

Conewago Online

Report on the August 13, 2003 Meeting of the Conewago Township Board of Supervisors

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The Conewago Township Board of Supervisors held a regular meeting on August 13, 2003. There was a good size crowd in attendance. One group was interested in getting more details on PennVest and the impact on sewer fees. They were mostly disappointed because not much more information was available yet. A second group was interested in noise related to a motorcycle track in somebody's back yard. Some of those present were:

- The Supers:
John Graybill John Rochat Jay Brandt
- Their trusted Assistants:
Shirley Bretz (secretary) Dolores Kuntz (treasurer)
Max Schradley (engineer) Jon Yost (solicitor)
- The Reporters:
Tom (*Scoop*) Rumpf, The Sun Ray Coble, Patriot-News
Joel (*Flash*) Buckley, ConewagoOnline
- People with Business:
Kim Bloom, DTMA Bhumesh Chandra
Galen Shelly Scott Nye (Steve & Tracey Barrick
Dr. Sicher
- Interested Citizens:
Rose Sarfert Chantal Atnip Mark and Ruth Siegel
Kent Bachman Jane Hafer
Several others

Call Meeting to Order – by chairman Graybill, later than 7:30 (I didn't note the time) because of an executive session to discuss legal issues. (Probably PennVest with DTMA but they didn't say.)

- Minutes of July 9, 2003
- Treasurer's Report - July 31, 2003
- Expenditure Report - August 13, 2003
- Subdivision/Engineering Fees Report
- Planning Commission Minutes - July 28, 2003

Public Comment Period:

- **BOCA** - Joel Buckley asked when it was expected that the new state building codes (discussed last month) would take effect. Max said probaly not til late this year or next year.

- **PennVest** - Andy Wolf asked about how the PennVest grant and loan would affect sewer costs.

As reported in Conewago Online on July 24, 2003: "PENNVEST has approved a \$2,843,334 loan and \$1,906,666 grant to Conewago Township to install more than five miles of sewage collection lines and mains to serve the Laurel Woods area of the township, where at least one-fourth of the on-lot septic systems are malfunctioning and contaminating local drinking water wells with coliform bacteria. The loan will be for a term of 20 years at a rate of 1%." Solicitor Yost indicated it would be some time (60 days) before revised user fees could be calculated. For readers who are dying to know the new bottom line, Conewago Online will attempt to make a rough estimate.

At first glance, the total award of \$4,750,000 would appear to exceed the sewer system construction costs. To use more of the money, the township might reimburse itself for design expenses that it previously indicated it would pay for (rather than add to the rate base). There will also be additional administrative expenses associated with accepting this financing. [*Editors Note:* I have included here some additional information that was not mentioned at the meeting that Conewago Online obtained from other sources.] There will be some costs reimbursed to DTMA for the financing they set up but which we will not be using. It is possible the terms of the PennVest award may not allow the immediate transfer of ownership of the system to DTMA as previously agreed to. Changes to the operating and maintenance agreement with additional costs are possible. I believe some of PennVest money might be used to pay DTMA's capacity fee (\$1300 per user), which was not included as a construction cost but was included in the "tapping fee".

Costs with DTMA financing were previously estimated at \$6000 tapping fee and \$80/month (\$960/yr) combined sewer and capital surcharge fee. CO's preliminary calculations indicate the "tapping fee" would have to be substantially reduced, if not completely eliminated, to be able to accept the full amount of grant and loan. It is possible that the full amount will not be accepted. We were told that if the full amount is not accepted, the declined amount would have to include proportional amounts of grant and loan. (We can't just take all the grant money and only some of the loan.) If we are able to accept all of the grant, it would appear to represent about 40% of total system costs. A rough estimate might be a 40% reduction in tapping fee and capital surcharge portion (\$55) but not the regular portion (\$25) of the monthly sewer fee. Conceivably this could mean a \$3600 tapping fee and \$58/mo (\$696/yr) combined sewer and capital surcharge fee. **NOTE: these numbers are rough estimates--actual numbers are likely to be rather different.** There would also be additional savings over this rough estimate due to the lower interest rate. I suspect a higher tapping fee might be retained which would allow a further reduction in the monthly fee. Though my calculations indicate that a higher tapping fee would require declining a larger portion of the grant and loan, which would increase costs. So before more accurate figures can be computed, additional expenses must be determined and balancing of costs between the one-time "tapping fee" and the recurring capital surcharge fee must be made.

