

MINUTES

PUBLIC HEARING – FEBRUARY 20, 2019

LOWER SWATARA TOWNSHIP BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

A Public Hearing of the Lower Swatara Township Board of Commissioners, held at the Lower Swatara Township Municipal Building, was called to order at 6:30 P.M. by President Jon G. Wilt.

Roll call was taken with the following officials in attendance:

- Jon G. Wilt, President
- Todd F. Truntz, Vice President
- Michael J. Davies, Commissioner
- Ronald J. Paul, Assistant Secretary
- Christopher DeHart, Commissioner
- Elizabeth McBride, Manager
- Ann Hursh, Planning & Zoning Coordinator
- Andrew Kenworthy, HRG

Absent:

- Jean R. Arroyo, Secretary
- Peter R. Henninger, Solicitor

Residents and visitors in attendance:

(PLEASE SEE ATTACHED SIGN-IN SHEET)

The purpose of this evening's Public Hearing is to take public comment on a proposed amendment to the Code of Ordinances of the Township of Lower Swatara, Dauphin County, PA, Chapter 27 (Zoning) to rezone certain land from the R-U Residential Urban District and the IP-L Industrial Park Limited District to the I-P Industrial Park District. Ms. Hursh stated that the hearing was properly advertised but timing of the property posting was brought into question so this hearing is occurring tonight and March 6. The Public Hearing Notice was advertised on January 23, and January 30, 2019 in the Press and Journal.

Charles Courtney introduced Dan Schwab, Jason Wilhelm, Tim Kinsley, Ron Secary, and Craig Mellott. He explained this is a rezoning request for a portion of the Jednota property. D&H acquired 276 acres that is currently zoned, (1) Office Park Limited, (2) Residential Urban, and (3) Industrial Park Limited. The question is how the property gets developed. This is a rare and

unique opportunity to shape development that is beneficial to D&H, Lower Swatara Township, its taxpayers and residents. This may generate less traffic than other possible types of development. This proposed development has been recommended by the County & Township Planning Commissions.

Dan Schwab, Co-President of D&H Distributing, came to the microphone to give an overview and slide presentation of his company. D&H has been in business 101 years and its goal is to stay local. It is a wholesaler and has clients such as Bed Bath & Beyond, Costco, and Walmart. It is a \$4 ½ billion company that is family owned with an employee owned ESOP of 36%. Presently the employee count is 200 in the warehouse, and that count expects to grow to 250 in two to three years and 350 – 400 in five years. D&H is a third generation family business with him, and will be a fourth generation business with his son Brandon Schwab. The company started 100 years ago in Pennsylvania and they have been headquartered in Dauphin County for over 65 years. They have a distribution center in Union Deposit today by the big Pepsi building. They have been in that building for 18 years, but the useful life for that building has come to an end for D&H. The company has grown and they have just outgrown that building and need to move within the next 2-3 years. They built the company foundationally upon their employees and put them first and foremost in everything they do. Twenty years ago, they gave the employees about a third of the company; so today, the employees own about 36% of the company. They feel being an employee-owned company has really helped facilitate the growth of D&H. For the past ten years, they have anticipated that they would get to this point (of outgrowing their facility) so they have been out looking at properties that would make sense for D&H in Dauphin County. They have seen plenty of buildings available that would fit their needs, but unfortunately they are located outside their preferred geographic area. This would displace their employees, which they cannot do. Therefore, their goal was to find a site large enough to build a facility that could house their distribution center for the next 20 to 30 years that was just a short distance from their existing facility so that their employees could continue on as employee co-owners of the organization. They are a distribution only facility; they do not manufacture anything nor do they put their name on anything.

Charles Courtney reviewed a map on the overhead screen. No change is being requested for the area north of the turnpike that is zoned Residential Urban. For the area north of Rosedale, a zoning change is being requested from Residential Urban to Industrial Park. The areas currently zoned Industrial Park Limited are being requested to be rezoned from Industrial Park Limited to

Industrial Park. There is an office building on the site which has two tenants. One has a lease which expires in 2019 and the second has a lease which expires in 2020. Both tenants have indicated an interest to make a long term commitment to remain. D&H, with these commitments, intends to leave the office building as is.

