

**PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING  
JULY 11, 2019**

A special meeting of the Plainfield Township Planning Commission was held on Thursday, July 11, 2019 at the Plainfield Township Volunteer Fire Company Banquet Facility located at 6480 Sullivan Trail, Wind Gap, PA, 18091.

Chairman, Paul Levits, called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.

The Pledge of Allegiance was performed.

**ROLL CALL:**

The following Commissioners answered roll call: Chairman, Paul Levits, Vice Chairman, Robert Simpson, Robin Dingle and Terry Kleintop. Mr. Jeffrey Beavan was excused from the meeting.

Also present were Secretary, Paige Stefanelli, Township Manager, Tom Petrucci, Zoning Officer, John Lezoche, Solicitor, David Backenstoe, Esq., Special Environmental Legal Counsel, John Embick, Esq., Special Environmental Engineering Consultant, Michael Brunamonti, P.E., Alternate Township Engineer, Robert Lynn, P.E. and Special Environmental/Wetlands Consultant, Mr. Jason Smith, PWS.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

No minutes were to be approved at this time.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- 1. GRAND CENTRAL SANITARY LANDFILL, INC. (PEN ARGYL ROAD, PEN ARGYL, PA 18072) SLATE BELT HEAT RECOVERY CENTER PROPOSED LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN:**

Township Manager, Tom Petrucci provided an overview on the current status of the plan review. He noted the applicant has granted an Extension of Time through August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019. Mr. Petrucci stated that the Planning Commission is currently holding August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 as the upcoming meeting date. At this meeting, the Planning Commission will make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors. On August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2019, the Board of Supervisors will review the proposed submission regarding the project. He noted that members of the Planning Commission have not had a lot of time to go through all of the information that has been provided by the applicant.

In reference to the Nuisance Mitigation Control Plan, the plan requires an enforcement process. This plan has not been finalized at this time. Another remaining topic of discussion is the Pen Argyl Road access. There are still items of concern in regards to filling Sedimentation Basin #2. At this time, there is a variance required for the setbacks and waivers would be required for the process. The Township and applicant have not come to an agreement regarding the variance. A Traffic Impact Study was also requested on behalf of the Planning Commission. Such testing has not been completed to the Planning Commission's satisfaction to date. Environmental Legal Counsel, Attorney John Embick, has provided the Township with a memorandum in response to Attorney Elizabeth Witmer's letter. Mr. Petrucci stated that the final list of conditions has not been finalized to date.

Mr. Jim Hecht provided a PowerPoint on their approach to protecting the ground waters. Mr. Hecht's comments include comments from their Hydrologist. Mr. Hecht stated that they will be providing several layers of protection. The presentation dated July 14, 2019 by Mr. Jim Hecht is hereby incorporated for reference in these minutes as though it were more fully set forth at length as "Exhibit A". Mr. Hecht discussed the flow of water and possible change of characteristics into an industrial flow. This is the reasoning for the applicant obtaining an NPDES Permit. The applicant does not intend to have any issues. Mr. Hecht stated that they had engineers do a comprehensive review of the current design. They have added in a treatment process along with regular testing of materials brought in to the facility. Mr. Tom Pullar reviewed the latest letter from EarthRes regarding Sedimentation Basin #2. The EarthRes Review Letter dated June 7, 2019 by Mr. Tom Pullar is hereby incorporated for reference in these minutes as though it were more fully set forth at length as "Exhibit B". Mr. Pullar stated that the applicant will be installing two groundwater wells which will provide the ability to detect any possible issues with local creeks/bodies of water. Currently, there are 20 existing groundwater wells around the site which are tested. Mr. Hecht added that they would like to perform precautionary testing which will provide the most effective and timely response to any issues.

In reference to the PowerPoint presentation by Mr. Hecht, Mr. Robert Simpson questioned where this process is documented within their application. Mr. Tom Pullar from EarthRes stated that this information is part of the Site Monitoring Plans that were submitted. This information was submitted in the Grand Central Sanitary Landfill Minor Modification Permit and NPDES. Ms. Dingle questioned whether there are any other parameters being used for testing including anything that addresses pharmaceuticals or other hazardous chemicals. Mr. Hecht stated that the applicant would know whether there is an issue based on other testing parameters and the levels that those parameters will

show. Mr. Pullar added that there are action levels and limits that need to be met, otherwise, corrective action will need to be taken. This includes drinking water levels. The applicant has various protocols that need to be followed immediately following problematic testing. The applicant requested the Planning Commission to thoroughly review the procedure proposed which will be implemented on site and come back with any questions or comments based on the submission.

