

MINUTES
December 2, 2020
Milford Township Planning Commission Zoom Workshop
7:00 p.m.

A workshop of Milford Township Planning Board was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Chairman Bob DiLorenzo through a Zoom call, the contact information for which had been advertised in advance in the Pocono Record. Also present in this Zoom workshop were Members Kevin Stroyan (Vice-Chairman), Patrick McCarthy, Ray Willis, Peggy Emanuel, and Secretary Shahana Shamim.

Kevin Stroyan suggested some minor corrections in the October 7, 2020 and November 4, 2020 workshop minutes, and Members agreed to these corrections. Peggy Emanuel made a motion to adopt these minutes with those corrections, Mr. Ray Willis seconded, and it passed unanimously.

Comprehensive Plan Survey Advertisement: Mr. Stroyan added that Mr. Shepstone had said that the comprehensive plan, which was written in 2006, of this township needs to be reviewed, and it does not need to be rewritten. Peggy Emanuel added that Mr. Shepstone was present at the last Planning Board meeting, he had said that he had received about 50 survey responses as of then, and he needed more responses. Ms. Emanuel continued that according to Mr. Shepstone, the survey responses indicated that people liked the location of Milford Township and its small-town atmosphere. People also liked the community's appearance. Survey responses indicated that appearance came out as the top priority, low density as second, and emergency services as third. People also liked sign and land use regulations. Survey responses also indicated that people felt the importance of bringing job opportunities. 23% of respondents thought this township was better than before. 36% of the respondents thought that the sewer expansion was needed, and the remaining respondents were against this expansion. Mr. Stroyan added that Mr. Shepstone had sent a memorandum for working on the zoning ordinance, and it would be discussed in the upcoming Planning Board meeting.

Mr. Stroyan said that the Planning Board did not have the authority to spend money, and hence this Board needed to get permission from the Board of Supervisors to readvertise the comprehensive plan survey monkey at Mr. Shepstone's direction. Members commented that updating the comprehensive plan is a large decision, this township had received only 50 responses as of then, and Mr. Shepstone prefers to have 100 responses to make this decision. Mr. Stroyan asked the Secretary to take permission from the Supervisors to readvertise this survey at Mr. Shepstone's direction. He added that Supervisors had allocated some money for planning, and there is still some money left. Mr. Pittman suggested posting the advertisement in township's face-book page, and Members replied that that wouldn't hurt.

Act 537 Plan Draft: Mr. Stroyan asked the Secretary and Ms. Emanuel to organize comments and questions. He added that him and Ms. Emanuel would refine these comments and questions, which will be ratified at the next Planning Commission meeting and then forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for their January reorganization meeting. He continued that the pandemic was still present, and hence he would discourage any in-person public hearings until the pandemic is present. Written responses would be requested from the Engineer for these comments and questions.

Mr. Stroyan pointed out the following comments and questions regarding Act 537 Plan Draft:

1. The word “SHALL” in the second item of the Executive Summary needs to be eliminated, as Milford Borough is allowed not to implement the OLDS ordinance, they are allowed to conduct a five-year long study, whereas Milford Township must implement this ordinance. The word “SHALL” makes the implementation mandatory, whereas the word “MAY” does not. All municipalities deserve to be treated fairly. Mr. Willis said that he was not in favor of enacting the OLDS ordinance for this township, and all Members agreed with him. Mr. Stroyan added that the list of comments should include that the Planning Board is not in favor of implementing this ordinance.
2. The inter-municipal agreement should indicate what the composition of the governing board, which should have a name, is going to be.
3. This inter-municipal agreement should indicate who would run it. There are four Municipalities and two Authorities, which are autonomous independent taxing structures, and can set fees. Westfall and Milford work on setting the fee. Milford Water Authority is not even a signed in member of the intermunicipal agreement, and they have a major seat at the table. Milford Water Authority was restructured to Milford Municipal Authority so that they could own and maintain the sewer pipe.
4. **The Table:** It is important to know who is going to sit at this table. Professionals, such as Engineers and Lawyers, will be involved, as users will pay for hookups. A representative (not majority) from every Municipality and Authority is needed all the time, as residents of Milford Township will be directly affected by whatever is done in Milford Borough and Matamoras Borough. Mr. Willis supported by saying that if this Township does not get a table in this table, then other Municipalities will be making decisions for this township.
5. What will be the structure of this Board?
6. Who will control this Board?
7. The statement “Milford Township will just be a transmission line” is not valid, as the Township won’t stop businesses that want to hookup, and Supervisors should make this point clear. Mr. DiLorenzo added that Westfall already had said that they would take anybody who wants to hookup to this transmission line. Mr. McCarthy inquired if the township would be in charge if anybody wants to hookup to this transmission line. Mr. Stroyan replied that this township will be in the game just like Milford Borough.
8. The engineer admitted that reviewing 1,200 pages, which constitute ordinances and comprehensive plans of Municipalities, of this 1,600-page document is not needed, and then why are these 1,200 pages included in this draft? Are bits and pieces of one municipality going to be referred to another municipality, as all these ordinances and comprehensive plans are in this single document now? These 1,200 pages should be eliminated from this draft document, as the purpose of including these pages is not clear. What will happen if Municipalities change their own ordinances and comprehensive plans? Mr. McCarthy added that these 1,200 pages were given to us, and that means it has some importance. Mr. McCarthy added that a statement, such as, “all comments are

