

**EAST NORRITON TOWNSHIP
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2008**

A meeting of the East Norriton Township Planning Commission was held at the East Norriton Middle School, 330 Roland Drive, East Norriton, Pennsylvania on Wednesday, October 8, 2008. The following members were in attendance: Chairman Keith Tornetta, Vice Chairman Joseph E. Gavanus, Jr., William J. Griffin, Jr., Robert Lee Schmidt, Secretary Joan Morello, Derek Bell, Colleen M. Henderson, Kristl Wiernicki, Robert Schottmiller and Township Solicitor Christen G. Pionzio. Zoning Officer, Bryan Bortnichak was also in attendance. Chairman Tornetta called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m.

1. Announce purpose of meeting and review of how the meeting will be conducted:

Chairman Tornetta announced that this meeting is a continuation of the prior meeting held on October 1, 2008. Chairman Tornetta explained the format by which the meeting would be conducted, noting that audience members would be granted a five minute question period and a three minute comment period.

**2. Preliminary Land Development Application:
Albert Einstein Healthcare Network, 559 W. Germantown Pike**

Present: Richard Montalbano, V.P. AEHN, Project Executive
Joseph C. Kuhls, Esq., Dischell, Bartle, Yanoff & Dooley
Joseph P. Hanna, P.E., Chambers Associates, Inc.
Matthew I. Hammond, P.E., Traffic Planning & Design, Inc.
Les Bishop, Project Landscape Architect

Mr. Kuhls introduced himself and stated that he had returned with some more detailed information on points of interest requested at last week's meeting. Those items include elevation views, the visual impact to Whitehall Road residents, operation of secondary access point, and confirmation of some numbers on helicopter trip generation associated with a trauma center.

Mr. Paul displayed three different visual representations of the proposed site. The first moving west from North Wales road, the second of the main entrance and the third of a section profile depicting properties on Whitehall Road and the elevation with respect to the medical office building which is approximately a distance of 370' from the residential properties.

Mr. Hammond responded to Kristl Wiernicki's question from last week about the number of employees expected to be working at the medical office building. Mr. Hammond noted that trip counts for this plan were derived from counts at other facilities in this area and the Institute of Transportation Engineers trip generation manual. Their figures show twenty-four left turns and sixteen right turns into the secondary drive during peak hours

with most of the traffic using the main entrance on Germantown Pike where a traffic signal is to be located. There is a significant amount of queuing room to allow for the left turns at peak hours at the secondary access. Einstein reviewed four other medical office buildings to assist in determining these figures.

Ms. Wiernicki asked that since 7:00a.m. to 9:00a.m. is peak traffic on Germantown Pike for west to east traffic why can't a number of employees be provided. Mr. Hammond responded that traffic will be spread out throughout the day and that the analysis is for at a.m. and p.m. peak and a.m. and p.m. shift change times.

Ms. Wiernicki asked what the queuing distance is for the left turns at the secondary drive and on Germantown Pike. Mr. Hammond responded the distance is 200 ft.

Richard Montalbano introduced himself and responded to the inquiry from last week's meeting regarding the number of helicopter trips. Mr. Montalbano stated that there were fifty-seven helicopter trips last year at Einstein in Philadelphia, which is a level III trauma center. For a level II or level III trauma center the number of helicopter trips could range between twelve and twenty-four trips per month.

Robert Schmidt asked what the difference is between a level II and level III trauma center.

Mr. Montalbano responded that a level II trauma center has the same clinical skills necessary for a level III such as head trauma and penetrating chest wounds but that the presence of emergency department residents and research in emergency medicine is a significant difference

Chairman Tornetta asked if there are any architectural differences between the trauma center levels. Mr. Montalbano responded that the primary difference is the 24-hour medical staff and the operating room. If upgrading were to be needed it would first need external certification by an external trauma agency.

Mr. Kuhls commented that Mr. Montalbano has concluded their formal presentation and they were ready for questions and comments.

Chairman Tornetta asked if there were any additional questions from the members of the Planning Commission or staff. There being none, Chairman Tornetta stated that the questioning would continue from last week's meeting with questions from East Norriton Township residents.

Ed Duffy of 206 West Hartranft Boulevard asked how many helicopter trips would be eliminated by not going to Norristown and if the reduction of traffic at Montgomery Hospital had been factored into the traffic study. Mr. Montalbano responded that flights will be significantly be less because Einstein in East Norriton Township will have the same available medical services as Einstein in Philadelphia does so medical service will be contained in East Norriton Township eliminating those flights to Philadelphia. Mr.

