

WESTAMPTON TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

6:00 PM CLOSED SESSION 7:00 PM REGULAR MEETING

September 8, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM with all present, Mr. Thorpe was absent. Resolution 9-8-15 was adopted to go into Executive session to discuss police and EMS contacts and police promotions.

The meeting was again called to order and reopened at 7:00 PM by Mayor Chang. Requirements of the Sunshine Law were read. This meeting was advertised in the Burlington County Times January 6, 2015. The flag was saluted and there was a moment of silence.

Roll Call:

Committeeman Daniels	Present
Committeeman Maybury	Present
Committeewoman Teleisa	Present
Committeeman Thorpe	Absent
Mayor Chang	Present

George Saponaro, Solicitor, was present.

Donna Ryan, Clerk/Administrator and Marion Karp, Deputy Clerk were present.

Approve 9/8/15 Agenda – motion to approve by Mr. Daniels; second by Mr. Maybury. All voted yes.

Closed session Minutes of 8/11/15 – motion to approve by Mr. Daniels; second by Mr. Maybury. All voted yes. Minutes of 7/11/2015 meeting – motion to approve by Mr. Maybury; second by Mr. Daniels. All voted yes. Minutes of the 8/11/15 meeting – motion to approve by Ms. Teleisa; second by Mr. Maybury. All voted yes.

Scheduled Appointments

7:00 PM – Bonnie Rick (JIF Presentation, State of the Fund Snapshot) from Hardenbergh Insurance Company. She spoke regarding the safety program in the Township and gave the Committee an opportunity to ask safety related questions. Westampton Township received the 2014 Safety Incentive Award (the maximum of \$1625.00) last year and we are on track to earn the same award in 2015. The focus topic of this year is cyberattacks on municipalities.

Public Comments on agenda items

Dave Barger, 212 Olive Street – asked where Block 401, Lot 7 is. It is on Woodlane Road next to the Ingerman development. There is a house on the lot currently. He asked about commenting on Ordinance 11-2015 and if he should ask now or later. The Mayor advised him he could certainly ask now. Woodmont is a 456 unit apartment complex that is proposed; he wanted to know the expected construction timeline for this project.

Gil Gehin Scott, 104 Second Street – is having trouble seeing how this project benefits Westampton. He has a letter from Solicitor George Saponaro to Donna Ryan from 2014 where he refers to the project as a long term tax abatement; if the project was non PILOT, the tax rate would be nearly a million dollars per year; and the school would get about half of this. In the PILOT agreement, the school would lose about 16 million dollars over the span of the agreement. In a BCT article of Aug. 31st they spoke that no taxes would be going to the schools. The payment is based on occupancy so if the project doesn't fill up the payment will be lower. Virtua won't be up and running for at least 5 years, Phase 2 for almost 20 years. The worst thing about this PILOT is no school taxes. He is concerned that our school superintendent expressed no worries when asked about this, according to the article in the BCT.

Nancy Burkley, 226 Olive Street – knows that we have given tax breaks in the past but they were always for corporations; the purpose is to get them to come here. That makes sense. Woodmont doesn't produce any long term jobs; it produces people who live here – students going into our schools. Tax abatements should be used to attract corporations here. She wanted to know what jobs it will create, why are we doing it? She thinks it is a bad deal and asks the Committee to consider the residents and not vote for it.

Matthew Wittman, 413 West Country Club Drive – asked how many units are 3 bedrooms, how many are 2 bedrooms. This will help to answer how much burden it will bring to the Township.

Sharon Fisher, 217 Irick Road – is a realtor and a resident that has been here in the Township 38 years; she has seen some good decisions made and some bad. She has seen the effect the Mt. Laurel decision has had in Mt. Laurel. She thinks rental units will attract people that will not take care of the property; we are creating a little Camden, a little Trenton. Westampton doesn't need rental units. Low income people rely on public transportation; we don't have the bus services necessary. She said in many Townships the impact has been bad from these types of houses.

Maureen Smith Hartman, 36 St. Andrews Court – is also a realtor that has lived in Westampton a long time. She has probably sold houses to half of the people in this room. She is horrified and embarrassed to read in the paper that we are putting in apartments; they will be the demise of Westampton Township.

Kathy Cummings, 30 Spyglass Court– was a teacher; saw the projections of 23 students a year; the numbers don't add up. She wants to know the impact on the local schools as well as at RV.

