



Upper Uwchlan Township
Board of Supervisors Workshop
March 11, 2025
4:00 p.m.
Minutes
Approved

Attendees:

Jenn Baxter, Chair
Andy Durkin, Vice-Chair
Sandy D'Amico, Member

Kristin Camp, Esq., Township Solicitor

Tony Scheivert, Township Manager
Lindsay Yeager, Assistant Township Manager
Gwen Jonik, Township Secretary
Rhys Lloyd, Codes Enforcement Officer
Anthony Campbell, Zoning Officer
Tom Jones, Police Chief

The Workshop was held at the Township Building, 140 Pottstown Pike, Chester Springs PA 19425.

Jenn Baxter called the Workshop to order at 4:02 p.m., led the Pledge of Allegiance, and offered a moment of silence. No one planned to record the Workshop. There were 5 citizens in attendance.

Board/Commission Appointment.

Jenn Baxter announced the Board met with Keith White this afternoon. Mr. White is interested in filling the vacancy on the Authority. Andy Durkin moved, seconded by Sandy D'Amico, to appoint Keith White to the Municipal Authority. The motion carried unanimously. Mr. White is filling a late-term vacancy, and his term will expire December 31, 2025.

C-1, C-3 Zoning Ordinance Amendments ~ Authorize Advertisement.

Kristin Camp explained the County Planning Commission's comments regarding the proposed C-1 and C-3 Zoning Ordinance amendments, to generally remove language that allowed the Board of Supervisors to modify certain area, bulk and lot, historic preservation, design and other standards. Addressing the comment was not substantive; basically formatting issues. The intent to adopt needs to be advertised 2 consecutive weeks. Ms. Camp will send a revised draft to the County Planning Commission and advertise for adoption at the April 21 Supervisors Meeting. Andy Durkin moved, seconded by Sandy D'Amico, to authorize advertisement. The motion carried unanimously.

Windsor Baptist Church Parsonage Demolition Permit Request.

Pastor Ben O'Toole, Ed Theurkauf and Ric Bassler attended. Pastor O'Toole advised the Church would like to remove the parsonage, beautify the corner of Park Road and Little Conestoga Road, connect the trail and connect with the community. The idea began years ago during the land development process for the school building, approved with a condition to extend the trail to the corner by Fall 2025. Because the structure is on the Township's historic resource inventory, the demolition request has to be reviewed and commented on by the Historical Commission and the Planning Commission. The Historical Commission requested the Church provide cost estimates to renovate the parsonage, which they did: \$233,800 but it will probably be much more for foundation repair, historic-looking exterior, bring utilities up to code, etc., and they have no use for the building. It's impractical for the Church. They spent money to get these estimates. The building is not the original parsonage, and it's not a Victorian style house. They want to preserve the Church building which is an historic structure, and will connect with the historic village of Eagle. They are managing resources to carry out their necessary and beneficial church activities; they're

thinking of expanding their Chapel, refurbishing stained glass windows. The Pastor mentioned the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act, which provides for religious liberties.

Vivian McCardell, Historical Commission Chair, noted the parsonage's architectural significance might not be at play but it is an historically significant structure. It was built during the Victorian period but not decorated as such. Its significance is its relation to the Church and the house is part of the village. It helps retain the character and feel of the village. This could set a precedence.

Kristin Camp noted this building isn't used in the exercise of the Church's operation or purpose. This is a compelling situation, and each case is fact specific. There are no plans to use or reuse this building.

Ed Theurkauf noted the Zoning Officer had clarified that the building now can't be used for a residential purpose. Ms. Camp noted it could be if that was feasible for the Church.

The last time the parsonage was lived in was in the late 1970s/early 1980s. [Marsh Creek Signs house was the original parsonage.] The Pastor advised they have been using it for storage for their sports teams and other activities.

The Planning Commission felt the Church met the ordinance, that it's impracticable for them to spend \$300,000 to renovate a building that isn't going to be used.

Sandy D'Amico questioned the asbestos removal estimate. Mr. Bassler said the demolition will cost \$28,000 plus \$17,000 for the asbestos removal. The \$17,000 would also be additional to the renovation estimate.

Mrs. D'Amico asked if the Church had the funds to fit out the house for a tenant, or maybe someone else has an idea to use it for something that could generate funds for the church to rehabilitate it. The Pastor noted the estimates they provided were low. It would probably be more in the \$500,000+ range to renovate.

Vivian McCardell mentioned the Historical Commission suggested using it as a Thrift Shop, an emergency residence for families after a fire, or a food bank.

Gerry Stein questioned if the 5-year trail construction requirement could be modified by the Board. The house deteriorated over 30 years; could it slowly be renovated over 5 years or whatever length of time so as not to be a financial burden.

Jenn Baxter noted adaptive re-use is flexible, but if you can't fund it or have a use for it, why should it be renovated. Pedestrian accessibility for the Village is very important to the community as well. The building does not have the same character as other more viable structures in the vicinity.

Mr. Theurkauf advised that part of the mission of the landscape plan is to incorporate historic architectural elements such as a stone capped wall, moving the trail away from the roadway, perhaps a staircase and axial path back to the steeple, to draw the historic Church into the scene. Tony Scheivert added that a historical marker will be fashioned.

Vivian asked if the trail could be rerouted behind the parsonage instead of in front of it, extending the trail and preserving the building. If the demo permit is approved, explore moving the building across Little Conestoga Road, or dismantling and rebuilding elsewhere. If the church offers it for free to someone, they could move it, although costs to do so are unknown. Also, could the Historical Commission (HC) go through the structure to see if there are any artifacts the HC could have and could Bob Wise, the Township Historical Consultant, prepare a report on the interior? The Pastor said that is fine.

Gerry Stein asked if there are other plans for the property along with the chapel expansion. The Pastor noted the chapel expansion is in Phase 5 of their Master Plan.

Andy Durkin commented that the parsonage doesn't fit with the rest of their campus. It's hard to justify spending \$400,000 or more on a structure with no plans for use.

Tony Scheivert advised the Board will consider the Decision at their March 17, 2025 meeting.

Open Session

No comments were offered.

Adjournment

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, Jenn Baxter adjourned the Workshop at 4:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gwen Jonik
Township Secretary