

**COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
PLYMOUTH MEETING, PA 19462
MINUTES, SEPTEMBER 28, 2005**

Vice President Johnson convened the special joint meeting of the Colonial Board of School Directors and the Conshohocken Borough Council at 7:08 p.m. in the Board Room of Colonial Elementary School on September 28, 2005.

School Board Members Present: Gary Johnson, Hope Luken, Susan Moore, Pascal Scoles, Steven Slutsky, William Ryan and Mitch Zimmer.

School Board Members Absent: Marc Orlow and Tom Davis.

School District Staff and Representatives Attending: Vincent F. Cotter, Superintendent; James M. Bell, Director of Support Services/Board Secretary; Joseph P. Bickleman, Chief Financial Officer/Board Treasurer and Megan Duryea and Rob Walper, Attorneys, Fox Rothschild for the Solicitor.

Borough Council Members Attending: Vincent M. Totaro, Jr., President; Sandra Caterbone, Deborah Stovall and Jack Coll.

Borough Council Members Absent: Robert C. Stokely, David Supplee and Peter J. Cianci.

Borough Staff and Representatives Attending: John J. Heleniak, Borough Manager, Richard M. Connelly, Solicitor and Pearl Buckett, Council Secretary.

Also in Attendance: Ed Campbell, Attorney representing O'Neill Properties.

Mr. Johnson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Campbell provided information on the proposed Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district that O'Neill Properties had requested in connection with the development of property along the Schuylkill River in Conshohocken Borough. He reported that the developer needed the TIF to do the project and cited the remediation of environmental concerns at the site and the need to build above the flood plain as the primary reasons why the property would be expensive to develop. He estimated that the developer would have to spend \$20,000,000 to "put a shovel in the ground". Mr. Campbell used a plot plan to highlight the work proposed on the site in two phases. He focused on the first phase, the development of residential condominiums and modest retail space above two-story garages. He noted that borough building codes permitted the building of garages on the flood plain and that they would be the base upon which the residential and commercial space would be built. He highlighted planned development of the riverfront proper as a recreational site open to the community. He also noted the borough's interest in using the TIF to address infra-structure issues such as road and bridge improvements and an upgrade of the borough sewer plant. Mr. Totaro, President of Borough Council, outlined the benefits of using TIF funding to cover related infrastructure upgrades and the possibility of Villanova University having a boat house on site. Mrs. Moore noted the district's interest in access to

a boat house for crew at PWHS. She and other board members sought and received reassurance that the site would have a loop road that could handle school buses that might have to access the site to pick up students.

Mr. Campbell noted that, although the finance expert at O'Neill Properties was unable to attend the meeting, Mr. Campbell was prepared to provide some general information on the financial impact of the TIF on the district and the borough. He reported that the final assessment of the developed property was estimated at \$476,000,000 and the current assessment was approximately \$3,000,000. He noted that the district and the borough would eventually benefit from any real estate taxes levied as a result of the increased assessment on property owners and any earned income taxes that might come from residents of the condominiums. He noted that the earned income taxes would not be part of the TIF funding. Mr. Campbell also reported that a major investor in the project was likely to be the NY State Pension fund. He indicated that the developer was already working with the borough on the necessary approvals for development of the tract and hoped to start work on the project next year and open during the first half of 2007. Ms. Luken stated that she understood what the borough hoped to gain from the project and asked how the project would benefit district students. Mr. Campbell noted the potential taxes that the district could receive and the low number of students that would likely enroll from the development. He offered the district the opportunity to visit the site and discuss project components that could benefit district students and staff and the community at large. Mr. Slutsky asked about the process for reaching an agreement on the TIF. Mr. Campbell requested a couple of board and borough appointees to join with the developer and the county in drafting a proposal for TIF funding that would come back for district and borough review and action. Ms. Duryea and Mr. Walper had some questions on hiring an independent appraiser for the property and on the developer paying district legal costs associated with TIF participation. The issue of an independent appraiser was deferred to a later meeting. The developer acknowledged the district's request for reimbursement of its legal costs.

Public Comment: None.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Orlow adjourned the meeting at 8:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James M. Bell
Board Secretary