

The regular meeting of the **PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE** for August 2020 was held this evening via web-conference, Chairman Mitchell Zygmund-Felt presiding. Members present were Commissioners Areman, Brockington, Holland, Pransky, and Rappoport. Also, present was Ex-Officio Member Norris.

Staff present via web-conference were: Christopher Clewell, Public Works Superintendent; Michael Fleming, Public Works Coordinator; Henry Sekawungu, Director of Planning and Zoning; Mark Eisold, Township Engineer; Alyson Elliott, Assistant Township Manager; and Terry Fedorchak, Interim Township Manager. Also, present via web-conference was Joseph M. Bagley, Esq., Township Solicitor.

Mr. Zygmund-Felt called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Mr. Bagley announced that the Board of Commissioners held an Executive Session earlier this evening to discuss personnel, litigation, acquisition of property, and other matters which if discussed in public would violate lawful privilege.

## 1. REPORT OF THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

### A. Review of the Report of the Highway Department:

Mr. Zygmund-Felt mentioned the challenges the Township has been experiencing with storm water and wanted to thank the Public Works Department, including the Public Works Superintendent and Highway Superintendent, for all the extra time they have been putting in for all of the storms.

Upon motion of Mr. Zygmund-Felt, the Committee unanimously approved the July 2020 Report of the Highway Department.

### B. Upon motion of Mr. Zygmund-Felt, the Committee unanimously approved the June 2020 Report of the Refuse/Recycling Department.

### C. Review of the Report of the Parks Maintenance Department:

Mr. Zygmund-Felt acknowledged the hard work of the Parks Maintenance Department. Mr. Areman thanked the Public Works Department and Mr. Clewell for their efforts at Grove Park to find more information on the fish kill in Tookany Creek. It was determined that the heat or weather may have had caused it, not an illicit discharge. Mr. Clewell explained that if the public notices any fish kill, they should contact the Public Works Department. Since time is of the essence, the Township will be better able to respond and more quickly identify the problem than the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Pennsylvania Game Commission. They will call DEP or the Game Commission to report the issue.

Upon motion of Mr. Zygmund-Felt, the Committee unanimously approved the July 2020 Report of the Parks Maintenance Department.

### D. Upon motion of Mr. Zygmund-Felt, the Committee unanimously approved the July 2020 Report of the Code Administrator.

### E. Upon motion of Mr. Zygmund-Felt, the Committee unanimously approved the July 2020 Report of the Street & Traffic Light Superintendent.

Mr. Zygmund-Felt acknowledged the hard work of the Street and Traffic Light Superintendent, Joe Stuckert.

## 2. REPORT OF THE TOWNSHIP ENGINEER

### A. Consideration of a Resolution approving the Sewage Facilities planning Module for the Wawa Land Development located on Easton Road and Waverly Road in Glenside.

Mr. Eisold said the planning module that was submitted is in order and will be submitted to DEP for review and approval. Six EDUs will be required, which is lower than the aggregate amount of EDUs allotted to the original properties associated with this project.

Mr. Areman asked if the estimated amount of usage is for a much larger Wawa, rather than the one in question. Mr. Eisold clarified that this is just a method of calculating the usage and the calculations are not far off for the project.

Ms. Rappoport asked if the advisory committees are up to date on the status of the plans. Mr. Eisold said the most recent information has been posted on the Township website and reflects which issues have been addressed and which ones have not.

Ms. Rappoport asked why an existing clay pipe is not being replaced. Mr. Eisold said the clay pipe in question is on Easton Road and is not part of the land development project. Mr. Zygmund-Felt asked if the Township can ask Aqua to inspect the existing aging infrastructure. Mr. Eisold said that it should not be an issue for Aqua to approve this request. Mr. Zygmund-Felt wants to make sure that any work being done, will not put the aging infrastructure at risk.

