

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

EAST GOSHEN TOWNSHIP

CHESTER COUNTY

1580 PAOLI PIKE, WEST CHESTER, PA 19380-6199

October 28, 2014

Dear Resident:

The purpose of this letter is to advise you that the Board of Supervisors will be making a decision about the Hershey Mill Dam at their meeting on November 18, 2014.

By way of background, in 2007 the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP) advised us that the Hershey Mill Dam did not meet dam safety requirements. Specifically, since the dam could not safely pass the design storm, during a major rain event the dam would be overtopped and the dam could fail.

The Township explored the various options available as well as confirming that the dam was classified correctly, the PA DEP had the authority to regulate the dam and there were only two options. The first was to modify the dam so it would safely pass the design storm. A number of alternatives were examined by the Township. The second option was to breach the dam.

In 2009 the Township applied for and was awarded a grant from U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for a stream restoration project that would breach the dam at no cost to the Township. On August 18, 2009 representatives of the Friends of the Hershey Mill Dam (Friends) and a large number of township residents attended the Board's meeting. The residents presented a petition with 425 signatures from individuals who wanted the Board to save the dam and urged the Supervisors to reject the NRCS project. The residents advised the Board that they would work with the Township to find and fund a solution that retained the dam. The Board acceded to the residents and declined the NRCS grant.

In 2012 after consultation with the Friends, the Township contracted with EB Walsh Associates to prepare plans for the construction of a secondary spillway at the dam. This spillway would allow the dam to safely pass the design storm and bring the dam into compliance. The plans were submitted to PA DEP and in July of this year a permit was issued. Since the project involves wetlands, a federal permit was also issued and that permit requires the Township to begin construction prior to June 2016.

Under state law, contracts for this type of project must be publicly bid. In order to ensure that we meet the time limit of the federal permit, the Township needs to start the bidding process in January 2016.

The Friends previously advised the Board that they need a “good” number about how much money they needed to raise before they begin soliciting funds for the dam. They also suggested that dredging the pond needed to be part of the project, since most of their supporters would like to see the pond returned to its original condition. EB Walsh has advised us that if the pond was dredged the dredged material could be used to create a small parking area along Hershey Mill Road.

The Friends would need to raise \$410,000 to construct the secondary spillway and an additional \$57,000 if they want to dredge the pond.

At their October meeting, the Board had some discussions with representatives from the Friends about their plans for fundraising. In light of the time limit in the federal permit the Township would need to have the required funds in hand by December 31, 2015, in order to start the bidding process in January 2016.

At the meeting on November 18, 2014 @ 7 pm, representatives from the Friends of the Hershey Mill Dam will be present to discuss their fundraising effort.

Information on the Hershey Mill Dam is available in the “Overview” tab on our web page (www.eastgoshen.org).

Please give me a call at 610-692-7171 or e-mail me at rsmith@eastgoshen.org if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rick".

Louis F. Smith, Jr.
Township Manager