

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of **Greenfield Township Trustees** *Special Meeting*

May 30, 2024 - Held 6:00 PM

The Greenfield Township Trustees met in special session at the Township Administrative Office to meet with attorney Marshall McCormick about potentially helping out with the Comprehensive Plan. Dave Cotner, Lonnie Kosch and Kent Searle were present.

Trustee Searle opened the meeting by explaining the purpose of the meeting. The Township is in the process of working on a Comprehensive Land Use plan. A copy of the draft map from the first meeting was shared with the group, and this map (second draft) indicates potential zoning in the Township. Trustee Kosch explained the goal of the comprehensive plan was to stop the annexation by Lancaster, but also to share the information with the county water and sewer group so they can develop their plans for these services in the Township. They want to put a lift station on Coonpath Road to bring the material from Lancaster north to the facility, which is at Lockville. Trustee Kosch went on to ask if and when the Township wanted to change their Comprehensive Plan, how would they do that and what would it look like? Would the original plan need to be completely rewritten or could specific parts be amended? Mr. McCormick responded that there is no time limit or restraint on when this is done, and suggested it should be revisited on a regular basis. The general idea would be to build on it and not revamp the entire plan. Discussion continued as to the current Land Use Plan created by the county, and how that affected what the Township is working on. A previous Board of the Township (several years prior) had adopted the county's plan, so they had a plan in place; however, the Township now wants to create their own plan. The Comprehensive Plan is necessary to have the Township zoning in place.

The group reviewed the current draft map and the specifics of how things are plotted out at this point. The area of threat of annexation was pointed out, as well. At this time, some participants arrived at the office; however, they opted not to stay for the meeting.

Mr. McCormick also asked about NCA's and whether discussion had begun on that issue, and shared some information about his experience with Liberty Township and the village of Baltimore and their potential plans. He noted that multiple NCA's can be created and added on. The census numbers were discussed, as NCA's require a specific number of residents in the Township and the County.

The group continued to review the current zoning map. Google was pointed out on the map and noted that the infrastructure in that area had occurred because of Google. Annexation and the location of the various school districts was discussed, noting that Greenfield Township includes three school districts: Lancaster, Liberty and Bloom Carroll. The other services to the Township include the Greenfield Township Fire Department, and the Fairfield County Sheriff's Office. It was noted there are no JEDD's currently; only some TIF's in the business and commercial areas.

Discussion continued regarding the feelings of the constituents and how they feel about development. The Board does not want multi-family housing and it is felt that the constituents do not, either; however, if it is needed in a specific area to put up a block, then that may need to be done.

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The group continued to review the map, specifically where the larger areas of land are held by specific people and families in the Township. It was noted the lot size for a house in the Township is at least an acre and a half, with them having private well and septic. The existing water and sewer service was pointed out on the map. It was noted this currently is being pumped down to Ety Road; however, the county wants to reverse that and pump it up to the Walnut Creek facility.

Mr. McCormick stated his recommendation that the Township formulate their Comprehensive Plan first, and then develop an NCA. Otherwise, part of the Comprehensive Plan may need to be rewritten. He reviewed the content of another Comprehensive Plan he had written, and how Greenfield's plan would be similar. He also noted it helps to have the constituents on board with the overall Comprehensive Plan. In terms of the industrial sections, Trustee Cotner noted he had spoken with the largest landowners in the Township about what they wanted to see. Mr. McCormick went on to state it was important to continue to hold the community meetings about the Comprehensive Plan as the process moves forward, and get the constituents input. He also talked about the NCA's and how they are set up, as well as how the NCA Board is set up in dealing with the account. He noted the county is not required to be on the NCA Board. Discussion continued as to the county's involvement and intention in the process and the NCA/NCA's.

