

SOUTH STRABANE TOWNSHIP  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

October 3, 2019

**APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

The Planning Commission of South Strabane Township held a Regular Meeting on Thursday, October 3, 2019 at 7:00 P.M. in the Mae C. Reynolds Meeting Room of the Municipal Building, 550 Washington Road, Washington, PA 15301.

Present: Chairperson Joe Kopko, Vice-Chair Fred Pozzuto, Mr. Jay Gordon, Ms. Paula Phillis, and Mr. William Ursic

Not Present: Mr. Thomas Steele and Ms. Susan Bayard

Also present: Assistant to the Township Manager Patrick Conners, Township Solicitor Chris Furman, Township Engineer Scott Groom, and Mr. Michael Sherrieb

Chair Kopko led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

A list of 7 visitors is on file at the Municipal Building

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

No public comments were received.

**APPROVAL OF PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES – September 3, 2019**

Assistant to the Township Manager Conners reported that he had omitted the September Planning Commission Regular Meeting minutes from the provided materials. He stated they would be provided for review at the November 7<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of the Planning Commission.

**CONSIDERATION OF A CONDITIONAL USE APPLICATION PURSUANT TO SECTION 245-168.1 OF THE SOUTH STRABANE TOWNSHIP ZONING CODE CONCERNING A PROPOSED FRESHWATER IMPOUNDMENT FACILITY FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 50 MEADOWS VIEW ROAD (MUNCE WELL PAD) IN THE A-1 ZONING DISTRICT**

Chair Kopko read aloud the Agenda item and inquired if a representative of Range Resources was in attendance. Mr. Max Junker stated that he will be serving as legal representation for Range Resources. Mr. Sherrieb reported that he had left his position at KLH Engineering. He stated that he conducted the review of the Conditional Use application on behalf of the Township and would be willing to answer any questions or concerns posed by the Planning Commission. Mr. Sherrieb then took a moment to introduce Mr. Scott Groom who would be serving as the Township's new Planning Commission/Plan Review Engineer, citing his experience as a professional land surveyor.

Mr. Sherrieb stated that he had reviewed the Application for completeness and compliance with South Strabane's zoning requirements for a Conditional Use for the installation of a freshwater impoundment facility in the A-1 Agricultural Zoning District. He highlighted that a land development plan is not required. He reported that after his review the Application was found to be complete. He continued by reporting that several questions were sent in the form of a Request For Information (RFI) to provide a greater scope of clarity

concerning various items included in the application binder. He concluded by stating because the Application is complete and in compliance with the base requirements for the Conditional Use, he would recommend approval pending the Applicant addressing all the RFI's and questions.

Assistant to the Township Manager Connors briefly reviewed the Application for a Conditional Use to be considered by the Planning Commission, citing that many members had not been present for the Agenda meeting held last week. He read aloud a memorandum outlining the Application process for the proposed installation of Freshwater Impoundment Facility at the Munce Well Pad. He highlighted that public notice was provided in the Observer-Reporter on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019. In addition, he stated that notices were mailed to 32 residences who owned property within 300 feet of the Applicant's property line. He continued by discussing the size of the lot and current uses on site including an oil and gas well and agricultural uses. He reported that the Applicant's property is surrounded by the A-1 Zoning District on all respective sides. He highlighted that a Conditional Use was granted in September of 2010 which established the natural gas well site at 50 Meadows View Road. He reported that six special conditions were established by the Planning Commission prior to final approval being granted. He continued by reporting the proposed facility would be used to assist in the delivery of freshwater to various well sites in the immediate area. He stated that after Staff review, the proposed Conditional Use complies with the Zoning Code, as presented. He reported that Fire Chief Reese reviewed the emergency management plan provided by Range Resources and is satisfied with its contents. He concluded by highlighting that the Planning Commission has the authority to recommend approval of the Conditional Use, recommend approval of the Conditional Use with special conditions, or recommend denial of the Applicant's request.

