

**HILLTOWN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING
Monday, November 24, 2008
7:00PM**

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Hilltown Township Board of Supervisors was called to order by Chairman Richard J. Manfredi at 7:05PM and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Also present were: John B. McIlhinney, Vice-Chairman
Barbara A. Salvadore, Secretary/Treasurer
Christopher S. Christman, Township Manager
Bill E. Wert, Asst.Mgr./Dir. of Parks, Recreation & Open Space
Christopher E. Engclhart, Chief of Police
Judy Stern-Goldstein, Township Planner
Francis X. Grabowski, Township Solicitor
C. Robert Wynn, Township Engineer

A. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. The Board met in Executive Session prior to this meeting in order to discuss personnel, and will meet in Executive Session immediately following this meeting in order to discuss a matter of pending litigation.

B. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY:

1. Mr. Bob Showalter of Showalter Associates referred to the draft Ordinances that are listed under the "Planning" portion of the agenda – specifically the Traditional Neighborhood Development Zoning Ordinance, the Conservation Management Design Zoning Ordinance and the ERSAP Subdivision/Land Development Ordinance. He stated that the ERSAP study is a very costly, time-consuming process, which he feels is unfair to require for smaller projects. Supervisor McIlhinney commented that the ERSAP study would only be required for developments of six or more lots. Mr. Showalter encouraged the Board to disseminate draft Ordinances for review by engineers prior to its adoption, noting that it is easier to provide input during the drafting process, rather than when it is up for adoption. Chairman Manfredi advised that the process for these particular Ordinances began approximately 5 years ago, and the various drafts have been under review at public meetings for several years. Supervisor McIlhinney further advised that the ERSAP Ordinance is for Use B-1A only.

C. CONSENT CALENDAR:

- Approval of Minutes of October 27, 2008 Board of Supervisors Meeting.
- Approval of Minutes of October 27, 2008 Cond. Use Hearing–Metro PCS
- Approval of Minutes of November 10, 2008 Supervisor’s Meeting.
- Approval of Bills List dated November 25, 2008.

- Acceptance of Solicitor's Report.
- Acceptance of Fire Company Reports for October 2008 - Dublin, Sellersville, and Telford.
- Execution of Office Lease Agreement with State Representative Katharine Watson.

Motion was made by Supervisor Salvadore, seconded by Supervisor McIlhinney, and carried unanimously to approve and accept the Consent Calendar as noted above. There was no public comment.

D. CONFIRMED APPOINTMENTS:

1. Mr. and Mrs. James Martin – Request approval to construct fence in 20 ft. wide stormsewer easement – Hilltown Ridge Subdivision – Ms. Kellie McGowan, the applicant's legal counsel, was in attendance along with Mr. and Mrs. Martin, to present their request to install a 5 ft. tall aluminum fence within the stormsewer easement in the Hilltown Ridge Subdivision. Mr. and Mrs. Martin are the owners of three contiguous properties in that subdivision, with family members living in the homes on either side. The Martin's son lives next door with his two small children and would like to install the fence for the safety of the children.

The Martins submitted a zoning permit application in December of 2007, which was ultimately denied because the fence was proposed to be located within the 20 ft. wide stormsewer easement. This denial was then appealed to the Zoning Hearing Board, and a hearing was held on August 21, 2008, where the applicant was granted permission to install the fence within the easement area.

A written decision was issued confirming the grant of relief on September 4, 2008, and conditions of ZHB approval are as follows:

1. The applicant and their successors in title shall at all times provide and maintain a minimum six foot section of fence which shall be removable or gated to provide immediate access to the stormwater drainage inlet for maintenance and repairs, said gate or removable fence portion to be located over the inlet structure.
2. The applicant and their successors in title shall remove all other fencing sections as directed by the easement holder within five business days to allow the easement holder to perform maintenance and/or repairs to the stormsewer structure and underground piping.

3. The applicant shall obtain the express consent and/or approval of Hilltown Township regarding the construction of the proposed fence in its proposed location as the Township will become the ultimate easement holder for the stormwater easement at issue.
4. The applicant shall otherwise comply with all other applicable Township, County, and State Codes, Laws, Ordinances, and Regulations with respect to the proposed construction and use of the property.

