

## **CHESTERFIELD TOWNSHIP SPECIAL MEETING SESSION AUGUST 3, 2022**

The Township Committee met on the above date in the Municipal Complex, 295 Bordentown-Chesterfield Road, Chesterfield, New Jersey. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Panfili at 6:30 p.m. followed by a flag salute and moment of silence.

The Open Public Meetings Act Statement was read and compliance noted.

### **ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS**

Present: Belinda Blazic, Denise Koetas-Dale (Remote), Michael Russo, Jeremy Liedtka, and Mayor Lee Panfili.

Also present: Thomas A. Sahol, Township Administrator; Caryn M. Hoyer, Township Clerk; John Gillespie, Township Attorney; Joseph Hirsh, Township Engineer; Michael Davison, Chief of Police; Troy Ulshafer, Public Works Manager.

### **AGENDA MATTER(S) REQUIRING RECUSAL(S) - NONE**

### **ORDINANCE FOR INTRODUCTION**

Mayor Panfili stated the meeting tonight is to discuss the introduction of Ordinance 2022-15, an Ordinance of the Township of Chesterfield, County of Burlington, State of New Jersey Adopting "Old York Redevelopment Plan" for Certain Property Known as Block 701 Lot 2.01, the Former Old York Country Club. He stated that tonight is not an approval. If the ordinance is introduced, it would be sent to the Planning Board. At that time the public will have an opportunity to comment on the plan. He stated that the Township Committee had decided that anything regarding action on the Old York County Club property would be a meeting specific to that topic. If the ordinance is introduced, it will also have a special meeting for the public hearing.

Mayor Panfili stated he received many calls and emails from residents who have no agenda. Some of the concerns they raised with him are as follows:

- Grading around the adjoining properties
- The height of berm and trees and if perpetually protected
- Septic permeability and how will recharge be handled
- Potential water table elevated and impact on full basements and septic
- Traffic pattern – if 206 closed how will traffic be diverted
- Green and carbon neutral – solar panels
- Enforcement of truck traffic on County Roads

He stated there are other issues but these are just some that he could not answer.

Ms. Koetas-Dale stated she agreed with the Mayor 100% and that she has reached out to the County to get some of the questions answered.

Mayor Panfili stated the property is unique. The financials are real. We need to do something to help the revenue but need to get the application right. He does not believe it will ever be a golf course again. He doesn't think this application cannot be done, but at this time we need to get the answers to the questions first. If we can get those answers and we are satisfied with them, then we can introduce at that time. That introduction would be at a special meeting.

Motion to hold the introduction of ordinance until our questions are answered was made by Mr. Russo and second by Ms. Blazic.

Roll Call:

Yeas: Blazic, Koetas-Dale, Russo, Panfili

Nay: Liedtka – Believes it should be introduced and moved to the Planning Board to get those answers. We are not bound to adopt the Ordinance.

Ms. Blazic made a motion second by Mr. Russo to open the meeting to public comment. All were in favor.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Christina Hogan – School Board President – She appreciated the opportunity to meet with the OYCC subcommittee to discuss the school concerns. She stated the school has three main concerns: Safe transportation of children, overall school safety and security, and financial. There will be increase in the volume of traffic and trucks going off route. They are waiting for a copy of the traffic study. She stated the school is concerned about a potential decrease in police presence around the school due to the strain on the police department. There could be a negative impact on school funding including Northern Burlington. She asks that the Township take into consideration the school concerns. She further indicated as a school district they are not for or against the project, but they want to be sure their concerns are addressed as they are a stakeholder in the township.

Phil Greene – 24 Olivia Way – He asked about holding the developer to their promises. He is concerned about the strain this will place on the police and fire departments. He asked about a bond to hold them responsible. Mr. Panfili stated that a bond would not be perpetual and only during construction for performance and maintenance two years after.

Lorrie Thier – 4 Foulkes Lane – She thanked the Committee for taking into consideration the questions raised by the public. She stated the town had open forums for other large projects why not this one. She is concerned the Township is only taking information from the developer. The community is divided over this process and she wants residents involved in the process.

Ashley Watson – 454 Main Street – She asked who did the traffic study. Ms. Koetas-Dale stated Active Acquisitions provided the traffic study and she had asked for additional information to be included and they provided it. She along with Ms. Blazic will continue to request additional information until all the questions are answered. Mayor Panfili stated it would be part of the applicants' responsibility

to submit the traffic study. It would require review and approval from the Township Committee, Planning Board and our professional staff, as well as Burlington County. Ms. Koetas-Dale stated she has continued to request additional information from them.

James Codella – 470 Main Street – He has been on the Budget Advisory Committee. This year the BAC recommended additional police because they were shorthanded. That is before a warehouse. He believes the town will need additional police if this goes through. Chesterfield has a fundamental spending problem. No single warehouse will solve the problem. The budget needs to be cut and taxes need to be raised.