Township Solicitor Furman entered the following exhibits into the Public Record: Exhibit #1 The Application for a Conditional Use, Exhibit #2 the list of property owners residing within 300 feet of the Applicant's property, Exhibit #3 A copy of the Public Notice set by the Township to the aforementioned property owners, Exhibit #4 The legal notice and proof of publication included in the Observer-Reporter on September 20, 2019. Exhibit #5 The Township Engineer's review letter, Exhibit #6 The Staff memorandum to the Planning Commission dated October 3, 2019, and Exhibit #7 aerial view and zoning map of 50 Meadows View Road.

Mr. Gordon moved to enter Exhibits no. 1 – 7 into the Public Record. Mr. Pozzuto seconded the motion. The motion was carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Chair Kopko asked the Applicant to begin their presentation which would be followed by questions and comments from the Commission. Mr. Junker began by highlighting the long-running familiarity of Range Resources and the Township, citing a Conditional Use process that occurred in 2016 for the Baumel, Zediker, and Munce Well Pads. He highlighted that in addition to the Conditional Use granted in 2010, an additional Conditional Use was granted in 2016 to extend the operation of the Munce Well Pad. He introduced Mr. Karl Metz, Mr. Justin Welker, and Mr. Bob Schubesnki who all represent Range Resources. Mr. Junker introduced the binder outlining the details of the Conditional Use Application, citing that it includes the application, location maps, project narrative, compliance comments, setback exhibit, emergency contact information/plans, operational hauling map, and site plans. He concluded by reporting they did not receive the Township Engineer's comments until this afternoon, citing a miscommunication and invalid email address. He stated the Applicant would do their best to address all outstanding questions and would be more formally prepared for the upcoming Public Hearing before the Board of Supervisors.

Chair Kopko inquired regarding the Applicant's self-described confusion concerning the Public Hearing. Township Solicitor Furman concurred with Mr. Junker stating that he did not expect a Public Hearing either. Chair Kopko then inquired regarding the delivery of the Engineer's comments that will need to be addressed. Assistant to the Township Manager Connors stated that the Engineer's comments were relayed to the Applicant on Friday September 27<sup>th</sup>, but due to an incorrect email address, the message was never received. He reported

that after discussing the lack of communication from the Applicant with Mr. Sherrieb, he reached out to Mr. Karl Metz to confirm receipt of the Engineer's comments on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. He apologized for the confusion. Vice-Chair Pozzuto expressed his disappointment that the Applicant did not receive the Engineer's comments in a timely manner. He highlighted that much of the Planning Commission's obligation regarding this matter is administrative but cited there were a few specific answers he was hoping to have addressed. Chair Kopko stated he would like the Engineer's comments addressed in writing, not just to hear them. Mr. Junker noted that a transcript would be generated by the court reporter in attendance.

Mr. Karl Metz representing Range Resources came before the Commission. He highlighted that he is a civil engineer and presented an illustration of the proposed freshwater impoundment facility. He reported that only freshwater would be stored in the impoundment, highlighting that the facility would be serviced by a sizeable water tap owned by Pennsylvania American Water. Mr. Justin Welker stated that three total wells would be serviced from the impoundment facility. Of the three pads, two would be serviced from trucks and one would be serviced via a water pump pipeline system. Mr. Metz reported that the Munce, Patrick-Guyton, Wagers, and Zediker Station well pads would be provided freshwater from the proposed impoundment facility.

Vice-Chair Pozzuto sought confirmation that trucks retrieving and delivering water from the proposed facility would only access Meadows View Road and Davis School Road to access Route 19. Mr. Metz confirmed that would be the case. Vice-Chair Pozzuto inquired how the Township could be re-assured the water trucks would follow the assigned routes. Vice-Chair Pozzuto highlighted the Application states that truck traffic will be reduced if the proposed impoundment is constructed, he sought clarification concerning this matter. Mr. Metz discussed the Patrick-Guyton Well Pad, citing that with the proposed solution truck traffic will be reduced in the aggregate, but conceded that may not be the case for roads in South Strabane Township.