Discussion occurred.

Supervisor McIlhinney suggested that a wider gate or portion of removable fence, perhaps 8 to 10 ft. wide, be considered in order to allow access for large equipment if necessary. If the Township must remove the fencing to enter the easement for repair or maintenance, Supervisor McIlhinney asked who would be responsible to repair any damage to the yard. Mr. Martin replied that he would take full responsibility for any damage to the yard area.

Motion was made by Supervisor Salvadore, seconded by Supervisor McIlhinney, and carried unanimously to approve the applicant's request to construct a 5 ft. tall aluminum fence within the stormsewer easement of Lot #24 in the Hilltown Ridge Subdivision (TMP #15-56-16), as noted above; with the proviso that an adequate removable fence width be provided, perhaps as much as 8 to 10 ft., and noting that all repairs necessary to the lawn area would be the responsibility and at the expense of the property owner. There was no public comment.

E. PLANNING – Mr. C. Robert Wynn, Township Engineer and Ms. Judy Stern-Goldstein, Township Planner –

1. Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) Zoning Ordinance – Ms. Stern-Goldstein's memo (dated November 19, 2008) regarding the Bucks County Planning Commission's review (dated November 5, 2008) was discussed at length.

Motion was made by Supervisor McIlhinney, seconded by Supervisor Salvadore, and carried unanimously to authorize advertisement of the proposed Traditional Neighborhood Development Ordinance with any revisions as discussed this evening for Public Hearing and possible adoption at the January 26, 2009 Board of Supervisors meeting. There was no public comment.

2. Zoning Officer Enforcement/Powers and Duties Zoning Ordinance – Ms. Stern-Goldstein's memo (dated November 19, 2008) regarding the Bucks County Planning Commission's review (dated November 5, 2008) was discussed at length.

Solicitor Grabowski suggested that the following language be added to Section 160-83.B(3) “Where required **by the Municipalities Planning Code or by this Zoning Ordinance**, applications shall be forwarded to the Planning Commission, Building Inspector, Township Engineer, and Zoning Hearing Board.”

Motion was made by Supervisor Salvadore, seconded by Supervisor McIlhinney, and carried unanimously to authorize the advertisement of the proposed Zoning Officer Enforcement/Powers and Duties Zoning Ordinance with the revisions as discussed above, for Public Hearing and possible adoption at the January 26, 2009 Supervisors meeting. There was no public comment.

3. Conservation Management Design (CMD) Zoning Ordinance – Mr. Wynn advised that the Bucks County Planning Commission’s review (dated November 5, 2008) expressed only two comments:

- Existing Resources and Site Analysis Plan (ERSAP) – Since the ERSAP is an essential component of the proposed Conservation Management Design concept, the BCPC recommends that the amendment to the Zoning Ordinance, which would add the B1-A Conservation Management Design use, only be approved if the SALDO amendment providing for the ERSAP is also approved.
- Inconsistency in Ordinance provisions – Proposed Section 160-23.(g) restricts lots within a Conservation Management Design subdivision from further subdivision. This provision does not make an exception to the restriction on further subdivision of the additional 80,680 sq. ft. of land required for lots not served by public water (see Footnote 1 of Section 160-26 – Table of Performance Standards) when public water does become available to such lots. Because Footnote 1 of Section 160-26 – Table of Performance Standards does permit further subdivision of such lots when public water becomes available, there is an apparent inconsistency between these two provisions. The BCPC recommends that this inconsistency be resolved.

Mr. Wynn suggested that perhaps the CMD Ordinance should state that public water service is required, without the option of the 50,000 sq. ft. lot conventional subdivision. There is no area of the Township that Mr. Wynn could think of where this type of subdivision could be constructed if public water were not available. Chairman Manfredi expressed concern that it would take away the option for some property owners to develop their land under this use unless public water was available. Knowing the history of this Ordinance, Supervisor McIlhinney commented this use was never envisioned to be contemplated in an area not serviced by public water. Discussion occurred.

Motion was made by Supervisor Salvadorc, and seconded by Supervisor McIlhinney to authorize the advertisement of the proposed Conservation Management Design Ordinance with the revision as noted above with respect to public water service, for Public Hearing and possible adoption at the January 26, 2009 Supervisors meeting. Prior to a vote, public comment was heard.