Ms. Rhonda Isser asked if unused EDUs for the Wawa site can be used for future projects. Mr. Eisold said the Township is trying to claim some of the EDUs to utilize in other projects.

**Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners:** Upon motion by Mr. Zygmund-Felt, the Committee unanimously voted to recommend the Board of Commissioners adopt a Resolution approving the Sewage Facilities Planning Module for the Wawa Land Development Located on Easton Road and Waverly Road in Glenside.

- B. Consideration of a resolution granting conditional approval of CTDA No. 19-05, Land Development and Lot Consolidation Plan of Sergio Polyakov for 100 East Comly Street, Philadelphia to permit a parking lot for the adjacent vehicle repair business in the R-1 Residential District.

Mr. Eisold said after thoroughly inspecting the proposed plans and site, all the issues, including the outstanding issues, have been addressed. Mr. Brockington said he has not received any complaints and is satisfied.

**Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners:** Upon motion by Mr. Zygmund-Felt, the Committee unanimously voted to recommend the Board of Commissioners adopt a Resolution granting conditional approval of CTDA No. 19-05, Land Development and Lot Consolidation Plan of Sergio Polyakov for 100 East Comly Street, Philadelphia to permit a parking lot for the adjacent vehicle repair business in the R-1 Residential District.

- C. Consideration of a resolution granting conditional approval for CTDA No. 17-04 of Penrose Medical Center to consolidate two parcels located at 1829 and 1831 Cheltenham Avenue, Cheltenham to permit medical offices in the two attached buildings in the R-5 Residential District.

Mr. Eisold said the outstanding issues have been resolved. William Kerr, the applicant's attorney, also confirmed that the issues in question have been resolved and they are ready to proceed. Mr. Bagley asked for confirmation that the applicant has no problem recording the deed of consolidation.

Mr. Norris asked if the applicant has complied with the recommendations of the Montgomery County Planning Commission on the parking. Mr. Eisold said the applicant was compliant.

**Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners:** Upon motion by Mr. Zygmund-Felt, the Committee unanimously voted to recommend the Board of Commissioners adopt a Resolution granting conditional approval for CTDA No. 17-04 of Penrose Medical Center to consolidate two parcels located at 1829 and 1831 Cheltenham Avenue, Cheltenham to permit medical offices in the two attached buildings in the R-5 Residential District.

- D. **Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners:** Upon motion by Mr. Zygmund-Felt, the

Committee unanimously voted to recommend the Board of Commissioners Award a Contract for Furnishing Bituminous Materials, F.O.B. Plant to Glasgow, Inc., Glenside, PA in the amount of \$24,050.00 from September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2021.

- E. **Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners:** Upon motion by Mr. Zygmund-Felt, the Committee unanimously voted to recommend the Board of Commissioners Award a Contract for Furnishing Equipment at an Hourly Rental Rate to Glasgow, Inc., Glenside, PA from September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2021.

### 3. REPORT OF TOWNSHIP MANAGER

#### A. Receipt of Committee Meeting Minutes:

1. Shade Tree Advisory Commission (STAC) – July 9, 2020

Upon motion by Mr. Zygmund-Felt, the Committee unanimously received the Meeting Minutes of the Shade Tree Advisory Commission of July 9, 2020.

2. La Mott Board of Historical and Architectural Review – July 16, 2020

Upon motion of Mr. Zygmund-Felt, the Committee unanimously received the Meeting Minutes of the La Mott Board of Historical and Architectural Review of July 16, 2020.

3. Wyncote Board of Historical and Architectural Review – July 16, 2020

A. Upon motion of Mr. Zygmund-Felt, the Committee unanimously concurred with the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness for application W20-251 of Michael Messina and Emilie B. Haertsch owner of 112 Webster Avenue, Wyncote, PA 19095 for the construction of a 4' high wooden split rail fence with wire mesh in the rear of their property.

Upon motion of Mr. Zygmund-Felt, the Committee unanimously received the Meeting Minutes of the Wyncote Board of Historical and Architectural Review of July 16, 2020.

4. Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) – July 20, 2020

Upon motion of Mr. Zygmund-Felt, the Committee unanimously received the Meeting Minutes of the Environmental Advisory Council of July 20, 2020.

### 4. OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Discussion on SEPTA Jenkintown Stream Restoration Project in the Tookany Creek Watershed.

Mr. Areman stated that there has been a lot of discussion on this over the past few months, due to the fact that this project does not have any beneficial impact to Cheltenham. SEPTA was asked to address this issue again to see if there were steps that could be taken that would have a positive impact on flooding in Cheltenham. Mr. Dennis Stefanski of SEPTA stated that he has been working to better provide tangible improvements that will positively impact Cheltenham Township, particularly in the second phase of this project. He also stated that he has been having conversations with the Township and DEP about what he can do to help facilitate and expedite some of the work being done north of Bridge 1122. Mr. Stefanski said although this first element is being described as Phase I, it is not truly a phased project; SEPTA would complete the entire project at one time because there are mobilization and other cost savings. Minutes amended per the Board of Commissioners at its regularly-scheduled meeting on August 19, 2020.

#### Public Comment

*Robert Hyslop, 211 Harrison Avenue, Glenside, PA, expressed concerns about the project and that water will still be running down the tracks, regardless of the project phase and wants SEPTA to address this, as this is a tremendous risk.*

*Teresa Camerota, 1112 Church Road, Wyncote, PA*, asked how rainfall data was being collected for this project. Mr. Stefanski said they have been looking at data from previous storms and have compared that to Hurricane Sandy and Irene. The models reflected patterns of those two storms and the stream banks were adjusted to see what impact it has to lowering the 100-year storm data. Ms. Camerota said they have also has been collecting data from previous storms and revealed huge amounts of water still being collected upstream. Mr. Stefanski he is using the 100-year storm levels, plus another foot.

*Tom McHugh, 127 Hewett Road, Wyncote, PA*, asked about the new hydraulic analysis for a portion of the Tookany Creek Parkway.

Mr. Zygmund-Felt reiterated that the Board of Commissioners is making sure that downstream will be protected and upstream precautions will be put in place.

Ms. Rappoport thanked SEPTA for ~~the commitment it has shown in protecting this historic train station, which is something that the community is invested in and wants to ensure it is not demolished by neglect.~~ it's commitments and reiterated that the Township is watching the condition of the historic train station and as of a year ago, it was leaking in many places. This is not an acceptable way to treat property, especially something that this community is invested in for the future. Ms. Rappoport asked that the message be relayed to SEPTA that the leaks need to be taken care of, if they haven't already been completed, to ensure the building is water tight, so that it is not demolition by neglect. *Minutes amended per the Board of Commissioners at its regularly-scheduled meeting on August 19, 2020.*

Mr. Zygmund-Felt asked for a formal letter outlining the issues and concerns that need to be addressed before moving forward.

**Recommendation to the Board of Commissioners:** Upon motion Mr. Zygmund-Felt the Committee, voted 5-2, to recommend the Board of Commissioners authorize submission of a Conditional Letter of Map Revision (CLOMR) Application Package to the Federal Emergency Management Agency to revise the Annotated Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) based on updated hydraulic analysis for portions of the Tookany Creek and Baeder Run (Ayes: Areman, Norris, Pransky, Rappoport, Zygmund-Felt. Nays: Brockington, Holland).

Mr. Holland explained that he voted against supporting the letter because, while he appreciates SEPTA's willingness to work with the Township, he does not think it has done enough.

B. Mr. Areman asked that updates on the Glenside DEP Flood Control Project be provided at the next Public Works Meeting.

5. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. The Board of Commissioners presented a PowerPoint to introduce the Stormwater Remediation Initiative (see attached).

