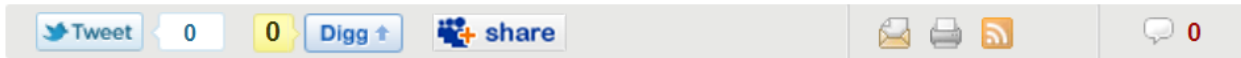


Amity supervisors discuss AWIP developments

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The Amity Township Board of Supervisors clarified at their May 4 meeting their involvement with the owners of four large and 12 smaller land parcels that comprise the area on north Limekiln Road that has been rezoned for the Amity Western Industrial Park.

Board Chairman Robert R. Yanos said the township has not hired a real estate broker for AWIP, as incorrectly indicated by an article headline in the May 4 edition of The Southern Berks News.

That article reported on the April 25 public meeting where JG Petrucci Co, Inc., a corporate developer based in Bethlehem, Lehigh County, and Asbury, N.J., was invited to Amity Township to discuss their “perspectives of developing” the AWIP site.

At the end of that meeting, James Vozar, Petrucci project executive, said the company is “ready to sign ‘loose’ land agreements with [AWIP] landowners in order [for Petrucci] to begin marketing the four large and 12 smaller land parcels.”

The May 4 article didn’t indicate that any of the properties were owned by Amity Township, nor that any of its boards had taken any action or that they were prepared to act in any way following Petrucci’s readiness to sign the loose agreements.

“This is a touchy, delicate situation with the landowners,” said Yanos. “We don’t want to infringe on someone’s property. The land is not owned by Amity Township. Petrucci showed us, and the property owners, what the possibilities are and Amity Township supervisors didn’t take any action nor do we intend to.”

The township rezoned the properties last December from low density residential to planned business office and industrial district.

Two landowners in the AWIP area proposed the idea a couple of years ago to ensure that their land parcels (zoned LDR at the time) would not ever contain houses, but hopefully instead industry that could improve the township’s tax base.

Property owners in the Daniel Boone School District currently pay \$2,842 for every \$100,000 of assessed property value; the school district’s millage rate is 28.42 mills.

Approximately 65 percent of the school district’s revenue is from property taxes.

Amity’s Economic Development Advisory Committee arranged the April 25 meeting with Petrucci at the township building.

“This could be a mutual opportunity for Petrucci, how we could help out as developers,” said Vozar, adding, “If we’re going to stick our neck out, we want some kind of control -- some loose agreements with the landowners.”

He said the agreements would include Petrucci establishing the property value and having the option to buy, build, and sell with contingencies.

“It is a good time to market the AWIP site,” said Vozar. “There is percolation in the market, low federal [lending] rates, and there is money out there. We’re in a returning market and the economy is picking up a bit. It is important to try to offer the nicest package available [to prospective developers]. The first thing companies ask is ‘what are you giving me?’ Once you get something built on the site, people realize that it is a viable site.”