Public Comment:

1. Mr. Bob Showalter asked if an ERSAP would be a required for all land developments with six lots or more. Mr. Wynn replied that an ERSAP would only be required for a Conservation Management Design subdivision/land development. Mr. Showalter again remarked that conducting an ERSAP is very costly and time consuming.

There was no further public comment. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Existing Resources and Site Analysis Plan (ERSAP) Subdivision/Land Development Ordinance – The Bucks County Planning Commission review (dated November 5, 2008) was discussed, with the following four comments noted:

- Documentation – The proposed amendment (Section 140-23.A.C) includes a provision that states that applicants shall be prepared to submit maps indicating the findings of each step of the design process if required by the Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors. The BCPC recommends that Township officials consider making the submission of such maps mandatory. This would allow officials to better see if the design is in accordance with the existing features on the site.
- Hydrologic soil groups – It is not clear what the purpose of requiring the applicant to identify hydrologic soil groups (Section 140-23A.B(1)a.) would be since the same section requires the identification of alluvial soils, hydric soils and floodplain soils. The BCPC recommends that Township officials consider removing this requirement.
- Measurement of large trees – The BCPC recommends that in Section 140-23A.B.(1)f. “natural ground cover” be replaced with “natural grade” as this is more widely used technique for measuring the diameter of trees.
- Editorial comments – The BCPC recommends that the following editorial changes be made:
 - * Section 140-23A.B(2)a. – In the first sentence “soils” should be changed to “soil.”

- * Section 140-23A.B(2)e. – In the third sentence the phrase “on-hundred-year” should be replaced with “one-hundred-year.”
- * Section 140-23.A.B(2)f. – “Along” should be changed to “alone.”
- * Section 140-23A.C – Subsections 2, 3, and 4 should be formatted with parentheses.
- * Section 140-23A.C – The “Documentation” subsection should be numbered 5.

With the exception of the “Natural Grade” and the above noted Editorial Comments, Mr. Wynn recommended that the Ordinance not be revised to address the other two BCPC recommendations.

Motion was made by Supervisor, seconded by Supervisor, and carried unanimously to authorize advertisement of the proposed Existing Resources and Site Analysis Plan (ERSAP) Subdivision/Land Development Ordinance with the revisions, including the terminology of natural grade, and the editorial comments as noted above and as recommended by Mr. Wynn for Public Hearing and possible adoption at the January 26, 2009 Supervisors meeting. There was no public comment.

F. ENGINEERING – Mr. C. Robert Wynn, Township Engineer-

1. Harry Kratz Subdivision – Acceptance of completion of 18-month Maintenance Period – Motion was made by Supervisor Salvadore, seconded by Supervisor McIlhinney, and carried unanimously to accept completion of the 18-month maintenance period and release of the remaining escrow funds for the Harry Kratz Subdivision. There was no public comment.

2. Sunoco, Inc. Land Development- Improvements required by the Sunoco, Inc. Land Development plan have been completed. Correspondence has been received from PennDot acknowledging acceptance of completion of roadway improvements along Hilltown Pike and Bethlehem Pike as required by the Highway Occupancy Permit.

Motion was made by Supervisor Salvadore, seconded by Supervisor McIlhinney, and carried unanimously to accept completion of improvements and authorize commencement of the 18-month maintenance period for the Sunoco Inc. Land Development, subject to reimbursement to the Township for all costs incurred during the course of the project, including, engineering, legal and Township administrative fees. There was no public comment.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS –

1. EMS Discussion – Ms. Jeryl Degideo, Director of the Bucks County Emergency Health Services, was in attendance, along with representatives of Chalfont Regional EMS, Grandview Hospital EMS, Souderton Ambulance, and Plumstead-Point Pleasant EMS, to discuss ambulance services for Hilltown Township. Supervisor Salvadore provided a Power Point presentation of ambulance services and their coverage areas of the Township. Supervisor Salvadore advised that there is now law requiring 24/7 ambulance service. The real issue is that residents have no idea which EMS squad services their area, and as such, some residents have received either several or no ambulance subscription options. Subscriptions are one way that ambulance squads have their expenses covered, and with subscriptions, there is an agreement that residents would not be balance-billed for use of an ambulance service. Also, in the healthcare world in general, EMS reimbursement is dropping because many insurance companies no longer pay those costs.

