

Upper Pottsgrove Municipal Complex Memo to Mae Axelrod of  
Natural Lands

On behalf of Upper Pottsgrove Township, thanks for sharing the announcement that Oliver Bass (President of Natural Lands) is sending to The Mercury news outlet regarding the new municipal complex. The offices of CMC Engineering are Land Planners, Landscape Architects and Civil Engineers that have been hired by Upper Pottsgrove Township to manage the site development of the new municipal complex. We've been asked to respond to Natural Lands concerns regarding the location of the new municipal complex.

Locating the new municipal complex at the Smola Open Space Tract was a decision that the Board of Commissioners didn't take lightly. Many factors, including gently sloping terrain, ease of vehicular access to major roadways in emergency situations, minimal disturbance to neighbors/environment and access to public utilities are just a few of the factors that were considered when selecting the new municipal complex site. Of the 35.2 acres that comprises the Smola Tract, only 1.2 acres of land (just over 3% of the total property area) will be used for the new municipal complex (administrative/police/public works facilities, including surface parking). The proposed municipal complex will NOT utilize 10 acres as has been continuously and purposefully misrepresented to the public. The proposed municipal complex is similar in size to the LenFest Center that the Natural Lands built at the ChesLen Preserve, which is currently being marketed for commercial use by hosting private banquets.

Further, prior to choosing this ground for the municipal complex back in 2020, the Township reviewed any restrictions which would potentially impact the proposed municipal use. Both the prior solicitor and the current solicitor opined that the property could be used for the municipal complex. The land is not preserved open space which again is a fact that has been continuously and purposefully misrepresented to the public. It is municipal owned land and the proposal is to use it for a municipal purposes, to stop the current business use of the property, and to make the ground more usable by the public. Currently, the public cannot access the ground as it is being utilized by a farmer and there is no safe access to the land. The proposed municipal complex will eliminate the current business use and will provide safe parking and access areas immediately. Eventually, the plan is to create a network of trails on the land so that the public will have full access to the property.

The proposed municipal complex is divided in half between two watersheds, the Manatauny and Sprogels Run. Stormwater management facilities will be designed for the new facility to manage runoff according to Municipal Land Development standards. The new stormwater facilities would encourage infiltration, manage flooding, and improve water quality. Farm fields are notorious point source polluters for watersheds. 1.2 acres of land will no longer shed fertilizers, pesticides and silt directly into the two watersheds. The minimal amount of fertilizer that will be used on the new municipal complex site will be managed by the new stormwater facilities, reducing pollution. 1.2 acres of heavily managed land that would normally shed water and soil

directly into the surrounding watersheds will not do so as the rainwater will be stored and released/infiltrated over a 72-hour period, reducing flooding.

Relocating the police/public works (PW) facilities to the Smola Tract will allow the Township to improve upon the amenities that are located at Heather Place Park, which directly abuts the current police/PW facility. Allowing the old 0.8 acre police/PW facility to be converted into a recreation/open space use will offset most of the development area being proposed for the Smola Tract while expanding the recreation amenities in this area.

Thanks for your time and please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Aloysius Gryga, PLA

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