Mr. Terry Kleintop stated if any contaminants were to reach the basin, he does not understand how the applicant will handle the issue once it has reached the basin. The applicant stated that groundwater and basin remediation will take place in the event of an issue. Mr. Pullar stated that because they are unsure of the issues that could arise, they do not have answers to the remediation process. In the event of an issue, they will be able to address it at that time.

Ms. Dingle requested that the applicant speak with representatives from BCM about their latest submission in order to discuss any final issues. Mr. Hecht noted that there are a lot of parameters put in place with both incentives and laws which motivate the applicant to remediate an issue as soon as possible. The BCM Engineers review letter dated July 9, 2019 by Mr. Michael Brunamonte and Mr. Philip Gray, Jr. is hereby incorporated for reference in these minutes as though it were more fully set forth at length as "Exhibit C". Mr. Pullar stated that areas which contribute to stormwater runoff includes the employee parking lot and a truck maneuvering area. This area is very limited. Mr. Brunamonte noted one concern he has is having additional parameters in the possible event of a hydraulic issue. Mr. Simpson requested extra testing parameters be put in place and have such revisions submitted to the Township for proper documentation/review. Mr. Brunamonte will compile all information that has been previously discussed. This review letter will include all parameters to be tested.

Mr. Simpson questioned what would happen in the event of serious rainfall and materials were to seep into the basin. Mr. Pullar stated to remedy the situation, it would depend because they have multiple different containment methods. Testing will be sent out to the appropriate labs. He added that there will be many incremental steps that need to take place. Post construction stormwater plans that were submitted show testing parameters and the duration of those testing procedures. Mr. Pullar will submit a plan similar to the presentation which should address the remaining comments within the latest review letter from BCM Engineers.

Mr. Pullar stated that the Air Quality Application is currently still under review. This subject matter will be part of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) hearing discussion which is set to be held on August 12, 2019. There was a Minor Modification

Application submitted on behalf of the Grand Central Sanitary Landfill. The DEP has since then issued a deficiency letter in response to the Minor Modification submission. The applicant is in the process of preparing a response to the DEP. The applicant has also received a deficiency letter from the DEP regarding their General Permit submission for processing of biosolids. Mr. Pullar stated that they are currently in the process of addressing those comments as well.

Ms. Racey stated that they can create one document that addresses all information, although, this information is regulated under multiple DEP permits. Mr. Simpson requested that the Planning Commission receive a copy of the comments from the DEP once administered. Mr. Pullar stated that the Township has been copied on all correspondence with respect to the DEP. Ms. Dingle added that as this facility ages, the potential for possible leaks, cracks, failures, etc. increases. These issues can be addressed both now and later through vigorous testing. Ms. Dingle requested that testing be done quarterly with no termination of those testing parameters.

Chairman, Paul Levits, stated that there is a large amount of scattered information. He also noted a communication issue between Plainfield Township's consultants and the applicant's consultants. He noted that there needs to be better coordination between the applicant and consultants in order to move forward with the review.

Mr. Michael Brunamonte discussed his latest review letter (reference "Exhibit C") and what issues are still remaining at this time. Chairman, Paul Levits, stated that stormwater runoff is not the right terminology within this application. He added that the nature of this project is biosolids and the water runoff is extremely different than traditional stormwater. Monitoring should be increased especially with the age of the plant when it progresses. Mr. Kleintop expressed concerns regarding digested and undigested biosolids. He stated that whichever the mix may be, there will be many potential problematic issues with this. Ms. Racey stated that the stormwater does not come in contact with the waste. She added that where biosolids are in contact, there are specific treatment provisions put in place. The only stormwater is located on a regular commercial parking lot. She noted that the monitoring provisions being requested by the Township are over and above what the DEP is requiring. Mr. Tom Pullar stated that in reference to the background testing for the wells, the applicant will be proposing a year of monitoring prior to the startup of the facility. Mr. Brunamonte noted that the latest comments from the DEP in reference to the groundwater monitoring do not alleviate his concerns. The added testing parameters were to alleviate his concerns with respect to the drinking water in Plainfield Township. The applicant agreed to undergo groundwater monitoring for drinking water standards. The VOC parameters need to be discussed further. Mr. Pullar stated that the point of monitoring is that you are testing for indicators, not everything that can be possibly tested

for. There are remaining items on the review letter that need to be addressed. Any issues will be addressed at next meeting.