Jennifer Myers, 4 Berkshire Road– moved here for the schools; she loves them. She has been in contact with the teachers at Holly Hills Elementary School; the classes are large now. There are no extra classrooms in any of these schools; we don't have room for 200 kids that 500 families will bring in. Are we going to add onto the schools? How will we afford this? Holly Hills has been busting at the seams for years. This will mean 25 – 30 children in each classroom.

Cheryl Delgado – has the same concerns; she lives in Holly Hills 3 blocks away. People park on her street when there are events at the school. There is no parking at either school at this point; the busses are full. Where are we going to put these children? She doesn't think it is a good idea at this point.

Chris Ounjian, 58 Fieldcrest Drive – moved here 9 years ago; his house is still worth less than what he paid for it. He sees that he will never recoup his property value; he wants to know what the benefit is to Westampton Township. How will these children be schooled and how will they be transported?

John Mumbower, 29 Lancaster Drive – hasn't heard any answers to any questions yet.

Solicitor George Saponaro– wanted to answer some of the questions now. The start of the average rent is \$1450.00/month. There will be only 3 or 4 3 bedroom units in the entire building. The Mayor asked that all questions be put forth first, and then they would answer later in the meeting.

Abraham Lopez, 59 Amara Lane – he wants to hear from the Committee not from George Saponaro; he wants to know how much they know about the project. He had asked the school superintendent about rumors regarding the expansion of Holly Hills School. He stated that she said she is constantly in touch with the Committee. He asked if the Mayor could share the information she had shared with the superintendent so that she was confident enough to state to the BCT that she wasn't concerned about the impact on the schools?

Kevin Ennis, 25 Lancaster Drive – his house is almost paid off, he would hate to have to move because he wasn't able to afford increased taxes. He asked about Woodmont's track record – it sounds like no one wants this but it would be even worse if it is started and not finished. He isn't clear what the benefit is to the Township.

Esther Blake, Lambert Drive – her family has been here since 1969. She is concerned about businesses closing and abandoned houses. How will it benefit Westampton Township? What are 456 luxury apartments going to do for our town? There is no balance.

Jennifer Williams, 82 Greenwich Drive – surrounding towns have apartment complexes that are not filled, they have empty apartments. Why build more in our town?

Jonathan Wright, 18 Glasgow Road – this is only 1 project; there are 3 in total: Project Freedom and the affordable housing project on Woodlane Road. They will all put a strain on the Township and the schools. Is the Committee going to listen to the residents? It sounds to him that everyone is against this. Will they do what's right and vote no?

Erwin Smith, 445 West Country Club Drive – agrees with everyone in the room that is opposed to this project. It knocks him to the floor that the Committee is even considering this.

Jack Lambersky, 30 St Andrews Court – asked if there is any compensation being made to anyone as a result of this deal.

Erwin Smith, 445 West Country Club Drive – these types of projects, if they don't benefit us, they shouldn't even be on the books.

Justin Wright, 15 Brighton Road– had attended a focus group with the superintendent, who spoke about a long term plan to make Holly Hills School Kindergarten through 6th grade and make Westampton Middle School 7th and 8th grade. Why would she say this?

Pat Herriman, 201 Burrs Road – is concerned about the schools. We take an ownership in the community; we are vested. She doesn't see that residents in apartments will demonstrate the same ownership in the township.

Chris Ounjian, 58 Fieldcrest Drive - wants to know each Committeeperson's decision on the project.

Dave Barger, 212 Olive Street – wants to know if any traffic studies have been completed. He has a question about COAH which is bothering him. The COAH numbers are in flux – why are only 28 units being proposed for the Woodmont project and not the required 20%? Affordable housing is jammed into one area of the Township.

Andrew Kanicki – is also a realtor; what demographic studies has the developer done to support 456 apartments for Westampton? That demographic will want more of a prestige address and we are not there yet. He named several apartment complexes in the area that only have 50% occupancy rates. He doesn't see it fitting in Westampton. How is this supporting and benefitting the Township? Why aren't we following the Master Plan of the Township?

Nancy Burkley, 226 Olive Street – she knows the Committee gets their information from developers. She can give 3 examples of where we got burned before. Deerwood developers told us we would get 20 children; we have about 150 children currently. Special Services School told us that all Westampton residents could swim there for free; this never materialized. Developers are in the business to make money; they will promise you the world. If you live in Deerwood, they can back her up.

Jacqueline Eckert, 8 Hyde Lane – agrees with everyone else; she was born and raised here. She married and moved back here, to Tarnsfield. The best thing about our community is the love we have for it. She can't imagine in 5 years what it will be like with the overcrowding. She was unaware that the Committee has the sole responsibility to make this decision. She asks the Committee to table the matter tonight and let the residents vote on this issue.