The board voted to accept the PennVest financing.

This represents a very significant reduction in cost to residents.

The board is to be commended for a job well done in acquiring the PennVest financing!

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Property Maintenance Ordinance** – if anything happened on this, I missed it.
- **Status Report, DTMA** – sewer construction progresses. Recent work has been on Dogwood and Church Road. Church Road construction is nearing Nye. The intent is to go as far as Kanodes, then go back and complete Nye. The Dogwood Drive right-of-way issue has still not been resolved. School starts in a week and a half. Rochat expressed his hope that there would be flag men to guide school bus traffic through the construction area. Rochat wondered if a guard rail disappeared during construction. In response to last month's complaints, the manholes on roads have been painted with fluorescent paint.
- **OLDS Management Program** – there was a case by case review of residents who are delinquent in their septic pumping.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Conditional Use** - Bhumesh Chandra 5016 Ridge Road, Elizabethtown, PA 17022 – Zoning is Residential Country. Tax Parcel Number is 22-5-91 & 92 .Mr. Chandra is proposing to operate a part-time Computer Repair Business in the lower level of his present home which is located on Tax Parcel #22-5-91. Planning commission had previously recommended approval based on the Zoning Officer's review of the application. If Mr. Chandra chooses to erect a sign (advertising his business and phone number); he will have to meet the sign ordinance requirements. Limited retail sales will be allowed. Customers to be limited to noon-8pm. Conditional use approval granted.
- **Noise Complaints** - Scott Nye and others complained about noise from their neighbor, Steve & Tracey Barrick. The noise comes from a moto-cross track in their back-yard. Complicating matters somewhat, both properties straddle the Conewago/Londonderry line on the east side of Steinruck. Complaint has also been filed through Londonderry. Frank Chlebnokov, zoning officer, not present at the meeting, had done an initial investigation. It seems that while there is a dog-barking noise ordinance, there is no general noise ordinance. A general nuisance ordinance may apply. The Barricks claim they are just trying to use their property for their own enjoyment (this is not a commercial activity) and and that the noise is not for prolonged periods. Some of their neighbors are unhappy with the noise and dust. The board will await the written report of the zoning officer.
- **Dr. Sicher - Minor Final Subdivision Plan** - Waiver granted for preliminary plan.
- **Sexually Oriented Business Ordinance** – a draft was presented. Rochat had comments on some wording. Mrs. Hafer wondered why we needed this. The solicitor explained that the current ordinance banning sexually oriented businesses would not withstand court challenge, so one that regulates such businesses should be adopted.
- **Ag Security Area** - 61 Acres - Robert Kain, Sr., 4696 Colebrook Rd., Hershey. Mr. Kain has signed papers to join the Ag Security Area on his farm (Tax Parcel #22-7-10). The Planning Commission reviewed the concept, but did not have enough information to take

action. The solicitor indicated that the prescribed review procedure for this was cumbersome and burdensome. He indicated it would be easier to do nothing and allow the applicant to receive approval by default after 6 months through the board's inaction.

- **Open Records Access** – the board wanted to clarify and place some restrictions on access to public records. While no one said so, this is all about that nosey guy from Conewago Online (me) who always wants to look at public records.
- **New Development in Laurel Woods** – this item was not discussed at the Supervisors meeting; it comes from the planning commission minutes. Melham Associates presented a sketch plan for a 740 ft cul-de-sac with 18 building lots on land in Laurel Woods owned by Ralph and Helen Luttrell. The minutes did not specify the location, but I believe it is between Primrose and Church, adjoining Conewago Place. After comparing the plan with the tax map, there were some problems with property lines. The plan was withdrawn pending a determination of actual property lines.
- **Hills of Waterford** - Construction of a model home is well under way. Construction of roads will begin soon.

Remember- Next Board of Supervisors Meeting is Wednesday September 10, at 7:30 pm.

That's it – *Flash*