

**COOLBAUGH TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**  
**WORK SESSION MINUTES**  
**February 20, 2024**

The work session was called to order by Chairman William Weimer at 6:00pm in the Coolbaugh Township Municipal Center located at 5520 Municipal Drive, Tobyhanna, PA.

**Board Members present:**

William Weimer, Cara Rogan, Alma I. Ruiz-Smith, Clare Colgan and Lynn Kelly,

**Board Members absent:**

None

**Staff present:**

Patrick Armstrong, Solicitor, Erin Masker, Township Secretary, Meredith Thompson, Business Manager, and Tomas Keane, Director of Codes and Zoning

**Staff absent:**

None

**1. Discussion on Programs Offered by Pocono Wildlife –(Discussed second on the agenda)**

Kathy Uhler, Founder and Education Director was in attendance and discussed the services provided at Pocono Wildlife as well as the volunteer opportunities that are available stating that the requirement is that they have a tetanus shot. She stated that Pocono Wildlife provides care to injured wildlife in order to get them back into the wild. K. Uhler provided the audience with her cell phone number stating that if they happen to find an animal that is in need they can contact her, also advising that if they are in their yard and see a snake, they can send her a picture via text and she will be able to provide information on it. She asked if the Board would consider donating \$1,500.00 annually to help support the center and to help with operational expenses. She stated that if anyone would like a program offered in their community to reach out and she would be happy to do so. The Board thanked K. Uhler for attending and providing such useful information.

**2. Discussion on Landston Equities/ Northampton Farms, LLC. Updates Relating to the Potential Entrance from Veterans Drive (479 Memorial Blvd, Tobyhanna) (Discussed first on the agenda)**

Rob Lewis was in attendance from Kaplan Stewart to discuss the status of the driveway entrance from Veterans Drive as they are negotiating with Walmart DC. He stated that the original request for waivers which the Board was not in favor of granting, he stated that they would now go away if the entrance were moved. Attorney Lewis stated that the change in entrance would make the size of the buildings smaller, going from 2.7 million sq. ft. to 2.3 million sq. ft. The current proposed plan has been provided to Walmart for review and there has not been any objection heard at this point from them or their counsel. Tony Pittcock, Engineer was in attendance and reviewed the plan layout including parking and entrance locations. He also stated that there would be a landscape plan provided when Ms. Ruiz-Smith stated that she would like the office staff to be able to look out their windows and not be faced with large buildings. Attorney Pam Tobin stated that after doing some research and reviewing the original subdivision plan which was for the Walmart property along with the Jaindl property, it was determined that the access was on the plan which by right would allow them to use Veterans Drive for the access to their property. She stated that once this was determined she spoke with Walmart counsel, and they agreed that they would not legally be allowed to deny them access. They are currently reviewing the plan and negotiating the improvements that her

client would be completing which currently include improvements at the traffic signal and widening the road.

- **Discussion:** Ms. Ruiz-Smith stated that if this was the case and they were allowed access they could have eliminated a lot of hassle and so much money spent in order to pursue the original avenue. D. Jaindl stated that is why there is this team in place in order to put fresh eyes on the situation, stating that one of the new team members was also an engineer on the project when the original subdivision was submitted and approved. Solicitor Armstrong stated that this Board is not agreeing to anything this evening and stated that this is between the applicant and Walmart. Ms. Kelly asked that if/when a draft agreement is complete, the Township will need to receive a copy for review. Rob Lewis stated that he will be able to submit a revised subdivision plan for review by the PC by the April deadline, but that the Land Development plan will take a little longer. The Board agreed that the applicant is still under the April 22<sup>nd</sup> deadline to either submit a new LDP or provide a substantive update on the status of the project. J. Miller stated that there is a petition on Change.org relating to this project that has over 1,100 signatures currently. He also asked when widening the road will it be on the township road or Walmart, being advised that the widening of the road would not be on the township road as there is a right-of-way for that purpose. When asked how many vehicles are anticipated daily between their traffic and Walmart traffic, being advised that will be determined in the traffic study. When asked how many bays, they were advised 480. J. Miller asked if there is an agreement yet, being advised that there is not as they are working out the details. Residents spoke about their concerns with the salt running into the exceptional value waterways, whether Route 611 can handle this amount of traffic, the noise and air pollution as well as the disruption to their lives and the peace that they live here for. F. Whalen asked if there is a baseline measurement to use for prior to the warehouses being built as they relate to the lighting and noise levels. Attorney Lewis stated that he does not know if there is one, but that with all of the concerns, his client will have to follow the township SALDO and ordinances as well as the requirements as set forth by outside agencies that they are seeking permits from. When asked by a resident how many acres of trees are being cut down, they advised that they were not sure but that they know that there is going to be 30 acres less now than originally anticipated. M. Wood asked if this will be inspected and held to the standard of the building and fire codes, being advised that it will and it is inspected by Bureau Veritas. Chief Dobson stated that the buildings are constructed up to code and are required to have sprinkler systems, hydrants, required turning radius requirements for fire apparatus and other devices as per the code. He stated that although he has concerns with the warehouses, when it comes to fires, he has more concerns about residential properties that are not required to have the sprinkler systems. S. Stroker expressed concerns with the natural resources that will be impacted and the fact that these buildings will be located next to hundreds of acres of woods which are used for hunting to provide food for families as well as the waterways that run into the Delaware. We ask that you consider the fact that we value good neighbors. S. Stroker stated that the buffers that are in place are not enough when it comes to these buildings being built. J. Miller stated that the developers do not care about the community and asked that the residents in attendance go to the Planning Commission where their projects are first discussed and get involved there as well as at the PADEP, PennDot and MCCD levels. S. Stranick stated that there is a women's center in the Mountain Center and stated that there will now be tractor trailers parked along the back of that property with a clear view of that location. She stated that they go there for safety and now they will

not even be guaranteed that . M. Bozzone asked about the septic fields assuming there will be tanks for irrigation, being advised the designs will be provided to DEP for review. He also asked who would be responsible for the well water that could be affected by the operations and maintenance at the facility, who is responsible for the drop in property values and also voiced his concerns with the exceptional value waterways that are located in the community which are headwaters to the Delaware River. A. Jacobs asked how the 480 loading docks compare to the number that they have at the Walmart DC, being advised they do not know how many are there. S. Stroker stated that she understands that the applicant has the right to develop the property but stated that the residents have the right to peace, clean air, and the ability to hunt. A. Flaherty stated that the developer stated that they don't want it in a residential area, stating that it is behind a residential area and the constant beeping of the trucks, and noise at the facility will impact the residents that live in the area. She stated that she is a teacher and that she spoke with a student that ended up being an engineer and was advised that there is an ordinance in place that prohibits building in an area if it results in a financial impact on the residents that live there. She stated that people that live here give a lot to live in this community and expect to have the peace and quiet that they moved here or built their homes here for. Solicitor Armstrong stated that the Board is not taking any action on this matter this evening and anticipates that the applicant will provide an update when the draft agreement has been reached. Ms. Kelly asked about the previously submitted Environmental Impact Assessment from 2 years ago and stated now that there are changes to the project, it should be updated. Solicitor Armstrong stated that revisions to the plan would impact the study, so that would be acceptable to request a new one.

## 2. Public Input

Nothing was heard.

Work Session ended at 7:33pm.