Sherri Dudas – 258 Ellisdale Road – She thanked the Mayor for his opening comments. We all care about Chesterfield but have different opinions. She stated its time to do the referendum. Her farm is no longer profitable and other farmers are facing the same issues and are delinquent on their taxes. This town has preserved a lot of acreage and are a leader in that field. She stated we need more trees and could have received free trees and the town did not take advantage of that opportunity.

Jacquelyn Guthrie – 452 Main Street – She agrees there will be stress put on the police department with a warehouse. The warehouses are like cockroaches and will not stop. The onus is on the Township Committee to show us why it is necessary.

Agnes Marsala – 42 Cromwell Drive – Thanked Mayor Panfili for making the motion to table the ordinance. As far as traffic studies and to say it will never go off route is not right. It happens all the time. She would like an independent analysis of the Stormwater Management and things of that nature. She cares about this community.

Dawn Donahue - 79 Bordentown-Chesterfield Road – She is upset. She didn't want the pipeline but it is there. Everyone buys from warehouses and they are in someone's backyard. If a referendum does not pass, she doesn't want to lose the police department or public works. She has the biggest liability in front of her house with the pipeline.

Brian Kenny – 2 Greenview Drive – He stated his sign would say build it. People have mentioned traffic, taxes and police. He does not believe the warehouse will save the town from having to go to referendum. He believes it will postpone the referendum and at least keep the services we have. He does not believe there will be daily calls for police and fire. He has not heard from anyone directly next to the proposed warehouse and would like them to meet with the warehouse developer to address their concerns. If the warehouse benefits the majority of the town it should be built.

April Sette – 104 Bordentown-Georgetown Road – Her property is right next to the warehouse. She is not for the warehouse for many reasons but mainly because of the view. With economy the way it is, will it be a viable warehouse or be vacant.

This will impact the environment. She loves Chesterfield for the preserved land. She hopes the town is looking into cannabis as that could be a revenue stream.

Kathleen Hamilton – 232 Sykesville Road – She stated she is against the warehouse. She does not want Chesterfield divided. She believes the residents just want to be heard. She stated our fire company already helps out Mansfield. Mr. Sahol explained that all towns in Burlington County are part of a Mutual Aid Agreement for emergency services to help ensure adequate coverage.

Olena Feltes – 75A Old York Road – She thanked the committee for tabling the ordinance. Traffic is an issue. Previously had blinking lights at the two intersections of Old York Road and now two roundabouts. A warehouse will increase the truck traffic already present. She stated the town needs to look at other alternatives.

Ken Kalinowski – 102 Old York Road – He asked if there is any guarantee it would only be one warehouse. Mayor Panfili stated he would require that stipulation to be included in the developer's agreement.

Larry Kuser – 150 Bordentown-Georgetown Road – He is third generation here in Chesterfield and has been involved in many committees through the years including the Master Plan. He stated Chesterfield was one of the first in the country to do TDR. The property is in the AG zone. He stated the township should hire someone well versed in alternative agriculture uses. He hopes the property stays open to agriculture.

Sam Cannizzaro – 214 Recklesstown Way – He stated it is very important that everyone consider the warehouse. He is concerned that we may need to outsource police and fire. We need to consider ways that we can continue services for the long haul. There are other opportunities the warehouse provides. It is a perfect spot for a warehouse because it is near the highway. The public needs to understand the financial impact if we do not get the warehouse.

Jim Robb – 110 Bordentown-Georgetown Road – He stated that if they build the warehouse, he will have a sewer plant in his back yard. He asked if the traffic study is being compared to Robbinsville because the police are there every morning and afternoon to take care of the traffic. There is a water issue on Bordentown-Georgetown Road as it is now and water runs across his property through his front yard to the Old York County Club property.

Cynthia Hilton – 110 Bordentown-Georgetown Road – There is already a problem with settlement and her pool has settled due to the water table. She asked about the impervious coverage and the water issue previously and has not been given any information. She stated she was stonewalled on multiple levels. There are already traffic issues with cars speeding down her road. They already have issues with cars passing school buses when the stop bar is out and the police have been called to follow the bus. Tractor trailers are going to make it worse.

Lauren D'Amato – 73 Harker Road – She thanked the committee for tabling the ordinance and appreciates taking the time to get more answers. She stated that

in May 2020, the Planning Board discussed the area in need of rehabilitation at this property. She referred to the minutes of that meeting. She asked if the rehabilitation is to restore or improve an existing property and not for new development, then why are we here.

P.J. Oliver – 29 Waln Road – He stated a warehouse brings a lot of opportunities for the township. The elected officials are not going to do anything to hurt this community. It will bring more money into the township and allow for improvements to school, police and fire. The existing warehouse in Bordentown Township is closer to Chesterfield and doesn't have any impact on Chesterfield. He doesn't understand why it couldn't be just one way in and out to Route 206 and not impact anyone in Chesterfield. He would like to see everyone here successful and a thriving community and let the warehouse help make the community better than it already is now.