Mr. Metz reported that since the proposed impoundment will hold freshwater only, a DEP permit is not required. Mr. Metz briefly discussed the temporary underground access that is necessary to run the pumping system from one well pad to another, highlighting that the final routes have not been established. He continued by reporting that the Applicant would be abiding by the 55-decibel noise threshold and additionally would conduct ambient noise testing. Mr. Metz continued by briefly discussing the water truck pull-off area, highlighting that it would not be paved.

Mr. Justin Welker, Water Operations Manager for Range Resources reviewed the logistics and operational procedure for the proposed impoundment facility. He highlighted the impoundment would be open-air and would serve 2-3 completions per year which would be scheduled. He emphasized that the Township would see less water-truck traffic for the use of the proposed tank pad than it experienced for the Munce Well Pad fracking operation. He stated that prior to the start of completion operations the Township would be given formal notice. He then explained the water-truck servicing process. He reported that discussions have taken place with Fire Chief Reese concerning the placement and installation of two fire hydrants on the Munce Well Pad which would provide 24/7 water access in the event of an emergency. Mr. Gordon inquired regarding the possibility of a water line breaking. Mr. Welker stated that when lines are in operation, they will be manned 24/7 which allows for quick identification of pressure fluctuations and faulty lines. Mr. Welker highlighted that the gate valve will be shut when the vault is not in use.

Mr. Welker then discussed the transportation routes for the freshwater, beginning with the Patrick-Guyton Well Pad. He stated that freshwater would be pumped directly from the Munce to the Patrick-Guyton Well Pad using a pumping system, highlighting trucks would not be used in the transportation process. He next discussed the Zediker Station and Wagers Well Pads, stating that freshwater would be trucked to the Wager's Pad and then pumped via a prior water line route to the Zediker Station Well Pad. Chair Kopko sought confirmation that water would only be trucked to the Wager's well pad. Mr. Welker confirmed that would be the case. After some further discussion Mr. Welker reported that each completion takes between 500,000 – 2,000,000 barrels of

water depending on the number of wells on a given site. He stated that an ideal timeline would consist of 3-5 trucks per hour being filled at the proposed facility. Ms. Phillis inquired regarding the strategy if Range Resources could not secure the temporary right-of-way agreements necessary for the water pump line. Mr. Welker stated that he was confident in his team's ability to secure the necessary agreements, citing that the Wager-Zediker route has already been secured once. He also highlighted that DEP permits will need to be secured for pipe stream crossings. Mr. Pozzuto inquired regarding the number of agreements that would be needed. Mr. Welker stated that between 17 and 25 landowners would need to provide temporary rights-of-way.

Mr. Welker stated that the ability to use public water on a given well site is determined by location of the nearest public tap, maximum pressure ratings, and the surrounding area (neighboring properties, etc.). He highlighted that over-using a given public water source could negatively impact the water pressure of neighboring property owners. He noted that a letter from Pennsylvania American Water will be submitted to the Township which should cite that no adverse effects have been reported to the water quality/pressure of properties surrounding the Munce Well Pad. Mr. Pozzuto inquired if Pennsylvania American Water would discount the cost of water for the operation. Mr. Welker stated that there is no special pricing provided to the Developer.

Ms. Phillis inquired regarding the total number of water truck trips per day that would be serviced at the proposed facility. Mr. Welker stated that realistically between 5-7 trucks per hour entering and the same number exiting is estimated. He highlighted that with an extremely efficient hour there may be 10 trucks in and 10 trucks out (20 trucks total). He stated the application reflects the upper threshold of 20 trucks per hour (10 in and 10 out). He extrapolated the overall maximum to be 480 trips over the course of a 24-hour period (240 in 240 out). Ms. Phillis inquired whether the operation would run 24 hours per day 7 days per week. Mr. Welker confirmed that would be the case. Ms. Phillis inquired regarding the permanence of the facility. Mr. Welker highlighted that would be a hard question to answer because every operation is schedule and demand based. Mr. Welker highlighted the logistics crews will "right-size" the water-truck count to ensure that impoundment levels are maintained. He also highlighted that truck routes would take heavily trafficked times and school bus routes into their routing pattern.

