

**CUMRU TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
PUBLIC HEARING ON ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT
MAY 17, 2023**

The Public Hearing on the Zoning Ordinance Amendment was called to order by President Ruth A. O'Leary at 6:02p.m. Other Commissioners in attendance were Sam Kalbach, William B. Miller and Lisha Rowe. Also attending were Solicitor Michael A. Setley, Chief of Police Madison Winchester, Superintendent of Public Works Robert McNichols, Jr., Asst. Superintendent of Public Works Michael Yost, Jr., Manager/Secretary Jeanne E. Johnston, Special Projects/Asst. Secretary Patricia A. Wylezik-Pfeiffer, Joseph P. Rogosky of Great Valley Consultants, and Court Reporter Kelly Ryan. Business/Personnel Administrator Peggy A. Carpenter and Fire Chief James Beane were excused with prior notification. Vice President David J. Batdorf arrived at 6:20 p.m.

NOTICE:

Public comment will be accepted in person. Please include your first name, last name and address for all comments. Any comments without a name or address will not be considered. To accommodate as many people as possible, we request that each person's comments be limited to 3 minutes. The meeting comment period is limited to a total of 60 minutes. This time period may be extended at the discretion of the Commissioners. While public comments will be given due consideration, immediate responses will be done at the discretion of the Commissioners.

After the Pledge to the Flag, Mrs. O'Leary turned the Public Hearing over to Mr. Setley.

Mr. Setley explained the changes that were being proposed for the Zoning Ordinance Amendment. These included adding additional permitted uses for the Mixed-Use General Commercial (MUGC) zoning district, changes pertaining to fencing, and allowing advertising on bus shelters. He entered exhibits into evidence.

PROPOSED TEXT AMENDMENT TO ZONING ORDINANCE OF 2009, AS AMENDED

- A.) Letter from Solicitor to Cumru Twp Planning Commission re: request for comments, dated 04/03/2023
- B.) Memorandum from Planning Commission Secretary re: Cumru Twp PC comments, dated 5/16/2023
- C.) Letter from Berks County Planning Commission re: review of proposed amendment, dated 4/24/2023
- D.) Letter from Governor Mifflin School District re: proposed Grings Hill Business Park – real estate tax revenue and need for commercial development, dated February 2023
- E.) Letter to GMSD re: request to testify at public hearing on 5/17/2023, dated 3/27/2023
- F.) Letter from State Rep. David Zimmerman re: real estate tax revenue and support for development of Grings Hill Business Park along SR 222, dated April 2023
- G.) Notice to property owners in the MUGC district, dated 4/20/2023
- H.) Proof of publication of the ordinance and hearing notice advertised in the Reading Eagle on 5/1/2023 and 5/8/2023

PUBLIC

Attendance: Lauri Ahlskog, Rich Keffer, Renee Troutman, Julius Bonacci, Brain Johnson, Roberta Kennedy, Barbara Nagle, Jim Ulrich, Bill McKay, Andy Pannafino, Kevin Armour, Sheldon Meyer, Perry Haas, Marcia Moore, Lisa Peterson, Andrew Donnell, Glenn Emory Phillip Stack, Bob Matt, Daniel Reese, Dorene Reese, George Lennert, Bonnie Bentz, and Mike Simon.

Several people from the public wished to speak.

Lauri Ahlskog, a representative from South Central Transit Authority (SCTA) and BARTA, commended Cumru township for including advertising for bus shelters in the proposed zoning ordinance amendment. She explained that the advertising helps pay for the bus shelters which provide a save place for the transit customers. Ms. Ahlskog thanked the Board for the support.

Rich Keffer, a resident of Mt. Penn Rd., stated that he thinks the uses are not appropriate for the MUGC district. He believes they would be better for the General Industrial (GI) district.

Kevin Armour, a resident of Fawn Dr., is concerned about the changes because he is afraid that the Township would lose the ability to question future development. He stated concern for French Creek and Nolde Forest State Parks.

Bill McKay, Superintendent of the Governor Mifflin School District, stated that he was joined by 3 School Board Members, Mr. Ulrich, Ms. Peterson, and Mr. Pannafino. He read a letter from the Governor Mifflin School District (GMSD) Board of Directors, dated February 2023, into the record. He stated that 57% of the GMSD revenue comes from property taxes. The letter explained that the school district supports development in the MUGC district and had approved a LERTA for the former Giant/Pathmark property. The letter used the Tulpehocken School District as an example of an area where development helped to reduce taxes.

Andrew Donnell, a resident of Nassau Circle, stated that he is a platform engineer specializing in system automation. He challenged the alleged tax benefits. He believes that these will not be high paying jobs and many jobs will be automated. He also believes that tractor trailers disturb the environment.

Glenn Emory, a resident of Flying Hills, stated that he concurred with Mr. Donnell that tractor trailers desecrated the environment. He read a prepared statement about the Sunshine Act.

Mr. Setley informed the public that the law did not require a mailing to the property owners. The Township did the mailing to be transparent.

Phillip Stack, a resident of Fairmont Ave., stated that the residents who spoke don't want trucks on the road. He believes this is just a money grab.

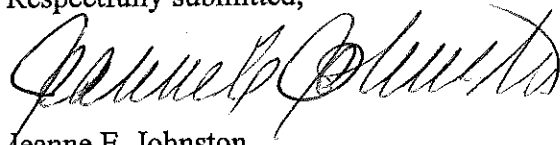
Mr. Setley asked the Commissioners if they had any comments. Since the Board had none, Mr. Setley concluded the Hearing portion of the meeting.

ON MOTION OF MR. MILLER, SECOND OF MR. BATDORF, A MAJORITY VOTE TO ENACT THE ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT AS ADVERTISED. MS. ROWE AND MRS. O'LEARY CAST NO VOTES. MR. MILLER, MR. BATDORF AND MR. KALBACH CAST YES VOTES.

Mr. Setley invited the public to attend the Board of Commissioners regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. this evening.

**ADJOURNMENT
THE PUBLIC HEARING WAS ADJOURNED AT 6:24 P.M.**

Respectfully submitted,



Jeanne E. Johnston
Manager/Secretary