilman Baldorossi said there are signs at most of the athletic fields. Mr. Fratinardo said the ordinance says that the dogs should not even be walked near a recreation area. Mayor Wilkie explained that animals can be walked in the area but they cannot be walked on the athletic field.

### **Administrator**

Administrator Brook said the municipality has a dumpster at the Water & Sewer plant that is not being used. The Cinnaminson MUA approached the township about purchasing the dumpster. Carl Goodfellow, Florence's former Water & Sewer Director reached out to the township. Administrator Brook got approval from the Department of Community Affairs to sell the dumpster. He said if the two municipalities can come to a fair number, he would like to sell the dumpster to Cinnaminson MUA. Each town would need to pass a resolution approving the sale. He said it is not uncommon for towns to help each other when it is necessary.

Administrator Brook said he plans to prepare an additional affordable housing agreement for 340 Alden Avenue. He said it has been discussed in the past and he hopes to have it ready for next week.

He then apologized to Mr. Fratinardo. Mr. Brook said he does not think the comments Mr. Fratinardo made were correct, but he regrets that he became upset so quickly. He again offered a meeting with the Assessor and himself. Administrator Brook said the purchase of the property has been discussed for at least two years. It was a good opportunity and a significant improvement to the project and hopefully the township will see the tax credits this year.

Council President Sandusky asked if VANCO owns any property in Florence Township? Assistant Administrator Sahol said they do but it is land locked. He explained there was a man that questioned who owns Griffin Pipe and the former steel mill site in Roebling. The person was very vague about why he wanted to know, and in the end he was looking for space to junk and store flooded vehicles and collect money from the insurance companies. The companies doing this are trying to claim it is a permitted use, but parking is an accessory to a principal use.

8:40 PM MOTION by Lovenduski, seconded by Ostrander to adjourn. Roll call vote – all ayes.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

8:40 PM: Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

JOY M. WEILER, RMC/MMC  
Township Clerk  
/aek