Hammond responded that the traffic in connection with Montgomery Hospital was of minimal impact and not factored into the traffic study.

Kevin Bryson of 2996 Brambling Lane asked; why has the sewer bill gone up, what is the current status of the sewer capacity at Germantown Pike, what was used to calculate stormwater flow from the proposed site, what is the capacity at the sewer plant and what are the sewer capacity levels of surrounding developments and Einstein, will the original sewer design change and will the water flow change, what green initiatives have Einstein designed in the plan and would Einstein consider onsite oxygen generation in lieu of truck delivery. Mr. Montalbano responded that green / LEED certification is a specialty of the firm but the level of certification that will be achieved has not been established at this time. As a responsible organization, Einstein is aware of its impact on the environment. Einstein has been in Philadelphia since 1866 and Montgomery Hospital has been in Norristown since the turn of the century so when they build they plan for this facility to be their home for a long time. With regard to the pump stations being overload they are working with the Township trying to redirect flows to eliminate overflows. Mr. Hannah corrected the last statement Mr. Montalbano stated that the sewer terminology that should be used is surge tank, noting that surge tank and storm water management are different. There are surge tanks and storage tanks underground for wet weather sanitary sewer flows that are in the Townships current system. Mr. Hannah spoke on stormwater management noting that the plans are designed according to the Township and State regulations as well as Best Management Practice that are required by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to improve stormwater runoff quality from the proposed site. Downstream impact on stormwater will be an overall reduction of peak flows from the site.

Mr. Hannah commented that the proposed pump station is double the original capacity so it can handle some of the Township wet weather flow and help with the current overflow situation.

Chairman Tornetta asked if there is a backup system. Mr. Hannah responded that there is and that backup power will be provided by generators.

Mr. Griffin asked if the pump station is large enough and if it will be privately maintained. Mr. Hannah responded that the infrastructure will be able to handle any future expansion and noted that it will be dedicated to the Township.

Ms. Wiernicki asked how far they would be pumping to a point east of the site on Germantown Pike. Mr. Hannah responded that it would be about 700 ft. off the site. Mr. Montalbano responded that he does not know about on site oxygen but with new technology, Mr. Montalbano would be willing to be educated on how it works.

Nick Viglianese of 3105 Whitehall Road handed out prepared questions to the Planning Commission members and read questions from the prepared document. Mr. Viglianese asked questions about conversations between Mr. Montalbano and the residents, when SEPTA was contacted, taxes and their effect, green space, future growth for additional building space and waivers. Mr. Vigilances continued questioning peak and increasing flows, the effect of additional building on the site, issues with commercial and residential

neighbors, oxygen storage, wet well and wetlands. Mr. Montalbano responded that fifty-one letters went out to surrounding owners. Many residents were not happy about the proposed development and asked Einstein to go away.

Mr. Montalbano stated that the rear property is already zoned Institutional and could build today; instead rezoning was requested for the residents to move the building to the front of the property closer to Germantown Pike. Mr. Montalbano held meetings at the bowling alley on three different occasions and about 100 to 140 residents came to talk. Mr. Montalbano stated that Einstein has tried to accommodate the residents and designed the pad to be out of residential path. As many as 60% of Montgomery County residents go out of town for medical service. The financial status of Einstein is not available for the public, with taxes there is a balancing act so that there is no impact to school and parks. Mr. Montalbano noted that he could not comment on additional expansion over the next 100 years. Mr. Montalbano noted that the Township's Director of Parks and Recreation has submitted a letter advising that he is not interested in a contribution of land for an additional park, so what the Township is looking for is a financial consideration.

Mr. Hannah commented on Mr. Van Rieker's report about peak flows noting that reports show they be able to accommodate sanitary sewer wet weather flows on site. Storm water is the average calculation per storm. Mr. Hannah added that the construction entrance will be on Germantown Pike. In response to the well question, Mr. Hannah noted that the extension of a 12-inch water main would make public water accessible to many properties and that he does not foresee an impact on resident's wells.

Mr. Montalbano added that the hospital will not be a burn center and is not familiar with Abington's plan. Chairman Tornetta asked if there has been any contact between Einstein and McDonalds or WaWa. Mr. Montalbano responded that they had not yet contacted either property. With respect to the oxygen tank, Mr. Montalbano responded the tank size has not yet been determined.