for the actual Act 537 portion, and not on the other 1,200 pages, which constitute zoning ordinances and comprehensive plans of all four municipalities” needed to be added to the comments. Mr. DiLorenzo inquired how this update would be integrated into this Act 537 Plan, as the township will probably update its comprehensive plan after this draft of Act 537 is adopted.

9. Comments for Task Activity Report (TAR) were never received from DEP or Delaware River Basin Commission.
10. The Power Company needs to be notified, as installing a lot of grinder pumps will have an impact. Mr. DiLorenzo added that a response is needed from the power company, as more power would be consumed by grinder pumps in all properties. Mr. Willis added that the power company might need to upgrade their infrastructure to handle this extra consumption of power from all properties. Peggy inquired if any representatives from the power company had a seat in the table, and Mr. DiLorenzo replied ‘no’.
11. **Burden of the Maintenance:** Residents are not supposed to be burdened with more than 2% of their income for sewage. Average income in Milford Borough is \$45,000, two percent of this amount is \$900/month, but the maintenance cost will be very high. The burden of the maintenance will be on the customer/property owner, and not on the Authority. The two HP pump in residents’ properties will be working with their 50-gallon tanks, which is small, and will turn on and off many times every day. The pump might fail from taking a lot of amperage from these frequent turnoffs, and the house owner will be required to buy a generator, as he/she will own the pump after it is installed. Mr. DiLorenzo added that all properties, which lie within 100’-150’ of this transmission line, would be mandated to hookup.
12. An alternative to the grinder pump needs to be thought about so that the burden of the maintenance goes to the Authority instead of the customer. Mr. DiLorenzo said that the maintenance would be on the Authority if gravity feed and pumping stations are used, and only a couple of grinder pumps and a couple of generators would be needed in this case. Mr. DiLorenzo continued that Mr. Spatz had said that pump stations are very expensive (\$200,00 - \$500,000 each) and the maintenance cost for each of these pumps is as expensive as \$6,000/year. He added that the gravity feed can be done by placing a grinder pump at the bottom of East Harford Street and another small pump station at Sawkill. The pumping can be done towards Westfall from these two points. Only one big generator, instead of seven, would be needed in this case if power goes out. This way the cost might be as low as \$1,000,000 instead of \$3,000,000. Pipes might need to be placed deeper in this case, and that might be expensive again, but customers won’t have to pay for broken pipes and hookups. Grinder pumps of all properties being handled by the six-inch pipe is questionable also.
13. According to this draft, an EDU is defined as 200 gallons/day, whereas the national average is 265 gallons/day. This difference needs to be explained. Mr. DiLorenzo added that he had done a study in Milford Borough, and he had found an EDU/day to be 230-

250 gallons/day. An explanation of how the 200 gallons/day for an EDU was calculated needs to be explained. Mr. DiLorenzo added that the bill for one apartment is \$100/month, and a lot of tenants cannot afford to pay this extra bill.