Vice-Chair Pozzuto reported past concerns from residents who have cited that well sites develop into an industrial site over time. He stated that adding the additional water impoundment facility compounds the industrial type operation that takes place in the Agricultural Zoning District. He stated that formal correspondence outlining how this additional use on the property would abide by the various special conditions that were granted during the Conditional Use processes in 2010 and 2016 would be beneficial. Mr. Junker stated that while many of the conditions centered around drilling, the Applicant could confirm to the Board that all applicable conditions will be abided by.

Ms. Phillis expressed her concerns with the proposed impoundment serving surrounding well pads. Mr. Junker discussed the variation in zoning ordinances and definitions, citing the Township does not confine areas to be served by the impoundment facility. Ms. Phillis continued by inquiring how long the wells would be serviced by the impoundment facility. Mr. Welker stated the Patrick-Guyton Well Pad is scheduled to be serviced for the next two years, highlighting the other well sites do not have a scheduled time frame. A discussion ensued regarding the long-term number of wells that could be serviced by the impoundment facility. Mr. Welker stated that a large area (more than 5 miles) cannot be served efficiently by a stationary impoundment facility. Ms. Phillis stated a reasonable condition would be to impose a maximum number of sites that can be serviced from the proposed impoundment. Mr. Welker stated that by doing so the leftover water would be useless.

Mr. Sherrieb inquired whether the pumps used to transport the water from well pad to well pad would be electric or diesel. Mr. Welker stated they would be diesel, citing there is no electricity at the Munce Well Pad. Ms. Phillis continued to discuss potential limiting factors. Mr. Sherrieb highlighted the economics would be the

ultimate limiting factor. He stated the overall cost of serving distant well pads with water from the Munce Well Pad would be cost prohibitive, citing there are other public water sources in different areas. Mr. Welker explained that economics were the driving force behind the request for the Conditional Use to begin with, citing a 23 cent per barrel price difference with the establishment of the impoundment facility.

Mr. Welker reported that various control measures could be established to limit available routes for water truck traffic including geofencing which would notify Range Resources when trucks diverge from approved routes. He also expressed interest in establishing signage directing water trucks down approved routes. Chair Kopko inquired regarding the number of water truck companies employed by Range Resources. Mr. Welker stated that 21 companies are under agreement. Mr. Ursic inquired regarding water truck safety standards. Mr. Welker affirmed there are procedures in place and briefly discussed camera technology that monitors truck speeds. Mr. Sherrieb inquired regarding the lighting standards described in the application. Mr. Metz affirmed that no lighting would be on the outside of the actual tank pad. Mr. Welker then discussed Range Resource's strategy of eliminating earthen impoundments. He cited a decreased use of natural freshwater sources highlighting it is more efficient and cost effective to use public water and construct temporary impoundments.

Mr. Bob Schubenski, Surface Land District Manager for Range Resources, came before the Commission to discuss safety measures and emergency contact information. He highlighted that he is responsible for overseeing the response center which handles truck complaints, general questions, etc. He discussed the goal of the response center is to provide a quick response time for any questions/concerns, highlighting that all agents are Washington County residents. Mr. Pozzuto asked if the number for the response center could be provided to the public. Mr. Schubenski provided the number to those in attendance (724-754-5999).

Chair Kopko commented that his initial interpretation of the Ordinance was for impoundment facilities to serve the respective well pad on site. He commented that overall truck traffic will likely be reduced in the aggregate, but not for Township roads. He highlighted the responsibility of the Commission is to consider the impact and well-being of South Strabane Township, not neighboring communities. A discussion ensued regarding the Township's definition of Freshwater Impoundment. A comment regarding Act 13 Impact Fees followed.