Ms. Rappoport stated that the Township wanted investigate the implementation of a stormwater impact fee few years ago. It was recommended in the recently-completed Five-Year Strategic Financial Management Plan.

Mr. Norris said the Board will be seeking lots of input from the community, taxpayers and non-profits during the stormwater impact fee feasibility study, which will start this fall. Both Mr. Holland and Mr. Pransky expressed their support for the stormwater impact fee project.

**Public Comment**

*Teresa Camerota, 1112 Church Road, Wyncote, PA*, thanked the Board for its work on this issue.

*Tom McHugh, 127 Hewett Road, Wyncote, PA*, said that we cannot control what Abington and Jenkintown do and the Township should not think of itself as a victim.

*Derek Baker, 531 Elkins Avenue, Elkins Park, PA*, thanked the Board for its hard work in addressing these issues and offered to participate in any way he can. He also asked if the PowerPoint will be made available to the public.

Mr. Eisold said that this is a bold decision and a positive move for the Township.

Mr. Zygmund-Felt added that this study is just one thing the Township can do to require some of the properties that are contributing to the highest amount of uncontrolled stormwater runoff and creating problems to contribute to correcting the problem.

6. CITIZENS FORUM: None.
7. There being no further business, upon motion of Mr. Zygmund-Felt, the meeting was adjourned at 9:18 p.m.



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Terry Fedorchak  
Interim Township Manager

Submitted by Ariel Sykes

# Stormwater & Flood Management



## Identifying a Road Map to Mitigate Flooding

*Public Works Committee  
August 4, 2020*

# Extreme Weather Events Exceed Our Control

Cheltenham and the neighboring region experience frequent seasonal weather events which:

- Result in flooding and storm drain back-up/blockage
- Contribute to residential, commercial and Township property damage
- Harm infrastructure, even destroying mature trees and greenscape

Severe Weather Events impact property owners both financially and emotionally

- Physical damage
- Shut down or evacuation
- Loss of use
- Lost time, revenue and income



# Impact/Implications of Extreme Weather Events

Homeowners, renters and commercial property owners frequently lack adequate property and flood insurance coverages resulting in:

- Significant out-of-pocket expenses
- Uncovered damage claims
- Potential reduced property valuations or eventual selling issues

Township currently diverts resources into situational remediation rather than prevention and future improvements.

These events provoke frustration

- Many turn to the Township, hoping we are obligated to handle damage claims
- Others expect FEMA to buy up flooded properties, which is a rare occurrence





# Plain Facts Impacting Residential, Commercial & Township Properties

Cheltenham Township has an aging infrastructure, with a long history of wastewater and stormwater management challenges:

- *Wastewater wise:*
  - Replacement of Interceptor A and the recently-completed sale of the sewer system to AQUA eliminates cost-prohibitive obligations on the Township
  - As much as \$80-\$100 million of debt was avoided and the potential for Township bankruptcy
- *Stormwater wise:*
  - Upstream development floods downstream properties in Cheltenham
  - ACOE Basin and PA DEP Flood Mitigation projects in planning stages
  - Stormwater runoff and flooding add to problems and expenses
  - Accumulated debris from aging/diseased trees and greenery in stream and stormwater management facilities leads to blockage/flow diversion
  - Mud and silt from soil displacement move water in unmanageable ways
  - Individual, unauthorized construction or personal flood mitigation efforts can all contribute to problems and damage during serious weather events



# Ongoing/Planned Efforts to Mitigate Stormwater Impacts & Flooding

Township Public Works, Emergency Management, Fire, Police and Engineering resources respond to dangerous, life threatening situations when notified.

- The July 6, 2020 event saw water rescues, submerged vehicles, severe local flooding but...
- No fatalities or storm-related hospitalizations

These same Township resources routinely inspect, monitor and institute preventative measures by removal, clearance, citation issuance or directly communicating with property owners.