The Planning Commission agreed that if macroinvertebrate testing is to be done on Little Bushkill Creek, this testing should also be performed on Waltz Creek. The applicant is not in agreement with this statement as they believe that additional testing will not provide additional protection. Mr. Kleintop noted that monitoring has changed with Grand Central Sanitary Landfill. He added that some testing parameters were removed and some were added. Mr. Kleintop questioned the applicant on whether it would be possible to extend the testing on Little Bushkill Creek further down. Mr. Pullar stated that Grand Central has been strictly going by their permit requirements. Mr. Pullar added that this may be something they may consider, however, they are currently following the plan in place. Mr. Kleintop stated that there are many gaps within each testing area. This issue should be addressed. Mr. Kleintop noted that there have not been any mayflies found in any of the locations. Ms. Dingle stressed the importance of adding Waltz Creek to the macroinvertebrate testing. Mr. Brunamonte did not have any further comments at this time as further discussion with the applicant is needed. Mr. Brunamonte requested copies of the responses to DEP Deficiency Letter and the Waste Processing Permit.

Mr. Pullar noted that the applicant is still reviewing the letter received by Mr. Phil Gray. He added that they are in agreement with the first part of the review. The applicant's geologist needs to discuss with the Township's geologist the remaining items of the review letter. Mr. Simpson noted that the whole objective is to review the impact the facility may have on groundwater. He added that there are many factors put into play when the basin is proposed to be filled with respect to the groundwater.

Chairman, Paul Levits, held a break from 8:50 P.M. to 9:03 P.M.

Mr. Levits noted that the applicant needs to have better communication with the Township's professional consultants. Mr. Simpson questioned about the trucks with respect to complaints of smell. Ms. Racey stated if complaints are received, they will work on process control with that vehicle and there are numerous chemicals that can assist with various issues. She added that there are many options to work with in order to alleviate/fix issues. Mr. Simpson questioned whether a contract can be cancelled based on odor issues. Ms. Racey noted that they would work with the contract holder to alleviate any possible issues prior to revoking a contract. She added that there is not a clean answer for every situation. However, there are a series of mechanisms that take place in how an issue is resolved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Peter Layman-** Pen Argyl Borough's Solicitor, Attorney Layman, complimented the Planning Commission on their review. He understands the groundwater issues and the importance as to why the Township needs to enforce these issues. With respect to the contracts between Synagro and their material suppliers, he agrees that the Township should have the opportunity to review those contracts. He added that the Township needs to hold authority over issues such as odor nuisances. Ms. Racey noted that this is the reasoning for a Nuisance Mitigation Control Plan. Attorney Layman noted that if a repeat offender cannot be mitigated, he would like to see the possibility of revoking the contract with that supplier. Ms. Racey stated that the Control Plan is set up to alleviate the odor source. Attorney Layman would like to see clear and actionable Nuisance Mitigation Control Plan. He does not feel the Control Plan addresses all the issues at hand.

**Tom Carlo-** Mr. Carlo questioned about the presentation that was provided and the possible contaminants that the material will bring in for stormwater. Mr. Brian Cataldo stated there are many testing areas on site that will be able to identify if/when/where an issue is occurring. Mr. Carlo questioned whether the treatment process thoroughly cleans the trucks/trailers after it disposes of the material at the facility. Mr. Cataldo noted that they put in a lot of effort for clean processing. Trucks and trailers will stay at the facility until they are at capacity, however, the time frame for when it reaches capacity will vary depending on the source of material. Ms. Racey noted that there may be trucks at the treatment facility that may stay overnight, although, they do not prefer to have trucks sitting for long periods of time at the facility. Mr. Carlo is concerned about the summer months with respect to the trucks and the possible odors associated with them. Ms. Racey stated that the Nuisance Mitigation Control Plan is set up to address those issues.

**Gerald Lennon-** Mr. Lennon asked Mr. Scott Perin how many sludge trucks are coming into Grand Central Sanitary Landfill on a daily basis. Mr. Perin stated approximately 10 to 15 trucks a day are brought in. Mr. Lennon questioned how the trucks will be identified as Synagro trucks versus Landfill trucks. Ms. Racey stated the PA DEP requires specific labeling on stickers for trucks to be easily identified. Most trucks will be contracted out. After filling of the vehicles, they will be immediately covered for potential odor. Mr. Lennon noted that the sky was red the other day and there was a plume on the stack at the Green Knight facility. He added that it was over 100 feet high. He believes it was from 3<sup>rd</sup> turbine rolling into the sky. After performing some research, Mr. Lennon found that there are other gasses that are found in methane along with other chemicals/pollutants. He stated that this mixture of chemicals/pollutants could be very dangerous.