John Mumbower, 29 Lancaster Drive – asked why the Township negotiated a PILOT for the Woodmont project. Is this more a benefit to the developer than the Township? It may be cheaper for them with a lower occupancy rate.

Sherry Dolan, 32 Devonshire Drive– was excited about hearing that apartments would be available; her mother recently moved to Cherry Hill because she couldn't find one here. She is embarrassed by some of the comments here tonight. She wants to know if a study was done to see if apartments are needed. She isn't for or against it; some people can't afford to buy a house. There are about 80 houses in foreclosure now; having apartments will give people another option.

New Business

Mr. Milanese – monument for 65th Infantry, Korean War. He wants to be sure that the Veterans memorial area is clean; it is dirty and needs to be cleaned up. He was thinking about moving the memorial. He knows there are many more problems more important that need to be solved.

Mr. Daniels – wants to thank Mr. Milanese for bringing this before the Committee. He advised the audience about how the Veterans Memorial was constructed at the American Legion building on Rancocas Road. The POTUS recognized the 65th Infantry and issued a congressional medal of honor.

Resolutions

110-15 Payment of Vouchers – motion to approve by Mr. Maybury; seconded by Mr. Daniels. All voted yes.

111-15 Burlington County Municipal Park Development Program – motion to approve by Mr. Daniels; seconded by Mr. Maybury. All voted yes.

112-15 Burlington County Municipal Park Development Program Project Completion – motion to approve by Mr. Maybury; second by Mr. Teleisa. All voted yes.

113-15 Cancellation of Taxes, Block 1210, Lot 7 & Block 1001.08, Lot 14 – motion to approve by Ms. Maybury; seconded by Mr. Daniels. All voted yes.

114-15 EMS Contract– motion to approve by Ms. Teleisa; seconded by Mr. Maybury. All voted yes.

115-15 Police Officers/Superior Officers Contract – motion to approve by Ms. Teleisa; seconded by Mr. Daniels. All voted yes.

116-15 Non Condemnation Redevelopment Area, Block 401, Lot 7 - motion to approve by Mr. Maybury; seconded by Ms. Teleisa. All voted yes.

117-15 Establish Promotional Procedures for Police Lieutenants – motion to approve by Mr. Maybury; seconded by Ms. Teleisa. All voted yes.

118-15 Establish Promotional Procedures for Police Sergeants – motion to approve by Mr. Daniels; seconded by Mr. Maybury. All voted yes.

Mayor Chang – there were a significant amount of questions tonight. Mayor Chang asked Mr. Santola of Woodmont to answer questions for the residents. Woodmont has appeared before the Township 6 or 7 times; the Committee has put a lot of time and effort into this. Woodmont has been in business for 53 years; and most recently have completed 3 multifamily communities. He is happy to let everyone know they have a 100% finish rate. They know what works and they know their markets. They build their own communities and will be here on site building. They manage all of their communities as well; they don't farm them out. There will be 1 or 2 full time superintendents living at the community. They also have full time leasing agents. As far as "luxury", every home has 9 foot ceilings, granite countertops, stainless steel appliances, master bath double sinks and a stall shower, washer and dryer, etc.

The complex will have a clubhouse with a fitness center and is dog and pet friendly. They have dog runs, dog wash areas, dog clean up stations, an outdoor pool, barbeque patios and walking paths. They encourage residents to interact with each other as this increases residents staying on. He invites everyone to check out their website. Apartments will be 1 and 2 bedrooms mainly. 25-30% will be 1 bedroom apartments; the balance will be 2 bedroom units. Age wise, the residents will consist of 40% under 35 years old. They have done their homework; this is a 60 million dollar investment. Everything in the area consists of old, tired 2 story rental developments. Theirs offers a big green space, it's new, it's attractive and is what the market wants. There are not many higher end luxury rentals in NJ. This is what the market wants.

Erwin Smith, 445 West Country Club Drive – what he is telling them is a bunch of BS, it benefits their bottom line. How will this benefit Westampton Township?

Mr. Santola explained that this is in a redevelopment zone; he discussed the PILOT agreement. The PILOT allows every dollar to come to the town with the exception of about 5% which goes to the County. The town will get about \$850,000 the first year and can do whatever they want with it, by year 6 it will be well over a million dollars. If a unit is vacant, they are still obliged to pay 70% until the unit is occupied. It is almost 40 million dollars over the life of the PILOT. Woodmont has PILOTS in 5 municipalities in the state. It won't cost the township any money to administer the PILOT.