Mr. McCormick asked if the county was aware that Greenfield Township wanted to develop their own Comprehensive Plan, and the Board responded that they did. He reiterated that the NCA is a 18-month to two year process, and also requires a vote on the ballot, which the Board was not aware of. He noted Liberty Township was planning to hold an open meeting with the person who wrote the law, Caleb Bell, regarding the NCA process in order to give them a better understanding of the process. It is anticipated to happen around July 1, and Mr. McCormick can update the Board of the scheduled meeting. Mr. McCormick also stated the cost to write and develop the NCA can be upwards of \$50,000, and the bill is shared by the participating parties, which in the Township's case would be the city of Lancaster and the Township. He stated it needs to be done correctly the first time. He noted he would not be the person to work on this project; however, he is willing to work on the Township's Comprehensive Plan. He noted he cannot give a definitive cost at this time, but stated his bill to Liberty Township was \$1,750.

Discussion continued as to how and when to get Mr. McCormick involved in the process. He advised the Board to keep good, detailed records of all the public meetings, and to continue to hold those meetings. He offered to come to a public meeting to help explain the Comprehensive Plan process, and stated he would not charge for the time to do this since the Board had not engaged him as yet. He stated his fee was \$250 per hour.

The group continued to discuss the county's intention with their proposed county-wide zoning plan via the RPC, and how that would possibly affect the Townships. It was noted that it is a proposal; they cannot force the Townships to accept the zoning, the same way they cannot force the Townships to use their Comprehensive Plan.

Trustee Searle asked if Mr. McCormick should attend the next public meeting as they continue to have discussions about the development of the Comprehensive Plan map. He stated he felt that was not necessary, and advised the Board to continue to hold general meetings and to publicize the schedule for the meetings so residents can attend and give their input. Trustee

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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Searle noted the local social media groups are also sharing the draft map and information, so that also helps to get the word out, as well as the Township advertising on their own.

Fiscal Officer Kull asked about the priority list that was discussed earlier, and the map was the first item. She asked what was next. Mr. McCormick stated the Comprehensive Plan would be the next item, and then the NCA is down the road. He stated he would check on Mr. Bell's availability to come out and talk about NCA's. He stated he would be the best person to answer questions in a meeting. Trustee Kosch asked if a JEDD would need to be in place with an NCA. Mr. McCormick stated it is not necessary, but noted NCA's are typically developed out of a JEDD.

Lengthy discussion continued as to the use of NCA's in the Township, and what could potentially happen, depending upon how they were written. Mr. McCormick recommended having multiple NCA's, rather than one large NCA. Steve Eversole stated he understood that the Township needed to preserve itself; however, as a landowner, he did not want to be locked in with an NCA where his rights were controlled, including annexation, and stated he would come out against it if that were the case. Mr. McCormick emphasized that that was why the fee for the NCA was \$50,000, as it required so much work and preparation to get it completely correct. It was also pointed out that limiting annexation and prohibiting it are completely different things.

Mr. McCormick was asked how much experience he had in dealing with TIF's. He stated he had never set one up, but had interacted with them quite a bit. Trustee Searle pointed out the TIF (ten year) that is on a current piece of property; however, noted it has not been activated. He asked at what point it should be activated, if the property is going to be annexed. It was recommended to activate the TIF prior to the annexation, so this will need to be monitored closely.

Trustee Cotner raised the subject of hiring Mr. McCormick. Mr. McCormick stated his charge is \$250 per hour. He did not have a retainer fee, but would send a fee agreement, as he did with Liberty Township. He will send billable hours to the Township monthly.

Trustee Cotner made a motion to hire Marshall McCormick to be the land use attorney at \$250 an hour, starting as needed when he sends his retainer in; Trustee Kosch seconded the motion.

Mr. McCormick asked if he needed to step out while the Board discussed the matter; he was advised that was not necessary.

With no further discussion, the roll call was as follows:

ROLL CALL: Searle: Yes Kosch: Yes Cotner: Yes Motion Passed 3-0

With no further business to come before the Board, Trustee Cotner made a motion to adjourn; Trustee Kosch seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL: Searle: Yes Kosch: Yes Cotner: Yes Motion Passed 3-0

Meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.