

## **FLORENCE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**November 13, 2013**

**8:00PM**

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

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

### **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; Richard A. Brook, Township Administrator; Thomas A. Sahol, Assistant Administrator; Kelly Grant, Esq., Township Solicitor; James E. Biegen, Township Engineer; Joy M. Weiler, Township Clerk

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Council President Sandusky opened the meeting to the public.

Seeing no one wishing to be heard, MOTION was made by Ostrander; seconded by Lovenduski, to close the public comments. Roll call vote – all ayes.

### **BUSINESS**

#### **Township Water and Sewer Engineer**

Nothing at this time.

#### **Township Engineer**

##### **NFI: Release Bond, Phase 1**

Township Engineer Biegen recommended the bond be released. NFI will provide a maintenance bond and there are bonds in place for Phase II.

It was the MOTION of Woolston, seconded by Lovenduski to approve the engineer's recommendation. All ayes.

Administrator Brook asked if there was another bond release involving Dr. Blum? Administrator Brook said he saw a letter dated October, 23, 2013 regarding the performance bond. He believes there has not been any action taken on it. Township Engineer Biegen said he recommended the release and requested a maintenance guarantee be put in place. Administrator Brook asked that it be put on tonight's regular agenda for action rather than making Dr. Blum wait until the December meeting. Council Members agreed.

## Florence Township Council Executive Session 11/13/13

### **Access Presentation – Hornberger Avenue**

Mayor Wilkie said revitalization of the Roebling Steel Plant has been ongoing. Last year there was discussion about access into the site, it is a major concern to potential developers. Hornberger Avenue is still the same as it was many years ago. There were three different options for access that have been discussed. One is to improve the current location. Another is to come in through the back on Spring Factory Road which would require a bridge to be built. The last is to move Hornberger Avenue so it would come to a four point with Fairbrook Drive.

Florence Township had asked the Township Engineer to look into all the options and take into consideration all the work that is being done on Route 130 at Hornberger Avenue. Based on the traffic studies, the least expensive but most beneficial option is to leave Hornberger Avenue in the direction it is coming in and not do the Fairbrook Drive quad. The bridge off Spring Factory road would give the best access but it is the most expensive option. By identifying this as the entrance there is an opportunity to sit down with potential developers.

Township Engineer Biegen said there was a meeting with the Department of Transportation to discuss the options. The NJ DOT agreed improving the current entrance was the best option. They felt if another intersection was added there would be another traffic light on Route 130. Also, the number of trips allowed would be less because there needs to be time to go across the road. The trip limit would be about 1200 trips at the peak hour. There would need to be a mix of uses at the Mill Site that would not exceed the allowed number of trips. He suggested a certain square footage of manufacturing and warehousing, a town center kind of mix of retail and possibly some apartments on top. There are many potential mixes.

Administrator Brook said for over 35 years, nothing has been generated from the steel mill, it has only been remediated. It is now at a point where the township, as the property owner, has two things left to do – monitor the wells and capping. Capping is often done by a developer in conjunction with the EPA. Even though the township owns the property, it is still a superfund site and the township must work through the EPA. When the engineer was asked to look at the three main areas, one of the things to consider is what will be on the site. Hornberger Avenue will be opened up in the Village of Roebling to improve the capacity, create a street scape improvement and the water area near Route 130 will be improved. This will set the stage for the developers. He suggested the township move to get all of the required permits from the DEP with a bond ordinance and recoup the cost when a developer acquires the site. The key for Mayor and Council is to put parameters around the use of the property.

### **Florence Township Council Executive Session 11/13/13**

There is a maximum of 1200 trips at peak hour. The DOT made it clear during a meeting that if the township stayed within 1200 trips per hour any uses were okay. If it is exceeded, there will be a problem. There will be an opportunity to improve Hornberger Avenue significantly with widening, street scape improvements and lighting to make it more attractive. The main issue for the town is to decide what would be accepted uses of the site. There could be a mixture with manufacturing, distribution, a data center. The key is to stay within the trip count. That is the only real restriction. There is a great deal of potential. If Council is in favor, the engineer can create a cost estimate. It was important to get the discussion out and make the public aware in case there are any questions. This is planning for the future and creating a vision of what Hornberger Avenue can look like versus the way it looks today.

Council President Sandusky said it is a good way to go. It enhances the quality of the community.

Council Vice President Woolston asked if it would be possible to have townhouses or condos on the second floor of whatever is built at the Mill Site? Engineer Biegen said there would be a possibility for that. The capping could be done to a residential standard. The developer would need to work with the EPA.

Mayor Wilkie said it would be possible to put some residential above businesses. Assistant Administrator Sahol said he will get confirmation from the DEP. Administrator Brook said it is a good idea to get confirmation about the possibility of residential over businesses especially with all the transit village advantages there are in New Jersey.

