

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of Greenfield Township Trustees *Special Meeting*

April 17, 2024 - Held 4:00 PM

The Greenfield Township Trustees met for a Special Meeting at the Township Administrative Office. The purpose of the meeting was to review and discuss the land use plan for the Township. Trustee Searle opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Kent Searle, Dave Cotner and Lonnie Kosch were present.

Trustee Cotner began the comments by stating the plan that is being worked on is not set in stone. It can be amended any time during this process, and it is for the future of the Township.

Rick Szabrak, Workforce Development Director, Fairfield County, and Anthony Iachini, Fairfield County, joined the meeting and discussed the plan and the future of the Township. Mr. Szabrak suggested that the plan is a ten year plan, and part of that is based on how financing is going. It is taking longer for projects to get off the ground. It depends on landowners who are willing and able to sell. Tony Vogel, Fairfield County Water and Sewer, also joined the meeting.

Trustee Cotner asked Mr. Szabrak to talk about what an NCA - New Community Authority - is and what the purpose is. A one-page document which helps explain this information was distributed. Mr. Szabrak explained an NCA basically gives the opportunity for the developers, government and property owners to designate a taxing entity over an area of land. Industrial users tend to look for the best deal when they are bringing a bunch of jobs into the community. Usually when you are giving an NCA, you are giving tax incentives, such as a tax abatement. He went on to explain the situation using DHL as an example: "We'll use DHL for an example. They are building a (*not any taxes - additional property taxes on the improvements, yes*) - so - whatever they are paying for the property taxes will continue. For the improvements to the property, no; so for DHL, that land was already being taxed. It actually became - moved to commercial land - so actually the land value went up, so they were even paying a little more taxes now, but the building itself, they are not paying property taxes on for 15 years; but what they are doing is - we negotiated a pilot - a payment in lieu of taxes - that they are going to be giving \$150,000 a year to the school district, since they are not paying property taxes to the school district; they are also putting in money to help for road improvements along Basil Western Road; so we said you really want this property and it's gonna be a deal because we are giving you this CRA; we are giving you this tax abatement which everybody is going to give a company that is bringing a lot of jobs and investing \$55 million in the community, they are probably going to get a tax abatement, but we were saying, you really want to be in this location, you need to pay a little more. They built a place in Pickaway County; they didn't have to pay anything; they just got the tax abatement and that was it. But we said, you want to be this close to 270, this is very prime property, we are going to make you pay a little for the school, we are going to make you pay for the roads; some of the road improvements; then they also did a JEDD with Violet Township and Canal Winchester, so that way, any of the people - their employees - a minimum of 200 employees - their payroll taxes - they are being taxed a

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local income tax, that is split basically like 80/20 between Violet Township and Canal Winchester payroll taxes that come in - so Violet Township is getting some money out of that. Then, in the future, that property - you've got a 755,000 square foot building that will get property taxes. For 15 years they won't, but in the future, they will start to see that benefit, and the schools will see a lot of benefit, with no additional students". Trustee Cotner asked if the fire department could be a part of that. Mr. Szabrak responded that a pilot could be created for that, too; a pilot could be created for anything. A pilot is a payment in lieu of taxes. A pilot is a separate thing from an NCA. He went on to explain that the NCA is the tax abatement. We are saying if you want this, we expect you to do these things. The NCA is also the area, as well. An area is created, and you can do special tax assessments in that area, as well. For industrial, that works well because you are getting employees and getting tax dollars that way. For residential, it's a little different. An NCA makes sense over that if it's mixed use. An NCA gives a lot of different taxing options. If a housing development is built for 300 homes, what you can do is say you are going to pay your regular property taxes, but you can also say, you are going to be part of this New Community Authority - NCA - and this NCA can do an income tax on you; just like you file income taxes in a municipality, they will be filing taxes through this NCA, and that money will go wherever the NCA Board decides. The rules are set at the beginning of the NCA. Once the first subdivision is created, it will apply to a subdivision that is built next to it; the NCA will move to that one. People moving to these areas will know that they are paying regular property taxes, and an additional tax which is going to go to the Fire Department, and the school system, and toward road improvements. It can be multiple things. It could be an additional property tax, or it could be an income tax. It needs to make sense for the people moving in. There is no time limit on the tax. That is the difference from a CRA, which is a tax abatement; that is for 15 years max and it's done. The people already living in the Township would not pay additional taxes; it would only apply to the people living in the specialized area that the NCA applies to. The people who are moving to that area would be aware of the specialized taxes. Mr. Szabrak gave the example of the outlet mall in Sunbury. The NCA helped pay for most of the infrastructure for it. Things that are purchased there have an additional sales tax, and it goes toward their NCA. The people who are buying those things are the ones who are benefitting from this, so those are the ones who are paying those taxes. Trustee Kosch asked if this would be included as part of the land use plan. Mr. Szabrak stated that it should be included on the map with a note so people know the areas that are part of an NCA. Mr. Szabrak also noted Greenfield Township is in a better position than most of the townships in the county, because they already have water and sewer available. Tony Vogel pointed out that the two reasons annexation would occur would be due to zoning, and water and sewer services. He also pointed out that an NCA could be set up with both Carroll and Lancaster. It is not based on their income tax; Greenfield Township would be setting up the tax structure themselves.