Mr. Viglianese asked the Township Solicitor if she is related to the Gilmore & Associates engineering firm. Mrs. Pionzio noted that she is not.

Chairman Tornetta called for a ten minute recess.

Connie Bennett of 2910 North Whitehall Road handed out prepared questions to the Planning Commission members and read questions from the prepared document. Ms. Bennett asked questions about noise and the disturbance to surrounding properties, truck trips per day, loading dock noise, idling of vehicles, buffering, location of the medical office building, helicopter flight paths, vehicle turning movements, landscaping and building coverage. Ms Bennett then asked what the next step was in the land development process.

In response to Ms. Bennett's questions, Mr. Montalbano noted that he could not say for sure how many truck trips would be generated on a given day, but noted that not all truck traffic would be tractor trailers. Mr. Hannah noted that the loading dock will be between medical office building and the hospital and that it would be one story below grade.

Einstein moved the emergency department from the west side to the east side to help eliminate the noise impact to the surrounding residential properties.

Mr. Montalbano noted that in general he thinks that this design will work well and the balance is good. The Board of Supervisors increased setbacks in conjunction with the zoning ordinance amendment. Einstein's first obligation is to meet code. Mr. Montalbano noted that he will go back to neighbors to discuss their individual needs. Mr. Bishop noted that of the 82.5 acres, 61.6 will remain as green space. Mr. Bortnichak noted that impervious coverage is limited by a requirement that 35% of the site remain green, but that 65% can be covered with impervious materials. Einstein would have to go back to the Zoning Hearing Board to seek a variance or to the Supervisors to seek a zoning ordinance text change to provide less than 35% open space. The Supervisors did control the location of buildings and parking on the site by increasing the building and parking setbacks in the Institutional district. Mr. Bortnichak continued answering Ms. Bennett final question by advising that the next step in the process is for the Planning Commission to make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors and then for the Supervisors to consider the preliminary plans.

Chairman Tornetta pointed out that one of Ms. Bennett's questions was not addressed, specifically a noise question about backup alarms near the loading dock. Mr. Montalbano responded noting that vehicles would be able to turn around in the loading dock and that the loading dock is below grade to reduce the noise heard off site.

Diane Viglianese of 3105 Whitehall Road handed out prepared questions to the Planning Commission members and read questions from the prepared document. Mrs. Viglianese asked questions about EDU costs, availability and requirements, the setback requirements for a eight story parking garage, the number of traffic trips that will be generated on an average day, rush hour traffic volumes, the number of lanes of traffic and ratings, and general traffic questions. Mrs. Viglianese then directed some questions to the Planning Commission members, asking what traffic improvements will be necessary, how the additional traffic will affect Whitehall Road, how much Einstein will pay for the installation of water mains, waiver and Best Management Practice requirements, utility easements, sewer piping under the gas lines. Lastly Mrs. Viglianese asked if Einstein had threatened a lawsuit if the project did not go through.

Mr. Bortnichak responded by defining an EDU and advised that Einstein would need to purchase approximately 400 EDU's to connect to the sanitary sewer collection system. This would result in a payment of \$1,107 per EDU to the Township and \$2,337 per EDU to the East Norriton Plymouth Whitpain Joint Sewer Authority. Mr. Bortnichak continued, noting that approximately 1000 EDU's are currently available at the East Norriton Township Whitpain Joint Sewer Authority for connections in East Norriton Township and that they are distributed on a first come first serve basis. In response to a question about the number of development awaiting capacity, Mr. Bortnichak responded that there are no developers waiting in line and that EDU's are currently available for purchase. Ultimately, the facilities installed by Einstein will benefit the Township by alleviating the current sewer overflow problems. Mr. Bortnichak also responded to the

question about a parking garage noting that it would be his interpretation that a parking garage would be subject to the building setback requirement, not the parking setback requirement.

Mary Stover from Pennoni Associates explained why waivers from the East Norriton Township Land Development Ordinance were warranted because some of the requirements have not been updated to be consistent with Best Management Practices for stormwater quality. Chairman Tornetta explained that the Planning Commission would not review each individual waiver request as they are subject to change before final land development plans are submitted. Mr. Montalbano added that Einstein has not threatened the Township with a lawsuit.