George Saponaro – wanted to address several more questions first. The property isn't yet owned by Woodmont, they are under contract to purchase it. He spoke about the other complex on Woodlane Road where the affordable housing will be built. Each unit will cost about \$90,000 to construct and he knows the taxpayers don't want to bear this. Woodmont will build 28 units in the luxury project and the balance over on Woodlane Road which is 72 units, for a total of 100 units. George stated that this community will have less than 25 or 30 school age children. The Township could expect \$1.1 to \$1.2 million dollars a year without a PILOT agreement – we would get only about \$225,000 of this amount. Woodmont would not be able to file a tax appeal while under the PILOT agreement.

Mayor Chang – she is upset with hearing several things people said tonight and is discounting them from the meeting, amongst them comments like “little Camden” and “little Trenton” ; she has listened to people tonight that have no political axe to grind. She suggests a public workshop with Woodmont where every single question that residents have will be answered. The date will be determined soon.

Ordinances

11-2015 Authorize Financial Agreement with Woodmont (second reading) – motion to table the Ordinance by Mayor Chang; second by Ms. Teleisa. All voted yes.

Correspondence

NJ DOT – acceptance of applications for NJDOT 2016 State Aid Programs – will send this over to the engineer; this is where we got our Holly Lane road grants.

Dates to Remember

Oct. 8th – Fire Prevention Week, Annual Open House, 6 to 9 PM

Open to public Comment

Cheryl Delgado – has a question about the Holly Lane road project; it's been going on for months. There are deep holes that are dangerous to children. She doesn't know from day to day whether or not she can get in her driveway, cars are parked everywhere. She had to call the Township building last week to have some holes fixed; today she almost fell into a hole. She doesn't know when the project will end – she asks the Township and they tell her to ask the contractor; she asks the contractor and they tell her to ask the Township.

Mayor Chang has spoken to the Township engineer and she knows there have been a number of phone calls back and forth on this. Donna Ryan explained that every storm drain had to be leveled; every curb has to be replaced. Ms. Delgado asked if they could be notified via Nixle; Donna would speak with the engineer; we could give an idea of the time line; let her see what we could do. She asked that the large holes in front of her property be fixed; she is afraid kids walking to school will fall into the holes.

Kevin Ennis, 29 Lancaster Drive – asked what the Woodmont website is.

Dave Barger, Olive Street – appreciates the Committee’s willingness to hold a workshop; hopes they can address the questions that weren’t answered tonight.

John Mumbower, Lancaster Drive – wanted to know what format the Committee recognizes to answer questions. Website? Email? Facebook? Mayor Chang stated that she always returns phone calls, emails are welcome, residents are also encouraged to ask questions at the meetings. There is no Facebook page that the Township runs.

Gil Gehin Scott, Second Street – this whole COAH thing is confusing; all of a sudden our units have risen to over 600. He wants it in writing so that they can understand what is going on. Mayor Chang explained that a letter was sent from NJ Builders Association to all municipalities recently, the courts have to determine what our obligation is.

Abraham Lopez, Amara Lane – the League issued a memo stating that the letter was done in a manner that was unprecedented and that they should disregard that letter. All municipalities should wait until they hear from the courts. He thinks a lot of the frustration tonight is due to a lack of communication; can there be a commitment moving forward for the Committee to reach out to its residents?

Mayor Chang – all meetings are advertised; they listen to the residents. She listened to the residents that didn’t have a political axe to grind. They tabled the ordinance this evening.

Abraham Lopez - asked if they would let the residents know; Mayor Chang said that is why they have public notice and meetings are advertised in the BCT.

Nancy Burkley – the forum is a great idea; she wants the unanswered questions to be answered and not forgotten.

A resident wanted to know where she could look to see a projected list of road projects. (Deerwood resident – didn’t state name.)

Maureen Smith – asked how they would find out when the workshop would be so that all can make arrangements. Mayor Chang stated that it will be scheduled and listed on the website. They could also call the Township.

Kelly Winner, Valley Farm Road – how many affordable units do we have? Donna Ryan stated that we used to have 99 but some have foreclosed; we are down to about 70 units right now.

Justin Wright – over the weekend our EMS had a water event and he went on Facebook to comment; his question wasn't answered and his comment was deleted and he is blocked from the page altogether. He wanted to know who was running the EMS Facebook page. The Mayor would find out who is running it. He also wanted an apology. He wanted to know who funded the event. Mayor Chang stated she funded it. She would be more than happy to speak to the EMS director about it.