14. The projected cost is \$72/EDU to the customer, but the wholesale price for Westfall Sewer Authority or maintenance fees for Milford Municipal Authority are not stated anywhere in the document. Will there be two different fees from these two authorities? Is this price going to be same for all four municipalities? Or are there going to be four different fee structures? Will Matamoras Borough have a smaller fee, as they have less pipes? Mr. Willis inquired if this fee would be the same for residential and commercial properties. Mr. Stroyan replied that it will be calculated based on the water meter, and restaurants, that consume a lot of water, will pay for multiple EDUs, and even residential units would pay more than an EDU if they spend more than 200 gallons in a day. Mr. DiLorenzo added that residential and commercial units will have to pay for the hookup in the beginning. He added that this projected cost was \$52/EDU six months ago, but now the draft shows \$72/EDU. Mr. Willis added that these charges would be higher for residents who wash their cars and do laundries every day.
15. **Impact Statement:** The impact on the development from the expansion of the Sewage is not mentioned. Number of bedrooms are limited by on-lot sewages right now. The lot coverage will go up with the expansion of the sewage, three-bedroom houses might become four-bedroom houses, and more people will move in. The impact on the development and density of preexisting lots needs to be included in the document. When will it max out? Will any kind of limitations for density be imposed? Mr. DiLorenzo added that more businesses will come in, they would want to hookup, and they may not be able to hookup if maximum capacity is reached. They might have to wait for DEP and DRBC to allow for another expansion to the capacity. Mr. Stroyan inquired if they would be allowed to build an on-lot system in the meantime in this case. Mr. DiLorenzo replied that that was another good question, which he had inquired in sewage meetings. He continued that he had suggested giving ten years to these businesses that had just spent money for their on-lot systems. The reply he got was that only five years could be given to these businesses. It also implies that the mandatory hookup for properties within 100' – 150' of the transmission line does not make a lot of sense if businesses aren't allowed to hookup to the transmission line. Mr. Stroyan added that another question in this case would be how many hookups this transmission line will be able to take.
16. **Capacity:** How much capacity does the facility have right now? How much expansion is possible by the facility that exists? What is the availability of this expansion? A massive expansion might be needed, as restaurants would be able to provide more meals in a day, and residential houses will slowly expand. These restaurants will pay for more EDUs but they will definitely cause an increase in the amount of flow. Mr. DiLorenzo said that these answers to these questions should come from DRBC, and not from the Engineer.

17. **A widespread confirmation of on-lot disposal system failures** was not confirmed, and according to DEP, we don't have ground failures here, and we only have system failures. Why is \$6-12 million expansion of the sewage happening? Mr. DiLorenzo said that DEP and DRBC had said that there are no ground failures here, and there are some system failures. Mr. Stroyan added that a small number of those failures can be fixed with \$1-1½ million. Mr. DiLorenzo added that that's why DEP and DRBC had knocked down sewer expansion proposals in the past. USDA and PennVEST loans (or a combination of these two loans) can be used to solve the issue of small number of on-lot sewage failures. Fixing the on-lot sewage works when frequent pump outs become necessary. We have a good soil for drainage. Mr. Willis added that he had a system failure many years ago, it was fixed, and it has been working very well since then. Mr. DiLorenzo added that the septic of Hotel Fauchere failed many years ago, he himself had fixed it, DEP agreed, and this septic has been working very well since then.
18. **What other alternatives have been discussed?** Central sewage is the only option that is being discussed to solve a small number of failures.
19. **Benefit to Westfall Township:** This township has a central sewage, and what benefits did they get from having it for the past 20 years? Were they able to bring high quality jobs? Mr. Willis said that they were only able to bring some retails, which had some supervising positions, which do not pay a lot anyway. Mr. DiLorenzo added that some those employees' salaries were as low as \$10,000/year.
20. Location of the lines in streets and the alleys needs to be clearly defined. How can a definite route be defined 5-10 years in advance? The route will be 20" wide, and all trees, traffic lights, and sidewalks will be taken out of that route. Will they restore all these after the extension is done?
21. **Tapping Fee:** The Borough says that there are no tapping fees, whereas a tapping fee is showing for everybody. The tapping fee cannot be waived, as this fee, which is used for capital improvements, goes to the Municipal Authority. The Borough might get grants, but that does not imply that the tapping fee can be avoided. Mr. Stroyan said that Milford Borough was actually looking for grants to pay for the tapping fee.

Mr. Stroyan asked Shahana and Ms. Emanuel to write down these comments and questions. He asked for permission from the rest of the Board so that he could meet with Ms. Emanuel to discuss and finalize these comments and questions. He added that he would then submit those to the Board of Supervisors. Rest of the Members agreed to this decision. Mr. DiLorenzo urged to inform the Supervisors that the Planning Board had to work in a very limited amount of time to find these outstanding issues. One of the residents commented that the tapping fee for Milford Borough would be waived, as they are expecting to get grants to pay for this fee. Mr. Stroyan replied that the tapping fee cannot be waived, as this fee is used by the Water Authority for the capital improvement. The statement "there won't be any tapping fees" is not correct even if they use the grant money to pay for the tapping fee.

There was no other business or executive session needed, so at 9:06 P.M., Peggy Emanuel made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Patrick McCarthy seconded, and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully,

Shahana Shamim

Secretary