Mr. Don Lambert of Woodland Lane came before the Commission to express his apprehension regarding the Township granting an expansion of industrial uses. He highlighted that he is in favor of energy independence but stated that it should be done in a responsible manner. He discussed the original noise study conducted prior to the construction of the Munce Well Pad citing his proximity to the Munce Well Pad. He reported that he is disturbed by the level of noise generated during operations. He continued by citing observations of truck traffic not abiding by the law. He concluded by highlighting the reported savings of 23 cents per barrel will not directly benefit the Township, but the associated impact will have a detrimental effect on residents.

Ms. Cynthia Rossi of Zediker Station Road came before the Commission to express her concerns regarding the proposed use. She discussed the increase in heavy equipment and trucks on Township roads. She highlighted that the Comprehensive Plan does not encourage industrial uses in the Agricultural and Residential Zoning Districts. She cited the Act 13 revenues are a drop in the bucket and do not serve the Township adequately. She concluded by discussing the need to adjust her framed European oil paintings on a daily basis due to the vibrations and tremors associated with the Munce Well Pad.

Chair Kopko acknowledged the poor timing for the Applicant to address the Engineer's questions but stated that he has trouble voting without formal written responses. Township Solicitor Furman highlighted the Commission could table its consideration, ultimately concluding the Public Hearing but leaving the record open to supplementation. A discussion concerning the timeline of the next Public Hearing ensued.

At the request of Township Solicitor Furman, Mr. Gordon moved to enter Exhibit #8 into the Public Record. Mr. Ursic seconded the motion. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Gordon moved to close the Public Hearing with the record being left open to supplementation for the Applicant's written responses to the Engineer's questions. Ms. Phillis seconded the motion. The motion carried on a unanimous voice vote.

The following comments from the Township Engineer (KLH Engineers) were received:

**Township of South Strabane  
Range Resources-Munce Tank Pad  
Conditional Use Application Review**

A conditional use application dated August 22, 2019 was received from Range Resources, for conditional use approval of a proposed water storage (water impoundment) tank on the Munce Well Pad site. The Munce Well Pad site is located at 50 Meadow View Road, in South Strabane Township. The application was reviewed by KLH Engineers, Inc. for completeness and compliance with the Township zoning requirements for a conditional use application under Article XV, §245-103 and for the requirements of §245-168.1 for a freshwater impoundment facility in the A-1 zoning district. A land development plan is not required for this conditional use under the requirements of §206 due to the nature of the project.

The conditional use application dated August 22, 2019 was found to be complete with the requirements of Article XV §245-103 which covers the approval of conditional uses.

The application was also reviewed specifically for the requirements of a conditional use for a freshwater impoundment in the A-1 district under §245-168.1(A.-J.). Items A-J have been included in the application. Item D, regarding the site lighting contains an insufficient certification statement from the applicant. §245-168.D requires site lighting be directed downward and shielded so to avoid glare on public roads and adjacent property. The certification statement by the application states the applicant will direct temporary lighting downward and inward to minimize glare on road and adjacent properties to the extent permitted by safety considerations during operational and maintenance activities. This statement is not acceptable as there is no waiver in the code from the requirement either operational or maintenance activities. Item J, regarding the required truck route map is incomplete. §245-168.1.J. requires a plan showing the proposed truck routes to be utilized during the operation. A truck route plan was attached but the truck route plan only addresses truck routes into the site. There are no truck routes provided for the distribution of the fresh water to surrounding well pads during the completion operations. The locations of the well pads to receive fresh water from the impoundment have not been identified or supplied.

The requirements of §245-168.1.A, §245-168.1.B, §245-168.1.C, §245-168.1.E, §245-168.1.F, §245-168.1.H, and §245-168.1.I have been met by the application.

The following is a list of questions and requests for additional information regarding the application from the Township Engineer which helps to clarify the intent of the project for the Planning Commission and the public. My questions are:

- RFI 1 Please provide a complete list of all well completion sites that the Munce Storage Impoundment will service. Please provide a map identifying all completion site locations and provide the associated truck delivery routes from the Munce Pad to these sites. Please indicate all South Strabane Township Roads that will be used along these delivery routes.