- Extensive investment in stormwater management facilities such as pumping stations, levies, reconstruction and point repairs have benefitted many areas
- Public Works actions routinely reduce potential flooding, stormwater incursion and damage through maintenance activities
- Code Enforcement staff routinely notify property owners regarding their obligations to prevent obstructions to stormwater management facilities
- Interventions (by owner and Township) may be needed to improve or reduce the risks of problems associated with severe weather events



# What Immediate & Future Fixes are Available?

Public Works and Township Engineers have/are surveying vulnerable areas to:

- Identify and assess locations at risk of flooding
- Look for blockages from accumulated debris at inlets, culverts and storm drains
- Routinely inspect streambanks for risk of overflow and potential for flooding
- Actively respond to reports of potential problem areas
- Identify and prioritize where projects can improve resiliency to extreme weather events

All of these can and do reduce the risks that come with extreme weather events, but they're not enough. Cheltenham requires a systematic and comprehensive initiative to prioritize Stormwater Protection and Management leading to a:

**Stormwater Management Initiative**



# Stormwater Impact Fee Feasibility Study

Following extensive information gathering, Township Staff and the Board of Commissioners initiated a Request for Proposals to identify the best consulting option for establishing a Stormwater Management Utility

- Philadelphia-based Arcadis was selected out of eight competitive proposals to conduct the analysis and identify how the Township can implement a Stormwater Management and Usage Authority
- Extensive community involvement will be incorporated into this initiative
  - Public meetings will be held throughout the process to provide opportunities for property owners to comment and understand the analysis
  - Residential, Commercial and Institutional property owners will be appointed to a Stormwater Advisory Committee (SAC) that will help guide the analysis
  - The Board of Commissioner, Staff, and the Township's technical advisors will also be involved in the discussion
- Bringing this into implementation is expected to be a 15-month commitment
  - Preliminary public activities will be ready to get started early this fall
  - Studies through to adoption of Stormwater Remediation Recommendations are expected to be completed and ready to go into effect by January 2022



# Stormwater Management Plan Implementation

It is envisioned that fees will be proportionately imposed on properties with large and impervious surfaces to support flooding and stormwater remediation efforts.

- Tax-exempt properties such as Colleges, Hospitals, Private Schools and Religious Institutions with large amounts of impervious surfaces, contribute to significant water runoff and creek or stream overflow would be expected to pay their fair share of these operating and capital costs, reducing current taxpayer subsidies

In all probability, residential properties could be assessed an Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU) fee based on the typical volume of impervious surface

- In 40 PA municipalities that instituted Stormwater Management Fees, on average, residential properties paid modest quarterly fees of \$22 as their contributions to mitigating flooding and improving water quality
- In contrast, non-profits with sizable tax exempt properties had their calculated impervious surfaces require payments (of up to six figures) based on their impact on the stormwater management and flooding remediation system



# Expected Outcomes for Cheltenham Township

Severe Weather Events have the potential to create havoc in the Township

- But extensive Township-wide improvements and preventative measures have the probability to diminish all but the most extreme impacts on frequently effected areas

Predictable locations, either in proximity to the waterways or with some history of flooding/storm water incursion, are identifiable

- With sound engineering and continuing maintenance, effective solutions can be implemented
- Army Corps (ACOE) and PA DEP proposals will be factored into these policies and funding

Generally, properties contributing to local flooding and water quality issues have larger impervious surfaces, but as non-profits, they avoid paying real estate taxes

- This inequity can be addressed via a Storm Water Remediation Initiative to establish adequate funding and fair “ownership” of these obligations

Community initiatives of this nature address short and long term problems that can:

- Limit costly damage to property and infrastructure
- Increase resiliency of stormwater and other infrastructure to minimize damage and lose of use to property/infrastructure during and after weather events
- Improve water quality



More information and updates about the Study can be found on the Township's website: [www.cheltenhamtownship.org](http://www.cheltenhamtownship.org) on the Hot Topics page, under "*Stormwater Impact Fee.*"