Sean Gunter - 73 Harker Road – Thanked everyone for coming out and listening to the residents. He does not agree that the developer should be giving us the impact statements.

Lee D'Amato – 257 Jacobstown-Arneytown Road, North Hanover, NJ – He stated the Developers do not care about us. It's all about the money. Cluster developments and warehouses are a problem. They are tapping into our water. The aquifers are drying up. Most of the people don't want this.

Paula Hessinger – 122 Davenport Drive – She is not for the warehouse. She asked if there was ever a survey or how many people want this. Mayor Panfili stated it was considered but would be challenged since it could not be put out without it being misleading one way or the other. She understands the warehouse could bring in money but believes it does not offset the negative impact.

Christina Hogan – 396 Chesterfield-Jacobstown Road – All she keeps hearing about is money and taxation and that is not a legal reason to approve a development.

Amanda Layendecker – 106 Bordentown-Georgetown Road – The developer came to their property and listened to their concerns but it would be seen from her property. The lights and brakes from the trucks would be a problem. The sewer plant would be right behind the area where her pool is. This is very personal to her. There are a lot of questions. She appreciates the committee taking the time to look into further but hopes it will be tabled for good.

Shamita Kumar – 39 Harness Way – She thanked the committee for putting the discussion on hold and having the patience to hear both sides. She is against the warehouse. Her bigger issue is the process. She stated the residents have been asking for information. Conversations should be had without the developer. It is time to communicate with the entire community in a meaningful dialogue. Otherwise, everyone thinks they know everything and we don't all have the facts and we point fingers at each other. She asked the committee to serve their role as a public official in their best capacity and not as individuals.

Dennis Guthrie – 452 Main Street – He asked if anyone on the committee has a vested interest in the warehouse. Mr. Gillespie explained that at the beginning of each meeting it is on the agenda for the Township Committee to indicate if they need to recuse themselves from any matter. No one recused themselves. Mr. Guthrie doesn't like the idea of a warehouse.

Tom Flaherty – 151 Chesterfield-Georgetown Road – He opposed the Old York Redevelopment Plan. He stated the warehouse does not reflect the rural character of Chesterfield. He wants a town hall meeting to address all of the pros and cons.

Brett Anderson – 62 Brookdale Way – He appreciates the committee is tabling the ordinance and considering the concerns of the residents. He stated that there was interest in a golf course opening at Old York and he was advised that one reached out to the township and indicated they were turned away by the township and the owners want to sell to the warehouse. He would like the traffic study to include the new warehouse approved in Bordentown at Route 206 and Old York Road. He believes that would increase the rating to an E and creates an additional risk at that intersection. He stated that Matrix and the new proposed warehouse in Bordentown do not have any turn restrictions into the properties. He is concerned the County would not approve that restriction. He stated there was no DEP violation until after the Township Committee sent the ANR to the Planning Board.

Glenn Layendecker – 106 Bordentown-Georgetown Road – He stated speeding will be an issue with 4,000 cars going to and from work. There is a lot of guessing and assumptions. Where are the facts that we can actually look at. It will have an impact on their property. If it is a bad decision for the town it will be in their back yard. He just wants it to be thoroughly investigated and feel comfortable that it is a good choice.

Stacy Verdino – 104 Bordentown-Georgetown Road - She just moved to Chesterfield in September and knew this was a possibility. She has not heard how it is a win for the town. She bought the house knowing how much the taxes were.

Dennis Cook – 8 Stevenson Lane – He has listened to both sides and wants to hear more from the Township Committee and where you stand. He stated you know the most and want to hear the pros and cons from each one.

Hearing no further comments, Mr. Liedtka made a motion seconded by Mr. Russo to close public comment. All were in favor.

Mike Russo stated he hasn't made up his mind either way about the warehouse. He has lived here for 47 years. His roots are deep as a 4<sup>th</sup> generation agricultural family. Their farm was one of the first preserved through the farmland preservation program. He understands the financial part of it. People moved here knowing the taxes were high. We don't have much commercial. His concern is for the individuals that it will directly effect.

Belinda Blazic stated it is was important to hear what everyone has to say. We need to be able to do a better job getting information out there. She heard concerns tonight about 4,000 vehicles and that is not the fact. She understands

that not knowing is scary for everyone. She is not sure what she can say and there are concerns that can be addressed. She needs to have a discussion with the committee and attorney to determine what we can legally answer at this time.

Denise Koetas-Dale made comments however they could not be heard due to technical difficulties. She had poor internet service. She will make her comments at a future meeting.

Mr. Liedtka made a motion seconded by Ms. Blazic to adjourn the meeting. All present were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:14 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Caryn M. Hoyer, RMC  
Township Clerk