Mr. Hammond responded to Mrs. Viglianese's questions regarding traffic improvements noting that the Traffic Impact Study defines four peaks traffic periods – a.m. peak, p.m. peak, a.m. shift change peak and p.m. shift change peak. Mr. Hammond noted that the medical office building peak will not coincide with the hospital's peak. Mr. Hammond continued noting that the area on eastbound Germantown Pike will improve from an F rating to a C rating from North Wales Road to Whitehall Road where four lanes currently transition down to two lanes. The one way, level of service would improve. Mr. Hammond noted that this is a preliminary plan and that while the current plan assumes that no additional right of way will be obtained from the Farm Park, the extent of certain improvements would become clearer with the submission of a final land development plan. Lastly, Mr. Hammond noted that plan incorporates many of the improvements that Township studies identified as being necessary in 2002 and that Einstein would contribute significantly toward traffic improvements.

Chairman Tornetta noted that Mrs. Viglianese's question relating to a sewer line running under the gas line had not been answered. Mr. Hannah noted that at least two feet of separation would be provided for any pipe crossing in accordance with Williams Transco Pipeline requirements.

Woody Johnson of 3028 Whitehall Road asked questions relating to the accuracy of the traffic studies that were presented and radiation safety. Mr. Hammond noted that the accuracy of the traffic study is consistent with the transportation planning industry. Mr. Montalbano responded to the question of radiation safety noting that only low level radioactive materials will be used and that they will comply with strict Federal regulation for the handling of such materials.

Tom Tirpak of 626 Barbara Drive inquired about what kind of park was suggested to be put in. Mr. Montalbano noted that East Norriton Township has an ordinance requiring that a developer provide a certain percentage of the land or a certain percentage of the value of the land to support Park and Recreation facilities. Einstein will likely be making a monetary donation as the Park and Recreation Director has advised that he does not need an additional park.

Susan McLaughlin of 2926 North Whitehall read questions from the prepared document and asked about the number and makeup of the proposed pump station and what the

purpose of the Marion Avenue sewer bypass is. Ms. McLaughlin expressed a concern about current and future sewer problems and capacity at out pump stations and the treatment plant.

Mr. Bortnichak responded that the Marion Avenue sewer bypass had been envisioned before Einstein was interested in the property and explained that the bypass would eliminate the Marion Avenue pump station taking flow by gravity directly to the Timberlake pump station instead of Germantown pump station. Mr. Hannah explained that the pump station is being designed to exceed Einstein's needs and to accommodate overflow from the Township's Germantown pump station.

Virginia Craciun of 3102 North Whitehall Road read questions from a prepared document and asked a number of procedural question and questions regarding the waivers that are begin requested. Mrs. Craciun expressed a concern that a project of this size should be given greater attention and that specific details should be provided. Mrs. Craciun also asked questions relating to costs and payments, helicopters and safeguards for surrounding resident's wells and asked if the houses on the plan are drawn to the same scale as the hospital.

Mr. Kuhls noted that answers to the waiver requests will most likely be address by the Board of Supervisors and added that waiver request #17 has been withdrawn. With respect to costs, it is impossible for anyone to make a determination at this time as the exact amount of tax that will be paid. Mr. Kuhls continued noting that determination of the final flight path may not be resolved until after final approval. Mr. Kuhls also noted that Einstein does not believe that the project will affect the surrounding wells. Mr. Hannah stated that all of the drawings are to scale.

Karen Patota of 929 Capitol Circle raised questions relating to abortion and the performance of second or third trimester abortions in East Norriton Township. Mrs. Pionzio stated that these types of questions were not appropriate for the Planning Commission meeting and asked Ms. Patota if she had any land development related questions for the applicant.

Frank Riccardelli of 2934 Whitehall Road asked how fire apparatus would preempt the signal at Germantown and Whitehall Roads, if safety had been considered in proposing a helicopter pad so close to the pipeline and if PECO power upgrades would be necessary. Mr. Bortnichak responded that preemption would have to be provided on all upgraded traffic signals consistent with the Township's requirements. With respect to the helicopter proximity to the pipeline, the Township has no authority to control this, however, the 75' wide easement must be respected. Lastly, Mr. Bortnichak noted that PECO power upgrades would be the applicant's responsibility.

