

**EAST GOSHEN TOWNSHIP  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING  
1580 PAOLI PIKE  
TUESDAY, JUNE 25, 2019  
FINAL MINUTES**

**Present:** Chairwoman Janet Emanuel; Members Carmen Battavio, David Shuey and Mike Lynch; Township Manager Rick Smith; Assistant Township Manager and Finance Director Jon Altshul; Zoning Officer Mark Gordon; Township Solicitor Kristin Camp; Planning Commission Members Dan Daley, Ernie Harkness, Brad Giresi and John Stipe.

**Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance**

Janet called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and asked Mark to lead the pledge of allegiance.

**Moment of Silence**

Carmen called for a moment of silence to honor our troops and first responders.

**Recording**

Janet announced that the meeting was being livestreamed on our YouTube Channel.

**Presentation by Tom Comitta on Paoli Pike/Goshenville Traditional Neighborhood Development Overlay Districts**

Tom Comitta provided an overview of what a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) overlay is and pointed to several examples of TNDs in Chester County, including in Charlestown Township, Kennett Township, West Bradford Township and West Chester Borough. He explained that TNDs would provide the Township and property owners with development and redevelopment options along the Paoli Pike corridor.

David asked whether the proposed ordinance provided sufficient “carrots and sticks” to property owners to be effective. Tom responded that the proposed ordinance is relatively modest and doesn’t provide a lot of incentives for property owners to use the TND zoning. For example, he noted that the proposed ordinance does not allow for additional density or building height. Tom added that if the Goshen Village Shopping Center were ever to be redeveloped in the future, there could be potential for the use of the TND at that site. He added that there is no downside risk to the proposed TND ordinance, such as additional traffic congestion or storm water problems.

Carmen raised concerns about the cost of the Paoli Pike Trail. He also stated that he doesn’t envision many parcels along Paoli Pike getting redeveloped, and expressed reservations about the Township providing developers with opportunities for “unreasonable development”. He also added that he can’t envision East Goshen turning into a Malvern or West Chester Borough and that the free market should drive development rather than the Board of Supervisors doing so.

Mike stated that he agreed with Carmen's comments and that a TND seems forced when residents can already choose between various nearby convenient retail and pedestrian-friendly areas in Malvern, West Chester and Paoli. He added that he doesn't have a clear vision of a "Town Center" in East Goshen. Tom observed that there are several "mini enhancements" that can be undertaken along Paoli Pike that can be used as trial balloons before undertaking more meaningful improvements along the corridor in the future.

Janet stated that she disagreed with Carmen and Mike and that the goal of this project was never to turn East Goshen into another Malvern or West Chester or change the Township's essential character, but simply to make East Goshen more pedestrian friendly so that, for example, residents don't need to cross busy parking lots to get an ice cream while walking along the Paoli Pike Trail. She added that the Planning Commission had already dismissed any suggestions about adding density to the corridor.

David noted that he recently returned from a bike trip in rural Minnesota and that several towns along the bike trail would have disappeared but for the construction of the bike trail there, but now have simple amenities like ice cream shops and boutique stores. He also observed that the current shops and parcels along the eastern portion of Paoli Pike, including the abandoned Swiss Farms and the log business, are not his vision of what a Town Center should look like.

Carmen reiterated his concerns about the cost of the Paoli Pike Trail and suggested deferring decisions about the TND overlay until after the trail is completed. Janet stated that while many enhancements along the corridor can wait, she is concerned that if a property along the corridor were to be sold now, the new owner would be restricted by the current zoning. Mike stated that he has difficulty envisioning the market for commercial development changing in East Goshen in the immediate future. Carmen asked why the Township doesn't simply change the underlying zoning along the Paoli Pike corridor, to which Janet responded that doing so would immediately create a number of non-conforming parcels.

Tom provided some background on how the TND initiative began during the Comp Plan update several years ago and that the Comp Plan Committee had long discussions about how to nurture and improve the "asset of Goshenville".

### **Public Comment**

Dan Truitt, 1430 Grand Oak Lane, asked for clarification about what the TND would do. Janet explained that it would allow building closer to Paoli Pike, but not increase the allowable height of buildings or density. She added that the proposed ordinance has a number of offsets, so that the proposed ordinance would not allow a consistent brick wall of buildings along Paoli Pike. Mr. Truitt stated that as a former Delaware County resident, he doesn't want Chester County to become like Delaware County.