The ambulance transport statistics are as follows:

- In 2006, there were a total of 747 transports in Hilltown.
- In 2007, there were a total of 718 transports in Hilltown.
- For seven months in 2008, there were a total of 472 transports in Hilltown.

Those figures show that at this point in time, Hilltown Township cannot support a resident EMS squad. The call volume information Supervisor Salvadore provided came from dispatch, and the patient care information comes from the state. For six months in 2008, there were 352 patients who were provided care, which averages to approximately 60 per month in Hilltown Township, which would not support its own EMS squad.

The Board also previously discussed whether three or four EMS providers were needed in Hilltown, and as such, only three squads were originally considered. However, upon review of response time data, Supervisor Salvadore began considering a fourth EMS provider – Grand View EMS. Without the addition of the fourth squad, the response times increased by 2-3 minutes or more, which in Supervisor Salvadore's opinion as a healthcare professional, is totally unacceptable. She presented a conceptual map to the Board for their recommendation, noting that a detailed map must be drafted and generated by the County. Supervisor Salvadore advised that the shortest response time was the only determining factor in preparing the conceptual map.

Ms. Jeryl Degideo, Director of Bucks County Emergency Health Services, has been working with Supervisor Salvadore on this project for several years. When she supplied Supervisor Salvadore with the original response time data, only three squads were contemplated. However, that response time data proved that four squads would be

needed. While the County recommends that the closest EMS squad respond to calls, Ms. Degideo advised that it is the municipality's responsibility to assign coverage areas. She noted that it requires at least 1,100 billable calls for an EMS squad to survive in this market. Ms. Degideo explained that there are two scenarios to take into account – the number of dispatch calls and the number of billable calls. The only way she believes a EMS squad could be designated for Hilltown alone, would be for the municipality to fully subsidize it.

Supervisor McIlhinney asked the total number of calls in Hilltown Township in the recent year. Ms. Degideo believes there were 747 for 2006 and 718 for 2007. The current year-to-date calls remain at 472 for 2008.

Approximately 1-½ years ago, Supervisor McIlhinney commented that the Board met with representatives from Plumstead, Chalfont and Souderton squads. At that time, both Perkasio and Dublin EMS squads were failing, with a primary reason being insufficient call volume, a point that was stressed over and over again by the remaining aforementioned three ambulance squads when meeting with the Supervisors. That being the case, the Board proposed utilizing the original three squads to tri-sect Hilltown Township in order to provide sufficient call volume. During discussions with the original three squads, they indicated agreement with trisecting the Township, which would provide them the call volumes required to provide adequate or excellent service. There was also discussion about possibly locating a remote ambulance station closer to Hilltown, which Supervisor McIlhinney believes would eliminate the need for a fourth squad.

Mr. Russ Leets of Chal-Brit Regional EMS would be happy to have a station or a sub-station in Hilltown Township however it could not pay for itself with 647 calls. At the present time, Chal-Brit EMS is averaging approximately 1,300-1,400 calls per year. Mr. Leets advised that an average ambulance call for his squad costs approximately \$1,168.00 based upon a two-crew staff.

Supervisor Salvadore asked what Chal-Brit's call reimbursement rate is at the present time. After a recent re-evaluation by their billing company, Mr. Leets replied it is approximately 75%. Supervisor McIlhinney asked if an ambulance subscriber is billed as well. Mr. Leets replied that every user is billed and insurance company payments would be accepted as payment-in-full. A subscriber to the ambulance squad, however, would not be charged and would be reimbursed if payment were made.

Mr. Jim Troop of Souderton Ambulance noted that it is not feasible for EMS squads to accept each other's memberships. For instance, if Souderton Ambulance covers Chal-Brit Regional for 10 calls in the month of October, and Chal-Brit covers Souderton for 9

calls the next month, Mr. Troop might consider an equal trade, however he could not commit to accepting other squad's memberships.

