

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of

Greenfield Township Trustees

Special Meeting

November 29, 2023 – 4:30 p.m.

The Greenfield Township Trustees met for a special meeting at the Greenfield Township Firehouse. Trustee Kosch called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance. Dave Cotner, Lonnie Kosch and Kent Searle were present. Trustee Kosch stated the purpose of the special meeting was to discuss the growth of Greenfield Township, and he turned the meeting over to Fire Chief Brad Smith.

Chief Smith thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He noted a meeting that was coming up on December 11, 2023 regarding the annexation of approximately 8.9 acres of land between 84 Lumber and the Kia property, and discussed how to keep the Township from continuing to lose land. He suggested the Township might be able to communicate with developers to find out what they are looking for in order to mitigate that. It was noted the Fairfield County Commissioners had already signed an annexation agreement on the 8.9 acre property at their meeting the previous night. It was also clarified that Metro Development owns the land under a contract for purchase.

Brad explained he had done a calculation on the 8.9 acre property by comparing it to a similar size property in Lancaster (Flats on Memorial - but cutting that property in half to match the size/value of the Greenfield Township property), and estimating the generated tax value, which would have been potentially \$32,000 for the Township. He also compared the property at Trio TV and the open adjoining lots to the valuation of the Lancaster property. He stated there were rumors of the developer looking at acquiring some acreage from New Life Church to add on to their parcel. He had added that land into the calculation of what the Township could receive or lose, based on the valuation of the property that Metro Development had annexed into Lancaster. The total tax revenue that the Township could have received was approximately \$86,000. Trustee Searle noted that the value would depend upon the type of annexation the Commissioners approved, noting the annexation they approved the prior evening was a type two; the Township will still receive their tax dollars from that. A participant asked if that was still the case if they are under a CRA; the Board noted the Township is not under any agreement at this time with Lancaster as far as annexation goes. Trustee Searle stated that although there is potential for money to be lost, it may not be the amount that Brad had calculated. Brad stated that with the money being split between the Departments, he knows with the future growth of the Township, it will require a new truck at some point, as well as the addition of a full-time firefighter.

In regard to the Township zoning, he went on to discuss potential strategies and reviewed the documentation he had distributed which showed the layout of the Township and potential development (map included). His representation showed the 33 corridor, whether it is mixed use property, such as commercial, industrial or multi-family; or further from the 33 corridor, maybe have more urban residential, and possibly establishing a PUD like what New Albany had done (brick faces of buildings) with the expectations of what the Township wants for the future.

He noted the potential for apartments similar to the Timbertop Apartment complex in Lancaster, which is well-kept and a lucrative property for the owners and the city of Lancaster, and suggested the Township could consider being open to that with developers.

Chief Smith went on to discuss the infrastructure that would be needed, which is a major component to the development and growth. He has spoken with Tony Vogel regarding water and sewer needs, and what needs to be done about hydrants within the Township. Because

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water and hydrant availability affects insurance rates, by getting water and hydrants to the more rural parts of the Township, it is a win-win for everybody.

He suggested again that the Township have a plan/platform of what they'd like to see as interested developers are coming in. He also suggested establishing a relationship with them to find out what their wants and needs are, and go from there. In terms of the financial options of the development that can benefit the Township and developers, he included a definition of JED, TIFF, CRA's. He reiterated developing an environment that is positive in order to promote the growth that the Township wants to see; otherwise, Lancaster will continue to annex land, and the benefit will be lost.

Chief Smith went on to review the map he had provided with proposed zoning for the Township. The yellow shows new commercial/ industrial and multi-family living; the yellow-blue area is urban residential, close-knit neighborhoods; the rural residential is outside of that area. He noted the horizontal blue line which indicates Coonpath Road, and then it comes down to Election House Road. It was noted this is helpful to the county, and for Tony Vogel - as he plans for the growth and necessary water lines and lift stations along Route 33.

Trustee Kosch noted in the meeting with the Mayor, he felt their interest was in the 33 corridor, and going toward Coonpath (and Election House Rd.); however, they said they would be willing to work with the Township, so they need to plan to meet and work together. He also suggested having the school superintendent involved in a meeting to have his input on development and how it would impact the schools.

A participant suggested that the Board get in touch with Rick Szabrak, Director of Fairfield County's Economic Development Office. He will be able to assist with the tools needed and with setting up agreements; helping to walk through the proper steps and answer related questions.