Mike encouraged residents to read the County's *Landscapes3* comprehensive plan and noted that Chester County anticipated 150,000 additional residents over the next several decades.

Mary Wilson, 406 Summit House, observed that the recent construction on and near Route 3 in Newtown Square is awful and that store front-style businesses are not viable businesses there. Janet noted that the Planning Commission had spoken with Neil Fisher from the Hankin Group about the types of businesses that would work along Paoli Pike, and he indicated that restaurants would work well there, but probably not boutique shops. Ms. Wilson also stated that she doesn't want to walk along the Paoli Pike Trail.

Ernie asked the Board how they would define a "Town Center" in East Goshen. Carmen differentiated between a town center in Malvern or West Chester and a self-contained unified district. Carmen preferred the unified district model in East Goshen. Janet observed that the unified district model would only work if you have a single large undeveloped parcel, but that that's not practical in East Goshen. Ernie then asked how East Goshen would get a town center. Mike noted that there are currently 1,600 apartments under construction in West Whiteland, and that while the new construction is impressive, he wouldn't want to live there. Ernie asked whether the Paoli Pike Corridor Master Plan should be changed to reflect the Board's current thinking. David observed that based on his discussions with members of the local business community, businesses want connectivity between the different areas of the Township, so that office workers are better connected to restaurants, coffee shops and professional services. In his mind, a town center would meet the demand of both residents and businesses. He noted that many residents are resistant to trails, but that once they're built everyone wants a connection to them.

Michelle Truitt, 1430 Grand Oak Lane, asked whether the Goshen Corporate Park would be a good location for the town center if buildings there become unoccupied in the future. Janet explained that the Township would need to completely change the zoning to allow that and, moreover, that the current configuration of the buildings would mean that residents would need to do a lot of walking in order to get around it. Carmen agreed with Janet that this was a very unlikely location for a town center. Rick asked Ms. Truitt how she was defining a town center, to which Ms. Truitt responded that it was something self-contained and not located along a major road. Rick indicated that the existing Paoli Pike-Boot Road-Route 352 triangle was the town center.

Tom suggested that if the Board is uncomfortable with the proposed TND ordinance, it could "change the map" and limit it to the area around the Goshen Village Shopping Center. Janet raised concerns that changing the map to focus only on the shopping center could preclude future improvements to the log business property if that changes ownership.

Alison Joyce, 704 Red Maple, stated that the trail should have trees along it, not just shops. Janet responded that tree plantings are part of the trail plan. Ms. Joyce also stated that “the more you build, the more you build”, meaning that allowing for more building along Paoli Pike will beget additional construction in the Township. Janet noted that the Township is essentially built out, so there weren’t many places left to build. David invited her to attend a Sustainability Committee meeting.

Brian Sweet, 646 Meadow Drive, stated that he supports the plan, but that the Township needs a vision about Paoli Pike and should not rely on the free market to dictate what the corridor should look like.

Alexandra Perrot, 1416 Grand Oak Lane, stated that she opposes the trail, wants to know how the Township is paying for it, and doesn’t want the Township to look like West Chester or Kennett Square. Jon explained that the engineering costs for the trail are being paid with the proceeds of the 2017 General Obligation bonds, which have a AAA-rating, and that the construction costs are being borne by local, state and federal grants. Carmen observed that improving walkability in East Goshen will increase property values, as walkability is important to the next generation of home buyers.

Alisa Moser, 1608 Herron Lane, stated that she likes living in East Goshen much more than the congested Main Line communities. She also raised concerns about the Goshen Village Shopping Center and about how viable redevelopment would be there given its parking limitations.

Carmen stated that he wants to do something, but that he prefers taking “baby steps” with improvements to Paoli Pike. He added that the Township needs to be careful not to over-extend itself.

Janet stated that the purpose of tonight’s meeting was to gather information from Tom Comitta about the proposed ordinance and that if the Board decides to move forward it would convene another meeting.

David made a motion to adjourn at 7:47. Mike seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Jon Altshul*  
*Recording Secretary*