**Don Moore-** Mr. Moore thanked the Planning Commission for their review. Mr. Moore does not see all remaining issues being resolved by the next meeting. He questioned whether the DEP or DRBC indicated at any time that Synagro would not receive approval to dispose waste water into Waltz Creek or Little Bushkill Creek. Mr. Jim Hecht noted that they did not receive any indication of that. Additionally, the applicant has not spoken to the DRBC. In regards to odorous sludge, Synagro can take the sludge back to the generator itself or have a backup facility/area that they can take it to. Mr. Moore questioned whether it was discussed with the DEP that this facility may be the first of many proposals. Mr. Hecht does not believe anything with respect to Mr. Moore's question was discussed. Mr. Moore also questioned if it would be easier to permit a second or third facility if and when this facility were to be approved with respect to the permit process. Mr. Hecht stated that the process would not be any easier, however, it would be more defined of what is required.

Mr. Moore also discussed the trail easement that is currently used as a haul road by Waste Management. He noted that he does not like that this haul road is used by multiple companies/facilities in the area aside from Waste Management. Mr. Moore referenced meeting minutes from a Board of Supervisors meeting during the time of discussing the possible easement. He stated that Waste Management is treating the easement as if they own the portion of land, however, they do not own this land. He added that the intent of the easement has been clearly stated within the minutes. He noted that there is currently an Official Map review underway by the Board of Supervisors which Waste Management has expressed great disapproval of. They noted at the last Board meeting that they are trying to protect their rights but the Township is attempting to protect their own rights.

Mr. Moore mentioned the Waste Water Facility by Synagro located within Waterbury, Connecticut. He noted that there are many legal issues that have been brought against them until additional water testing parameters were added. Mr. Moore stated that he is only aware of one place in the country that uses pellets as fuel. He added that there are not many people to burn the pellets. He believes that this facility proposal should be heard by the Environmental Board. He stated that at the next DEP meeting, there will not be an opportunity for Q & A and Mr. Roger Bellis will likely not be present at the meeting.

**Millie Beahn-** Ms. Beahn noted that the meetings have been going on for about 3 years. She is concerned about what is going on in the community. She added that Waste Management has done good things in the community but it is clear that their intent is to also protect themselves. Ms. Beahn does not see the point in having a Synagro facility in Plainfield Township as there is no benefit to having them here. She noted that once damage has been done to our area and especially our waters, it is really hard to correct the

issue. She added that anything Synagro does at their facility puts the entire Township at risk. Ms. Beahn does not want the Synagro facility located in Plainfield Township. She also stated that no one truly knows whether the product is safe. She is very concerned because the Township residents will need to deal with the aftermath of the facility. She requested that further information be provided regarding the process for eliminating contamination once it has occurred to the groundwater and local water sources such as Little Bushkill Creek and Waltz Creek.

**Justin Huratiak** - Concerning the Nuisance Mitigation Control Plan, Mr. Huratiak questioned what would happen if the applicant cannot contractually limit the product. Ms. Racey stated that if they were to shut down, they would need to find somewhere else to take the product. Mr. Huratiak reread PennDOT's review of the main access for the facility. He questioned who would be responsible if Waste Management allows all this truck traffic through the lots and they have a spill of their own sludge on the haul road. He added that there should be some type of agreement in place holding Waste Management accountable for those issues. Mr. Huratiak stated that this facility is ultimately an extension of Waste Management. He does not want to see the various facilities in this area pointing fingers at each other the second there is an odor issue as this will not get anything addressed.

**Howard Klein**- Mr. Klein noted that the Planning Commission is doing a great job with the review process. He noted that with the Waste Management trucks, it's impossible to decipher between sludge trucks and garbage trucks as they are not individually labeled. Mr. Klein questioned how the trucks will be identified from Synagro and how they will determine where the sludge came from if there were to be an issue. Ms. Racey stated that each individual truck will have an identification number on it which will provide all of that information.

**Alan Stangel**- Mr. Stangel questioned about the conveyors and whether there will be initial or final product. Ms. Racey stated that there will be both products that will be approximately 20-25% solid. The product will resemble wet dirt. She added that the product is made into a dried pellet which can be used as a fuel alternative or as a fertilizer. She stated that the EPA and DEP have set standards for the specific regulations and limits on this product. She noted that this product is traditionally less costly than commercial fertilizer. Mr. Stangel noted he is concerned about the presence of heavy metals in the material.

**ACTION: Motion was made by Robert Simpson and seconded by Robin Dingle to table the Grand Central Sanitary Landfill, Inc. Slate Belt Heat Recovery Center Proposed Land Development Plan for the next available meeting date. *Prior to the***

*vote, Chairman, Paul Levits, asked if there were any comments from the governing body or the public. Motion approved. Vote 4-0.*

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Having no further business to come before the Planning Commission, motion was made by Robert Simpson and seconded by Robin Dingle to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved. Vote 4-0.

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Paige Stefanelli  
Planning Commission, Secretary  
Plainfield Township