John Lauricella, 3 Applegate Drive, noted that he likes the idea of saving taxpayers money. He asked if the township could secure easements and right of ways near the bridge for the future? He thinks it may be needed for another access in the future. Mayor Wilkie explained the access is always there, it is owned by Public Service and the township owns the other side. Administrator Brook said the public needs to know how far a municipality can be pushed. The last developer who was going to build a two million square foot building was given significant tax incentives by the State of NJ to relocate to this site. The township had agreed to a PILOT program with the developer that was very generous toward the developer. The developer wanted the township to put out an additional \$18 million along with the PILOT. The township refused to take advantage of the residents. Administrator Brook said this is about planning ahead. Mr. Lauricella said he would like to see the other access open because he feels there will be more than 1200 trips during peak hours.

## **Florence Township Council Executive Session 11/13/13**

William Bott, 64 Riverbank Drive, asked if there will be a turn like the one near the turnpike? Assistant Administrator Sahol said the southbound side will have a wider presence than what is there now and more of a bridge over the creek area.

Administrator Brook said the next step will be for the township to have the Township Engineer prepare a detailed cost analysis and the time period needed to acquire the permits. If all were in agreement, then bond counsel would prepare a bond ordinance. Access is what has been holding this property up. Council was in agreement to move forward.

### **Phase II - Bikepath**

Assistant Administrator Sahol had the Township Engineer prepare an aerial view of what Phase II of the bikeway will look like. Phase I ran from Brookside Drive on Old York Road to just south of Marter Park. Hopefully, the second phase will go out to bid over the winter. The work should begin in 2014. The recent open space acquisition ties in with Phase II. There will be a safer entrance into the park where Bustleton Road and Cedar Lane meet. Mayor Wilkie asked where the bikeway will end? Assistant Administrator Sahol said he would like to take it as far as possible, but the funding will dictate how much can be done.

### **Route 130 North Property Improvement**

Administrator Brook said the township was approached by NFI. He referred to a map showing areas highlighted in different colors. He showed some right of way areas that will be conveyed to the NJ DOT. Yellow areas are land that is currently owned by the DOT that will remain theirs. He directed everyone's attention to a spot that is about 13,000 sq. ft. that DOT no longer needs. It is where the cellphone tower is. NJ DOT will sell the property to the township for \$1. The township will then turn it over to NFI. The process will take about three to four months. It is not uncommon to do this. It will improve the landscape and appearance of the NFI property. There will be ordinances to acquire the property and to sell it. The property will not be developed for another commercial use. It is a good idea. It shows how the private and public sectors can work together to get something done rather than bogging it down in red tape. There is little cost to the municipality. Council is in agreement to move ahead.

### **Heritage Trail Discussion**

Matt Johnson, a representative of Burlington County, met with the Assistant Administrator to discuss the Heritage Trail. Construction has begun on the trail in the Bordentown/Fieldsboro area. The next leg of the trail is to come down into Roebling and Florence, at least as far as the Roebling Station.

### Florence Township Council Executive Session 11/13/13

Under Route 130 there is a culvert that is wide enough to accommodate a pedestrian or bicycle trail. The county wants to take the Kinkora Line and make it part of the trail. They want the path to come across the old freight bridge. It will run along the Roebling Steel Plant site. Assistant Administrator Sahol will be sharing the information with Tamara Rossi of the EPA. This is all preliminary.

Assistant Administrator Sahol said the **Patriotic Day Celebration will be July 12, 2014**. The day will start with a flag raising ceremony, then the parade. The concert and fireworks will be held in the evening.

Mayor Wilkie explained that July 12 was chosen because July 5 is too close to the July 4 holiday. There were conflicts with participants and rain dates for the holiday would most likely be that day.

### Public Comments

Council President Sandusky opened the meeting to the public.

Mr. Bott said a week ago he went through the intersection at **Hornberger Avenue and Route 130** and he was almost hit. Today two cars ahead of him went through the light but he didn't make the light. He is afraid there is going to be a bad accident. Assistant Administrator Sahol will look into the timing of the light.

Don Kamienski, 10 McCay Drive, asked about the **Heritage Trail**. Assistant Administrator Sahol explained that the county has spearheaded the movement, it is for pedestrians and bicycles – anything non-motorized.

Assistant Administrator Sahol said that he spoke to the county traffic engineer and about the intersection of **Cedar Lane and Railroad Avenue**. The stop signs were approved. The last step is waiting for the Burlington County Freeholder's resolution.

MOTION by Ostrander, seconded by Lovenduski to close public comment. Roll call vote - all ayes.

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

### ADJOURNMENT

8:40 PM: Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Joy M. Weiler, RMC/MMC  
Township Clerk  
/aek