Trustee Searle asked if business or industrial was building, would it include an abatement. Mr. Szabrak explained the NCA is on top of the abatement. The Township

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could say you will get this tax abatement for 15 years, because you are bringing jobs here, but you will be part of this NCA. You will get the property tax benefit, but you are still paying this other tax. The NCA is its own separate situation. Using DHL as an example, we could have said, you are getting this tax abatement for 15 years, but you are part of this NCA - New Community Authority area - and you have to pay these taxes. It will still be a net benefit. You would want to do an NCA or a Pilot - not both. With the NCA the rules would be established at the beginning. Once the tax percentages are set, they stay at that rate. A seven-person board would be set-up, and typically, they serve a two-year term; it can vary, depending on the board.

Trustee Searle asked if NCA's could be set up prior to developers coming to the area. Mr. Szabrak explained that you wouldn't set them up ahead of time, but you could say, as part of the zoning, in order to rezone an area, it would need to be part of a New Community Authority. That should be included in a Land Use Plan: "Proposed NCA".

Discussion continued as to the need for or advantage of a CEDA: Cooperative Economic Development Agreement. Mr. Szabrak explained this would be designated on the land use plan. For example, the Township could say a specific parcel, when developed, would be annexed into Lancaster, and another parcel would not. But the parcel that is designated would be part of an NCA, where Lancaster could get a benefit. It could also set a standard where it would say in order to develop this, a roadway needs to be built off of certain township roads. The CEDA would put everyone on the same page, so there are no surprises.

Mr. Szabrak also explained that a JEDD is based on a municipality's income tax, where an NCA is whatever the entity sets up at the beginning. The NCA can include property tax and sales tax. An NCA would keep the property in the township. A CEDA would also allow the township to say it is a Type Two annexation/expediting annexation.

Mr. Vogel shared a map with red and green lines regarding water and sewer. The red indicates proposed lines. Green indicates the sewer lines. He noted water can be run anywhere. He indicated where the Greenfield sewer is currently and noted the developers can't come up Route 33. About one year ago, Mr. Vogel was talking to the group about putting a lift station in to service the Coonpath Road area, and that's why he needs to know what Greenfield plans to do, so he can size the service lines. The lines on the map are where gravity is flowing. He noted he would put a lift station at Coonpath Rd. to service the other side of 33 and the area on one side of Coonpath. South of Election House and Coonpath Roads would need a second lift station to bring the water up. He noted the water service goes to Carroll, but the sewer service stops at Lockville waste water. Mr. Vogel reiterated that he needs to know what the planning and zoning (density) indicates, so he can determine the size of pipes that need to be run to the specific areas, and he can build a big enough lift station, and then gravity everything to it to handle it all.

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Discussion continued with Trustee Searle asking how and when would Mr. Vogel determine when this infrastructure would be built. Mr. Vogel explained that right now, all of Greenfield's waste goes to the city of Lancaster, and he pays them every month; their rates are going up. At some point, if the Township says they will not develop, he will have to turn all the sewer around and bring it up to his facility because it allows him to control his rate structure. He will be building the infrastructure, but if he knows what the Townships plans are for zoning, he can build it accordingly. It was noted the zoning can be changed in the future by the property owner/business owner, once the property would sell and start to be developed.