- RFI 2 Please provide a detailed drawing of the steel storage tank to serve as the freshwater impoundment. This drawing should be signed and sealed by a structural Professional Engineer licensed in Pennsylvania. The drawing should indicate the maximum water storage depth or maximum volume the tank may hold.
- RFI 3 Please provide a copy of the PADEP Above Ground Storage Tank Permit obtained for this storage tank, and any conditions this permit has imposed.
- RFI 4 Please explain the type of backflow prevention devices to be installed on this impoundment system to prevent backflow cross contamination of the Pennsylvania American Water Company public water supply and provide details of these devices and an approval of the same from PAWC.
- RFI 5 Please provide all locations of above ground piping and buried piping that will cross South Strabane Township roads. Please provide details of the size of the lines and the estimated operating pressure of the line as well as the burial depth.
- RFI 6 Please provide the exact location and size of the potable water tap into PAWC supply system, and the line size of the PAWC system at said tap.
- RFI 7 Please provide the maximum flow rate the storage tank will draw from the PAWC system.
- RFI 8 Please provide a complete detail of the proposed fencing around the storage tanks so compliance with §245-172 can be verified.
- RFI 9 The application does not indicate whether the applicant will conduct a 72 ambient noise study or utilize the default 55dB ambient to comply with the requirements of §245-148.6.C? Please provide whether the 72 hour ambient noise study will be completed or the 55dB ambient default will be used.
- Q. 1 Has Range Resources investigated piping the fresh water from the storage tank overland to the individual completion sites? If yes, why was this option not selected as it would completely eliminate truck traffic?
- Q. 2 Has Range Resources looked at supplying individual completion sites with their own public water supply?
- Q. 3 Is the proposed storage tank to be provided with any cover or will it be open to the atmosphere?
- Q. 4 Will a dedicated security person be provided at the site during operations for security and traffic control?
- Q. 5 What color is the tank?
- Q. 6 The application indicates the water storage will be used for 2-3 completions per year with a completion lasting up to 3 months. Will the completions be conducted at the same time or will they be sequential?
- Q. 7 What is the volume of water required for a completion?

- Q. 8 Will completion operations be conducted during the months of December through February?
- Q. 9 Is freezing protection to be provided for the storage tank?
- Q. 10 The application indicates that Range will supervise on-site activities. How many hours per day will the site be active? How many employees will be onsite during these hours?
- Q. 11 Will there be a designated water supply employee/operator who will be responsible for controlling the water withdraw from the public water supply.
- Q. 12 Will the site be active between the hours of 7PM and 7AM? If yes, what hours during this time period will site activities occur?
- Q. 13 The application indicates the number of peak hour trips at 20. What is the total number of trips into and out of the site during a 24 hour period?
- Q. 14 What is the capacity of the trucks that will be used to haul water from the storage tank to the completion sites?
- Q. 15 What is the loaded weight and unloaded weight of these trucks?
- Q. 16 Has Range met with South Strabane Police, Fire and Road Departments?
- Q. 17 What is the 20' x 200' pump pad, indicated on the E&S site drawing contained in section E of the application document to be used for? Is this area involved in the operation of the water storage tank?

I am recommending the Planning Commission recommend approval of Range Resources, Munce Tank Pad conditional use application pending the applicant provides all of the requested information listed above including answers to all of the questions to South Strabane Township by Wednesday, October 2, 2019, so the Planners may fully understand the scope of these activities and apply any conditions they determine appropriate to these activities

#### **REVIEW AND EVALUATION OF THE TOWNSHIP'S LAND DEVELOPMENT AND ZONING REQUIREMENTS CONCERNING GREEN SPACE, LANDSCAPING, AND STEEP SLOPES**

Assistant to the Township Manager Connors stated there was no new material to be reviewed at this time. He highlighted that new benchmarking material and pertinent data would be presented for the Planning Commission's review at the November Regular Meeting.

#### **Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Gordon moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:16 p.m. Ms. Phillis seconded the motion. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully,

Patrick M. Connors  
Assistant to the Township Manager