

Amity Twp. supervisors approve sewer contract

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The Amity Township Board of Supervisors awarded on May 16 a pump station improvement contract to Barasso Excavation, Fleetwood, for \$52,190, to install flow meters at the pump stations at Lake Drive and Hilti's Lane.

Public Works Foreman Alistair Howell-Clarke said he has used a backhoe to clear two-thirds of a path and a turnaround at the Monocacy Hill Recreation Area, Geiger Road.

He said recent rains prevented him from going any further but anticipates that a complete path will be finished soon.

The path will allow township personnel to remove the large rocks that could prevent emergency vehicles from reaching the top of the hill for extinguishing forest fires or rescuing injured hikers.

"We're trying to nip it in the bud and the trail should be constructed for things other than fire," said Board Chairman Robert R. Yanos, adding that members of the Monocacy Hill Conservation Association was scheduled to remove brush along the trail on May 19 and 20.

The township's first draft of a map for the proposed Village Commercial (VC) zoning district for Amityville/Weavertown Road has been sent back to the drawing board.

Supervisor Richard L. Gokey said he is opposed to the VC area extending west to the New Rhoads Transportation, Inc., 96 Weavertown Lane, east to an existing home occupation fruit and flower business and also a tree farm on Pine Forge Road and south to a home occupation accounting business on Route 662.

"I will not vote for this change in zoning," said Gokey, adding, "it is not laid out right. This is just special interest - shooting it all the way down to Geiger Road - and I'll never vote for that. I have no problem with VC, but not all stretched like that. You're including residential areas that want to remain [low density] residential."

He said VC zoning should be confined to the Amityville area.

Supervisor and Planning Commission member Terry L. Jones said it was the commission's intent to extend the zoning line to the existing non-conforming home occupations in LDR and change them to conforming uses.

Yanos said the board's original intent was to change the existing, non-conforming uses to conforming for Vincenzo's Restaurant, 1333 Old Swede Road, and Salon 256, 1056 Old Swede Road.

He added that extending the VC zoning line to Merritt's Antiques, Inc., 1860 Weavertown Road, and to Rhoads would also allow for future new commercial uses at both of those locations.

"I'm not completely sold on it [the map], but I'm waiting to see what the definitions are -- the language for the VC area -- before I am totally in favor of this," said Yanos.

The board is also contemplating whether to increase the required restaurant parking lot size from one space for every two seats to one space for every 1.5 seats.

It asked township Engineer John Weber to draft some recommendations for restaurant and possibly take-out parking lot sizes.

The issue arose from Vincenzo's Restaurant and Take-Out that is very popular and has a shortage of parking spaces despite its compliance with the township ordinance.

Supervisor Paul R. Weller said he doesn't know if he wants to change the ordinance for one business that got lucky and got busy.

A majority of board members said they are opposed to a new Use and Occupancy Inspection Ordinance that would apply to property transfers or rentals.

Jones said inspections would help ensure that properties are compliant and safe for occupancy, and uphold the responsibility of second class townships to protect the health, safety and welfare of all of its residents.

Inspection items would include that sump pumps are not connected into the sewer line, working smoke detectors are installed on every level of a home, that GFI outlets are installed in kitchens and bathrooms, and that gas ranges have a shut-off valve.

Gokey said there should be some kind of minimal inspection before a sale or property transfer.

Yanos said it should all stay between the buyer and the seller.