Mr. Szabrak went on to explain the process that occurs with industrial and manufacturing coming in in coordination with Jobs Ohio/One Columbus. When a company has a plan for a facility/size and what they want to build somewhere in the midwest, they ask Jobs Ohio what is available. When the appropriate area and land is found, it would be submitted to Jobs Ohio. This is behind the scenes activity and there are usually non-disclosure agreements in place, so a competitor does not come in and build before another business. He noted discretion is very important in these matters. He stated there are many different solutions based on the situation. He noted the group is trying to set up the rules of engagement, and between the cities, the village and Greenfield Township. The NCA helps out the Village of Carroll. Doing a JEDD would not make sense. The NCA could have a two percent income tax set; there is some flexibility there. He also explained the Fairfield County Port Authority in the Township, which is a quasi-government entity, and would have the powers that government has, without as many stipulations. He explained with DHL, they did a land lease, which meant it was government property. They built on it, and they didn't have to pay sales tax, because it was built on government land. That saves a lot of money in the bigger projects.

The question was raised as to whether the Township would need to include Lancaster for the NCA. The Township would need to include a municipality/city in order to receive taxes; a Township is not allowed to tax in the state of Ohio. Mr. Szabrak reiterated that they are involved to work with the Township, and why they hired Mr. Iachini - to work with the unincorporated areas and the villages.

Trustee Kosch asked if there was an advantage to bringing in warehouses. Mr. Szabrak noted there is a balance to the plan. Manufacturing brings jobs and they are decent paying jobs, especially as retail jobs decline. He prefers those over distribution centers. He also noted with a warehouse facility, if the owner leaves the building, it can be used for other purposes.

The next meeting with the Mayor and County Commissioners is to look at overlaying Lancaster's water and sewer with what the county currently has, and what they could have in terms of utilities. It would also look at what could be annexed in and what makes the most sense. Mr. Szabrak did suggest that the Township create a CEDA with

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Lancaster to lay out the rules of engagement, e.g. which properties could be annexed, and then have an NCA that will give a benefit to Lancaster. That would be a selling point to have Lancaster agree not to annex. The advantage of the CEDA would be to avoid a turf war like what happened with Violet Township/Canal Winchester/Pickerington.

The question was raised as to whether the Comprehensive Plan needed to be completed before a CEDA would be drawn up, and how to proceed. Mr. Szabrak stated the conversations that are being held now should be recorded as to what is being agreed upon verbally, and wait to have a CEDA created when working with the City of Lancaster.

Trustee Searle asked how the decisions were made as to how the Comprehensive Plan was laid out and how the various areas were determined to be identified as they are currently. Trustee Cotner explained that input was taken from everyone involved, which included Tom Erlenwein, Brad Smith, Cory Spires, Jeff Williamsen, Carlton Reaves and himself, as well as talking to the property owners for their input. He had spoken to the property owners directly. He noted Lloyd Helber wanted to be marked as industrial; Mr. Ridenour said he was fine with whatever the Township decided; Dick Paulus wants his property on Old Columbus Rd. to be local business; the Kulls are already industrial; Mr. Eversole has not determined what he wants the area at Coonpath and Election House to be yet; the Johnsons beside Meijer is industrial now, so he said to leave it that way; the Stebeltons are good with what the Township decides. Trustee Cotner reiterated that this is a wish list as to what the Board would like to see. The Comprehensive Plan is a legal document that will help to protect the Township with developers and businesses coming in.

Discussion continued regarding potential annexation in and around Waffle House and the adjacent church, and R3 and R2 properties, i.e. what it means, and where they are located currently. Jeff Williamsen noted that R3 says "one structure per parcel with no more than four units; and multi-family structure including senior housing, having no more than four dwellings in one structure, no more than one structure per parcel". Trustee Searle reiterated that R3 is not multi-family housing. The only multi-family housing would be through a PUD. There is still potential for annexation behind the Waffle House. It was also noted that the land behind Meijer is designated as PUD at this time. The properties in and around the area were reviewed in more detail on the current map.

At this time, Rick Szabrak and Anthony Iachini needed to leave the meeting.

Trustee Searle stated that at the first meeting he attended with Lancaster, they said they have no plan to do any annexation, other than where they already have infrastructure built out. He noted that area was heading west out of town near Wilson Road.

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The remainder of the meeting was spent reviewing the map and discussing the various parcels held by the specific owners, and how the property is being used currently, and/or how it is designated on the map currently. Trustee Cotner reiterated that the land use map as it is being developed is a “wish list” for what the Township would like to see. It was also noted again that once a landowner sells the property, zoning changes can be sought by the new owners. Jeff Williamsen suggested he would like to see more retirement homes being built in the township in the future, which would be considered R2 property.

After discussing a schedule for the next meeting, the decision was made to hold another Land Use Meeting on Wednesday, May 1, 2024 at 4 p.m. at the Greenfield Township Firehouse.

Trustee Cotner made a motion to adjourn; Trustee Kosch seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m.