With respect to three squads versus four, Mr. Mike Tuttle of Plumstead-Pt. Pleasant Ambulance commented that the original three squads could certainly cover the Township, however it is up to the Supervisors to determine how quickly that service is provided. Certainly with four squads, the call time would improve. He also noted that none of the individual ambulance companies could survive on the call volume produced by Hilltown Township alone. Mr. Tuttle further commented that Plumstead-Pt. Pleasant could not survive on any one municipality they currently serve, and noted that each of those municipalities help to supplement their income. He advised that Plumstead Township is the only municipality who provides financial support to the EMS service through taxes on a regular basis. Mr. Tuttle has not had the opportunity to clearly review the data presented this evening with respect to response time to certain locations.

Mr. Chris Francis, chief of Souderton Ambulance concurred with Mr. Tuttle and Mr. Leets that they could provide ambulance service to Hilltown, with either three squads or with four squads, however naturally the response times would be much quicker with four squads. Currently, Souderton Ambulance does not receive any specific tax money from any of the municipalities they serve, however they do gratefully accept monetary donations, as well as their normal billing rate.

Referring to the conceptual map provided by Supervisor Salvadore, Supervisor McIlhinney noted that it appears Souderton's coverage area has been greatly reduced with the addition of the fourth squad. Lengthy discussion took place concerning the various conceptual maps that were before the Board this evening. It is Supervisor Salvadore's opinion that the map redistricting should be accomplished using shortest response time. Supervisor McIlhinney once again expressed concern with three ambulance squads versus four. Mr. Leets explained that it is the Board's decision as to the standards and the benchmark that the Township wishes to set for response times. Hilltown could certainly be covered by three squads, however it is his opinion that if Grandview EMS is taken out of the equation, it would take additional time for any of the remaining three EMS squads to respond to those calls. The other two original ambulance squads concurred with Mr. Leets. If an EMS squad was established to specifically service Hilltown Township, the representative from Chal-Brit advised that it would be at a cost of \$450,000.00+, not including the structure, for the employees and the equipment, and income would be based totally on call volume.

Based upon response time to the center of the "box," each squad was polled and agreed that four squads versus three would provide better coverage and faster ambulance response time for Hilltown residents. Supervisor McIlhinney was not specifically opposed to a fourth squad, he simply wished to understand why, after initial discussions

with three squads, a fourth was now being considered. Supervisor Salvadore advised that it was her initiative alone to invite Grandview EMS to participate in order to consider options to provide the best response times. It was Ms. Degideo's recommendation that the closest due, shortest response time should be the determining factor when deciding the number of EMS squads. Discussion took place about the recommended redistricting of the coverage areas and the box system on the map, which is currently being revised by the County.

Chairman Manfredi asked if the four squads would be able to provide service on subscription funding only, or if financial support would be expected from the Township. Chal-Brit EMS advised that they would expect financial support from Hilltown Township. At the present time, Chal-Brit EMS receives 1/3 of the Municipal Service Tax (LST) from New Britain Township, New Britain Borough, and Chalfont Borough. Each of the remaining three ambulance squads concurred that while not conditional for continued service, financial support would be welcome from Hilltown to supplement their subscription funding.

With respect to EMS agreements, Pt. Pleasant-Plumstead EMS is in possession of a draft agreement, prepared by the largest EMS attorney firm, which they would be willing to share with Solicitor Grabowski and the Board of Supervisors for consideration.

Motion was made by Supervisor Salvadore, seconded by Supervisor McIlhinney, and carried unanimously to authorize the Township Manager and Supervisor Salvadore to work with the Bucks County Emergency Health Services and the four EMS squads to draft a satisfactory coverage map, to consider possible funding options, and finalize a draft Agreement for the Board's consideration at the December 8, 2008 Supervisor's meeting. There was no public comment.

2. Request for Update of Ludlow Trail Easement- Mr. Wert left a message for Mr. and Mrs. Ludlow last Monday, however he has not had a return call as of this date.

3. Hilltown Village Study Committee Recommendation – This study, a copy of which is on file at the Township office, was conducted as a collaborative effort between the Village of Hilltown Adhoc Committee, residents, business owners, and other interested parties. Recommendations found in the Study are a result of the Community Visioning Session and meetings of the Village of Hilltown Adhoc Committee.