Ron Secary explained the overall site will have two buildings: (1) north of Rosedale building, 655,000 square feet with a possible future expansion of 182,000 square feet. Access will be from Rosedale only, there will be two access drives from Rosedale; (2) south building, phase 2, 400,000 square foot building with access also from Rosedale. Most development will be on the east side of the property

Charles Courtney stated the plan is to permanently deed restrict buffer areas over and above what is required by the ordinance. Mr. Courtney referred to a slide showing the following areas to be preserved:

Buffer & Preservation Areas

2.5 acres, Area A

18.0 acres, Area B

16.5 acres, Area C

15.0 acres, Area D

Approximate total of 52 acres

Current zoning encourages spread out development; D&H Plan will not develop about 52 acres. The existing memorial and Rosedale Drive in this area has a nice streetscape. The streetscape will remain the same, because on the northern side of Rosedale an easement was granted to Jednota of approx. 125' x 435' long. This easement will include the existing memorial, stone wall and large trees that exist. These things will not be disturbed. One area of the wall will be removed due to the D&H access driveway. The streetscape on the southern side of Rosedale will remain the same because the current office building is being retained.

Ron Secary showed the Line of Sight graphic looking from Morgan Drive towards the proposed D&H warehouse. The graphic showed that the mature vegetation and woodlands will remain; there is the intention to preserve the area from Stoner Drive to the D&H development.

Charles Courtney stated that a meeting was held previously to allow residents to view the plans. Traffic was a concern of some residents. The goal is to make the situation better than it is today.

Dan Schwab went on to discuss what makes D&H different from other logistic companies. D&H buys containers and truckloads and maintains a 45 day supply. When shipped, D&H ships full truckloads. Presently there are 35 trucks counting both incoming and outgoing, and during peak season there may be 42 trucks per day. In five years, it is anticipated that there will be 39 trucks per day and in peak season there will be 48.

Craig Mellott, Traffic Planning and Design engineer, explained that compared to the possibility with the present zoning, the D&H proposal will have 20% less traffic. D&H will have traffic improvements for truck and employee traffic. Road plans will be included in the design which will physically encourage trucks to travel Rosedale Avenue to the Airport Connector or Meade Avenue to Route 230. Driveways will be laid out for those directions proposing geometry to make it all but impossible for trucks to navigate. Signage will be visible to direct trucks, and a turnaround will be provided in the unlikely event that a truck heads west on Rosedale. It is recommended that a truck prohibition sign be placed on Whitehouse and certain stretches of Rosedale, and that the Township may want to consider offering support by passing ordinances so enforcement can be done. D&H will have left and right turn lanes. Certain roads should be widened and the area near Penn State may need to be re-designed. They are proposing to widen Rosedale Avenue along the frontage so that there are dedicated left and right turn lanes going into the driveways to minimize the impact to through-traffic.

On Rosedale Avenue, just to the east of the Airport Connector overpass, they are proposing to widen Rosedale to University Drive/Meade Ave. There are some points where it is currently pretty narrow, so they want to widen it so tractor-trailers can safely travel through there in either direction at the same time. At the intersection of Rosedale Ave. with University Drive/ Meade Ave., they are recommending the geometry be modified. They would like the radii to be increased and pavement be added so that tractor-trailers can turn to and from Rosedale safely without having to encroach upon opposing lanes. They are recommending, if warrants are met, that a traffic signal be installed at that intersection. PennDOT governs installation of traffic signals in Pennsylvania and they have very strict standards in terms of when and where signals can go in. There is a minimum volume of traffic that you must have before PennDOT would agree to install a signal. At that intersection today, they do not believe there would be enough traffic to warrant a signal. But as traffic grows, there is a possibility that a signal will be warranted. Their recommendation is to monitor that intersection and if the demands are met, the developer will promptly install a traffic

signal to ensure safe and efficient access. Lastly, they are also recommending that signals be installed at the northbound access road for the Airport Connector, if warrants are met.