A participant pointed out that the annexation is occurring because of the Township zoning as it currently stands. In order for the developer to build the multi-family housing they wanted to build, they chose to annex the property. Steve Eversole pointed out that there are CRA's on the properties that were annexed; there is no CRA available from the Township. The CRA freezes the taxes at the current rate for a specified period of time. He gave an example of a farm in Canal Winchester that was being developed where there was a pre-annexation agreement done, after going back and forth with the issue of zoning and annexation. He noted the Township would need to work with the developers in order to control the size and structure of the development.

Additional discussion was held concerning guiding the growth and pre-planning with the developers. Trustee Searle stated he still felt the Township needed to pursue the development of the Township Comprehensive Plan so the residents could have input. He stated he didn't want to see the Township get into the situation that Canal Winchester did (in Steve Eversole's example), since the Trustees there ultimately passed an emergency resolution in order to allow the developers to build, as this did not give the residents a chance to provide their input.

Several participants went on to point out the parcels on the map where Metro Development already owns property, and where the potential annexation of parcels would be done, in order to develop their extended stay hotel plan. It was noted the church is allowing their available

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property to be annexed in order for this development to move forward. The thought was again expressed that development is going to happen along the 33 corridor; it's a matter of how Greenfield Township is going to handle it moving forward. More details were pointed out on the proposed map as to where development will likely take place in the future. It was again suggested to use the county commissioners and economic development team - Rick Szabak - for their assistance.

Steve Eversole explained that Wilson Road does not have service from Greenfield Township; Lancaster already has services in the area. They just built a new water plant there to give Google four million gallons of water per day. Lancaster also expanded a sewer plant on Campground Road to treat another four million gallons per day. He stated it seemed clear that this property would go to Lancaster. However, if the Township can get an agreement in place (CDA or JEDD) to keep some of the tax base, that would be the way to move forward.

Tony Vogel went on to reference the map to explain the tentative plans for water and sewer along Coonpath Road. He explained the Greenfield Township trustees had created the Greenfield Water and Sewer District many years ago in order to stop annexation. Now, the zoning will be what stops it. He stated all the services now go down to the city of Lancaster. At some point, a lift station will be built at Coonpath Road and turn all the waste back to take it to the facility up north. Then, a decision would need to be made about how to set up that lift station - whether to provide services outside of 33, or to take only the waste that is needed for what is already developed up to Lancaster so he can control the rates. He asked the Board what they plan to develop and what is it going to look like? By providing a zoning plan to him, that will affect how big the lift station needs to be and the plan for sewer and water services to 33. He noted on the map where potential water and sewer lines could be built, according to what the Township has in mind.

Discussion continued as to lot sizes in various developments in surrounding Townships, and how the size impacts the services. Continued review of the map and current services and potential services were discussed.

Tony again reiterated that the Board needs to have a plan and come together on the issue before they start meeting with the public; otherwise, any potential planning will not move forward. The question was also raised as to whether the zoning can be changed within specific areas/parcels of the Township to accommodate more urban or multi-family housing, and this will need to be investigated. It was suggested this should be specified in the development plan.

Trustee Cotner pointed out that when a city annexes property, they do not annex the road. This means Greenfield Township will still be responsible to maintain the road within the areas annexed by Lancaster. Captain Spires pointed out that the Department is still getting called for mutual aid and still sending their resources to those areas, with no reimbursement on the tax side.

Chief Smith and Trustee Kosch thanked all the participants for attending and giving their input. Trustee Cotner asked the Fairfield County staff if they would attend future Comprehensive Plan meetings, and they agreed. Trustee Kosch stated the Board would work with the Zoning Commission, as well as the Village of Carroll and the City of Lancaster.

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Trustee Searle reiterated he agreed with Tony Vogel's assessment - the Township's annexation problem revolves around the zoning resolution and multi-family housing. It was suggested the Township contact Holly Mattei of the RPC for her input on the issues, and Tom Erlenwein stated he had a meeting with them on December 5, 2023. He stated he would get in touch with Rick Ricketts, as well.

With no further business, Trustee Cotner moved to adjourn; Trustee Kosch seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL: Cotner: Yes Kosch: Yes Searle: Yes Motion Passed 3-0
Hearing adjourned at 5:21 p.m.