Chairman Manfredi sought Board opinion regarding the proposed Action Plan. Supervisor McIlhinney has thoroughly reviewed the proposed Study, which is acceptable to him, however whatever actions are taken will be subject to whatever grant funding might be available, and also subject to the general economy and private industry who

would be involved in the implementation of portions of the Action Plan. Chairman Manfredi believes the Board should consider the proposed Action Plan and the "High Priority" listing, and perhaps forward it to the Planning Commission for review. Discussion took place.

If the Board is so inclined, Ms. Stern-Goldstein suggested they adopt the plan, and then consider any high-priority items that may require funding during discussion of the proposed 2009 Budget. She noted that many of the high-priority items don't require any funding at all, and some that do, could be funded from a business association within the village, which had generated interest during discussion of the plan. Supervisor McIlhinney reminded the Board that completing the study was required before the Township could seek grant funding. That being the case, Supervisor Salvadore suggested that the first step should be adoption of the plan. Supervisor McIlhinney agreed. While he also agreed, Chairman Manfredi believes that the Board must determine what action will be taken on the recommended high-priority items in the report, and feels that it should be forwarded to the Planning Commission for review.

Ms. Stern-Goldstein suggested that she and the Township Manager could meet with Curt Heintzelman of State Representative Kathy Watson's office, who was instrumental in obtaining the grant, to review potential funding sources to determine which projects might fit the available funding. Supervisors McIlhinney and Salvadore were agreeable.

Motion was made by Supervisor Salvadore, seconded by Supervisor McIlhinney, and carried unanimously to accept the Study of the Village of Hilltown dated Oct. 31, 2008. There was no public comment.

H. NEW BUSINESS –

1. Mr. William Benner, Esq. – Concept for development of Souderton Area High School Property –The Administration met with representatives of Metro Development Company, Mr. Michael Grosso, Mr. Jack Schneider, and Mr. William Benner, on November 13th to discuss the concept plan for the Souderton High School redevelopment project, located on County Line Road near its intersection with Rt. 113. The 51.8-acre site is located partially in Souderton Borough, with 32.8 acres located in the PC-1 Zoning District in Hilltown. The developer is proposing 172,300 sq. ft. of new retail development on the Hilltown side, which would include a small strip center and one large viable anchor retail store in a lifestyle center-type setting, similar to the Promenade Shops in the Lehigh Valley or the Valley Square project in Warrington Township. Lifestyle centers should be pedestrian friendly with sidewalks and/or paths that meander through the center and connect to other community paths. Metro Development is also in the process of securing an easement from the adjoining shopping center in order to gain access to the site from both Rt. 113 and County Line Road. The developer would also be

willing to reface the existing strip retail center to maintain consistency throughout the site and construct an additional 10,000 sq. ft. retail building behind the existing Burger King restaurant.

On the Souderton Borough side of the site, the applicant is proposing a village commercial type development, with a central "Main Street" through the center and an additional roadway leading to Rt. 113, which would consist of a central retail cluster with one and two-story buildings with 81,000 sq. ft. of first floor retail. A "pocket park" is also proposed to act as a transition from the existing residential area to the retail space. There is an existing natatorium facility on the site, which was originally being considered to be retained, however it appears that it may be removed in order to construct assisted/independent living facilities. There is a residential component to the Souderton Borough portion of the development, consisting of approximately 22 townhouses, which will most likely be an age-restricted community. Lengthy discussion occurred.

Supervisor's Questions and Comments:

1. Supervisor McIlhinney questioned the amount of local taxes the developer currently pays for its Valley Square project in Warrington Township. Mr. Grosso had no knowledge of that figure, however Mr. Benner noted that the tax information might be difficult to assemble because there are aspects of the Valley Square project still under construction.
2. Supervisor McIlhinney referred to the southbound Rt. 309 exit ramp located adjacent to the site, and suggested that it might be advantageous to take ingress and egress to the parking lot from that ramp, which could help to alleviate traffic congestion.
3. Supervisor Salvadore's main concern is the traffic and the proposed roadway improvements. Mr. Schneider explained that the applicant is proposing approximately the same range of off-site improvement costs that had been expended for the neighboring Hilltown Plaza, and believes the main focus will be the cross-movement at the intersection between the Souderton Borough side and the Hilltown Plaza side, with a traffic light proposed at that location. The applicant's traffic engineer believes that major improvements could be accomplished to the section of Rt. 113, which they are certainly willing to consider. The applicant was approached by Souderton Borough who advised that many of the adjoining property owners along a section of County Line Road are interested in selling their land, which could impact improvements to that intersection.
4. Supervisor Salvadore asked if a traffic study was conducted. The applicant has not yet engaged their traffic engineer to conduct a Traffic Impact Study, which is part of the full land development process. Supervisor Salvadore noted that there are six points of ingress and egress to the Souderton Borough portion of the development, however on