Ron Secary discussed stormwater and flood control. D&H is planning to lessen stormwater runoff to Lisa Lake and the Airport. He said one of the items of sensitivity in the Township is the Jednota Flats area which is historically prone to flooding problems. As part of this project, they feel that they can do some things and participate in actions that will provide some help in that regard. First of all, the development sites are going to be required to meet the Township's and DEP's requirements for stormwater management. Mr. Secary stated they feel they can meet those requirements, and even exceed them by their design. They are confident that the discharges from these properties will be less than the historic rates that come off of there right now. From a more regional context, he said they looked at a study that was done by the Township engineer about ten years ago of the Jednota Flats area, and identified a pallet of potential flood control improvements that could help alleviate some of the problems down there. One of them was the construction of some regional flood control basins; one of them happened to be generally located where it is given the opportunity to intercept a good bit of water that comes down over Turnpike and heads towards Lisa Lake then makes a turn and heads towards the airport and Susquehanna River. This basin would hold back that water and decrease the flooding potential by controlling what comes from a pretty large drainage area. They are more than willing to participate with the Township in trying to come to some solutions that could help alleviate the flooding problems.

Charles Courtney stated that having D&H in the Township will result in estimated \$2.2 million in additional revenues to the township.

Dan Schwab noted that D&H likes to be a part of the community and gives its employees time-off to volunteer in the community. Their program, D&H Cares, is run by employees and benefits causes, police and fire departments. They are a Corporate Citizen with Community Engagement. D&H has received numerous awards including ESOP of the Year, Best Large Company in Central Pennsylvania.

Ms. Hursh explained that her comments were just the standard ordinance comments:

- The proposed use of a distribution for technology products is a conforming use.
- The development standards require certain specifics for the property - they meet all those.
- The Comprehensive Plan shows the area north of Rosedale Avenue as Residential and the area south of Rosedale Avenue as Light Industrial - that is conforming.

- The smaller area adjacent to Whitehouse Lane is shown as Commercial - Office & Retail, which they are not proposing to do anything on.
- The traffic study has been included.
- Sanitary Sewer and Potable Water are located within the vicinity of the project.
- What they are showing for buffers are over and above the requirements.

It was noted that the Dauphin County Planning Commission recommended approval of the proposed rezoning request on December 3, 2018. The Lower Swatara Township Planning Commission also recommended approval at its December 20, 2018 meeting.

Scott Cooper, 561 Colony Dr, stated he is in favor of D&H moving to Lower Swatara Township.

Richard Woodhead, Donald Ave, stated he has worked for D&H for over 15 years and is in favor of D&H moving to LST

Don Wager, 915 Oberlin, stated he enjoyed the presentation, but is concerned with proper stormwater management. He questioned plans for trucks that arrive “off schedule”. Dan Schwab responded that all trucks are scheduled, D&H contracts with trucking company, and there is plenty of parking space for trucks who arrive early.

Kathy Drebot, 5 Shirley Circle, stated that she works for D&H and is proud to work there

Commissioner Paul asked what will happen to the former cemetery. Charles Courtney responded that there are no plans for it.

Commissioner Davies expressed his appreciation for the buffer on the west side. He stated that there are serious drainage concerns affecting Jednota Flats, and he hopes D&H will be willing to participate in helping with that.

Hearing no further questions or comments, a motion was made by Commissioner Davies, seconded by Vice President Truntz, to continue the hearing on March 6, at 6:00 P.M. The motion was unanimously approved.

The Public Hearing concluded at 7:20 P.M.

ATTEST:

Elizabeth McBride, Township Manager

PLEASE PRINT NAME CLEARLY

FEBRUARY 20, 2019

PUBLIC HEARING - 6:30 P.M.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS LEGISLATIVE MEETING - 7 P.M.

Name/Organization	Address/Contact Information
Jason Wilhelm D+H	
Michael A. Murn II CNR	100 Pine St. Harrisburg, PA 17101
Dave Fed CNR	
Kathy Dreher D+H	
Elizabeth Muter	9 Banger Rd Middletown
Dan Schwab	
Brad Swidler	
Mike Conrad	
Scott Cooper	
Laura Hays	Press & Journal
Tim Kinkadee	2700 Water St. York, PA.
Don Wagner	915 Charlin Rd
Brian Engle	RETTEW ASSOC.
Joan DeKort	Old Reliance Rd
Richard L. Woodhead	29 Donald Ave
Tracey Berntel	2 Berkley Dr
John Weirke	LSE D
Robert Appleby	Resident - 1491 Heritage Sq
Pam Wagner	Boulevard Dr.