Joh Mumbower – a lot of residents are anxious about things in the Township. Taxes went up for the 7th year in a row. There are a lot of things that are going to affect their taxes and household budgets.

Jonathan Wright – welcomed Mr. Thorpe; he missed a lot tonight. It was a pretty hard sale that Woodmont pushed tonight. H didn't hear anything that made him want Woodmont here. He doesn't trust the Township Committee to correctly spend the money from the PILOT. He recently read that Mr. Maybury isn't going to seek reelection; if it is true he asked who is running in his place.

Michael Riley, 43 Sawgrass Drive – asked if the Committee will be prepared to answer the resident's questions about Woodmont. The Mayor stated that they would be.

Mike Westdyk, Westampton EMS – thanked the Mayor and Committee for working so diligently on settling their contract.

There being no further comment from the public, the meeting was closed.

Comments – Department Heads & Professionals

Police Chief Joe Otto – in reference to Holly Lane, they have been working with Mike Meenan and Donna Ryan; they will use the Nixle system for getting information out.

EMS Chief Jason Carty – thanked Mike Westdyk for working to settle the contract. The department has received 3 grants this year so far, they are very pleased with that. The one grant was specifically for volunteers which gives them an ability to remain competitive with other departments in the county. Over 300 kids attended the Wet Down on Saturday; he thanked the Mayor for providing the water ice. He spoke regarding the upcoming Fire/EMS Open House; everyone should bring their children out, it is always a big success.

Committee Members Comments

Mr. Daniels – knows we will have a workshop session; he wanted to respond to Jack Lambersky's comment, who had asked if anyone was getting anything financial out of

the Woodmont deal. As an elected official, he has been sworn in various offices 5 times; he holds himself to a high level of accountability. To answer his question directly; he gets nothing from this Woodmont PILOT. He receives a stipend of about \$3710 a year; most which he donates to youth advocacy programs. He is honored to serve as a Westampton Committeeman. Tonight the Committee had the opportunity to hear the residents. He thought that the project may be a good opportunity to re-invent ourselves; he envisioned this for us. He is accountable to each resident and thanks each one for attending.

A couple of weeks ago there was a World Cup soccer champion on our sports complex field; it represented a point of pride for our recreation program. Please pass on his congratulations to Todd who continues to operate a stellar program. He commended Patrolman Einstein who took the 100 mile walk; he is proud he is a cop in this Township. In 3 days it is the 9/11 anniversary; our nation would never be the same after that; our community would never be the same; one of our respected teachers lost his wife that day.

Mr. Thorpe – sorry he was late, very late. He is glad the ordinance was tabled. He looks forward to reading all the notes and the testimony that was taken. He had a great meeting with the seniors last week and is excited about the possible addition. He thanked the EMS for their efforts on Saturday.

Ms. Teleisa – thanks go out to Jason Carty, Craig Farnsworth and Donna Ryan for being instrumental in obtaining 3 grants; it benefits the Township and the safety of the residents. She is happy to see a full house tonight. She thinks what some fail to realize is that they are also residents of this town, she loves Westampton. She is up here not just as a Committeeperson but also as a resident. They had some very good concerns, she wants to let them know they also love this town, her children were raised here.

Mr. Maybury – has served 3 terms on the Committee and is proud of his record. He was elected to do the best for the residents and that is what he has strived to do. He was born here and grew up here. Only about 12 years ago our Fire Department was barely able to respond to calls and had to rely on mutual aid, now look at the Department. He didn't plan on running again for another term; candidates are commonly replaced, similar to what happened in the Republican Party this year. He will continue to fight lifetime alimony. He also wants to talk about blatant lies that are circulating; he isn't resigning from his position he is simply not seeking reelection. He worked his way up at the MUA and wasn't given anything over the 32 years he has worked there. He stands behind his vote for Chief Carty who is well qualified and is doing a great job.

Mayor Chang – thanked all residents who came out tonight; it is her hope that they will continue to fill the courtroom in the future even when there aren't hot button issues to discuss. She wants to discuss a comment made regarding National Night Out; she has been involved long before she became a public official. During that time she has sponsored numerous sports teams as well as donated her time which she continues to do. She was extremely offended when she heard a comment that she didn't do anything for National Night Out. She paid for the tables there but didn't do it to get credit but did it

because she has always done these kinds of things. She has always supported our kids in Westampton. The Kid's Wet Down was simply an opportunity for kids to have some fun before school and wasn't politically motivated; she will continue to do these kinds of things. It is the same with the seniors. She has never indicated what she paid for before but she feels she has to now.

There were no further comments and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Marion Karp, Deputy Clerk