the Hilltown portion, there are basically two, with one being shared. Because of that, she is concerned that there will be major congestion on the Hilltown side of Rt. 113, and along the Rt. 309 off ramps as well. Discussion took place.

5. Traffic will also be the critical aspect of this development in Chairman Manfredi's opinion. He wondered why a "big box" store is being proposed in the Hilltown portion, versus the walkable community that is proposed in the Souderton portion. Mr. Schneider replied that the property in Hilltown is currently zoned for this type of development, and from a planning perspective, putting the truck traffic associated with a big box type store in an area that would provide the least impact on adjoining residential properties makes sense. Further, Mr. Schneider noted that the physical shape of the Hilltown portion of the property is more regularly shaped and is less chopped up than the Souderton portion. It was Chairman Manfredi's opinion that these large anchor stores drive traffic, and asked what information from marketing data was provided with respect to traffic volumes. Mr. Schneider does not have that information since a Traffic Impact Study has not yet been performed. Mr. Benner commented that Metro Development has invested quite heavily in the preparation of this site from concept sketch plans and other soft costs, including meetings with both municipalities and with representatives of the Souderton School District. He stated that Metro Development is confident that there is appropriate need and demand for this type of development, as evidenced by the purchase price of the property. While he understands the logic, Chairman Manfredi would still prefer the walkable lifestyle-type development rather than a big box anchor store. Lengthy discussion took place.

6. Supervisor McIlhinney encouraged the developer to minimize the large anchor department store look, and to maximize architectural appearances to create more of a small town effect. Mr. Benner noted that architectural cohesion was of paramount importance to the Warrington Board of Supervisors as well, and he stated that every effort would be made so that the big box store would be architecturally compatible with the overall scheme of the shopping center.

7. With the economy as it is, Chairman Manfredi wondered how realistic it would be to fill those retail spaces. Mr. Schneider replied that economic trends tend to be cyclical and the applicant believes that by the time the development will be ready for occupancy, there will be no difficulty filling the retail spaces.

Conceptually, the Board was amenable to the proposal, though they emphasized their concerns with increased traffic congestion. Following discussion, the developer agreed to take the comments and concerns heard this evening into consideration while preparing more detailed plans for the Board's future review.

Public Comment:

1. Mrs. Mary Schiavone of Township Line Road is concerned that this proposal will create a traffic nightmare in an area that currently experiences heavy traffic congestion.

There was no further public comment.

I. BOARD MEMBER COMMENT:

1. With respect to the Hilltown Village Report, Supervisor McIlhinney thanked Ms. Stern-Goldstein for the preparation of an excellent report.

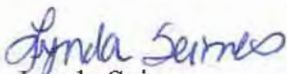
J. PUBLIC COMMENT:

1. Mr. Wally Rosenthal of Rosie Lane feels that the weakest link to the Souderton High School property proposal is that both the north and southbound single-lane ramps from Rt. 309 will experience severe traffic congestion, which he believes will cause bottlenecks in the far right lane of the highway itself.

K. PRESS CONFERENCE: A conference was held to answer questions of those reporters present.

L. ADJOURNMENT: Upon motion by Supervisor Salvadore, seconded by Supervisor McIlhinney, and carried unanimously, the November 24, 2008 Hilltown Township Board of Supervisors meeting was adjourned at 10:31PM.

Respectfully submitted,


Lynda Seimes

Administrative Asst. to the Township Manager

(*These minutes were transcribed from tape recordings taken by Mr. Bill Wert, Assistant Manager/Director of Parks, Recreation and Open Space).