Roy James Watters, III of Port Indian, West Norriton Township asked if there has been an environmental assessment of the property and if it will be available. Mr. Watters also asked if the ponds on the property are manmade and if Einstein has plans to rehabilitate the gas pipeline. Mr. Hanna advised that an environmental assessment will be performed.

Mr. Montalbano explained that hospitals frequently do evacuation plans for various emergency situations. Mr. Kuhls added that there are no plans to rehabilitate the gas pipeline.

Chairman Tornetta asked if there was anyone else in the audience who wished to ask questions of the applicant, whether they were a resident or non-resident of East Norriton Township. There being none, Chairman Tornetta advised that the Planning Commission would now hear comments from anyone in the audience. A time limit of three minutes would be enforced.

Connie Bennett of 2910 North Whitehall Road commented that she feel that Einstein has wasted her time. Questions were deferred meeting after meeting. Einstein ignored public concerns with the project. 83% of surrounding properties that were contacted signed a letter of opposition to the project. 75% of properties within 1,000 feet signed a letter of opposition. She thanked Einstein for moving ambulance entrance, but added that this is not enough. Lastly Ms. Bennett urged the Planning Commission to not approve the plan.

Nick Viglianese of 3105 Whitehall Road commented that the Supervisors held scripted meetings and noted that the Planning Commission should ask tough questions that the Supervisors did not ask. Mr. Viglianese thanked the Planning Commission and Zoning Hearing Board for their performance.

Virginia Fitzpatrick of 6 Embassy Circle commented that she is active in the watershed association and noted that though dry during some times of the year, areas may still be considered wetlands. Ms. Fitzpatrick added that there is a misconception with water sheds and that ponds can dry

Susan McLaughlin of 2920 North Whitehall commented that this was a nice quiet Township. Open ground is quickly disappearing. She was at the East Norriton Township Planning Commission meeting in January and was appalled at the speed of the recommendation for the zoning change. Residents are being raped by the Township. Roads and sewers are ruining the Norristown Farm Park.

Ken Christovich of 2937 Tanglewood Lane commented that he is not fundamentally opposed to the hospital. He asked why Einstein did not call on Governor Rendell to condemn land from the Farm Park. He added that he has not seen an adequate economic study on the impact of the hospital on the Township and school district. East Norriton Township is a crossroads of planning failures.

Deb Knawby of 3100 North Wales Road commented about the traffic study being preliminary and asked how can an approval be made tonight – too many variables are as yet undetermined. The plans do not take into account other development in East Norriton Township and Norristown.

Wood Johnson of 3028 Whitehall Road thanked the Planning Commission for their time. As a resident he is concerned with the preliminary plan and with the accuracy of the Traffic Impact Study. The Planning Commission should make people accountable.

Marion Johnson of 3028 Whitehall Road commented that she wants the Planning Commission, and Supervisors to consider the economic impact of the project including increased taxes. The hospital will be in the middle of a residential area.

Diane Viglianese of 3105 Whitehall Road requested that the plans presented be very preliminary. The Planning Commission should send Einstein back to submit better plans. East Norriton Township Residents should not have to pay for mistakes of greed

Barbara Price of 507 Barbara Drive, commented about access to Whitehall Road. Einstein should have considered and built on the state hospital land, she is pro life and is concerned about taxes. Ms. Price asked about the long range impact of other hospital in similar settings.

Chairman Tornetta asked if there were any other East Norriton Township residents who wanted to comment. There being none, he called on non-residents to comment.

Roy James Watters, III of Port Indian, West Norriton Township commented about oil and antifreeze, entering the water and trash running downstream damaging the trout stream. Mr. Watters stated that Woody's is the head waters for the Stoney Creek.

Kathy Sobocynski a former resident of East Norriton Township commented that Einstein is a large abortion provider and that she does not want East Norriton Township to become the abortion capital of Montgomery County.

Dan Hayes of Lower Providence Township commented that he is speaking fo children that will be killed at this "abortion mill". The other issues are irrelevant. A hospital should save lives, this will bring evil into this area. Lastly, Mr. Hayes commented that he is speaking for the unborn.

Chairman Tornetta then asked for any additional comments from Township residents or nonresidents and asked for any final comments from Einstein staff.

Chairman Tornetta commented that all Planning Commission members are residents of the Township and noted that many of the detailed questions asked will be clarified in the final plans.

Mr. Griffin explained that he has four major concerns that he would like to see rectified by the time of final land development. These include the oxygen tank location, landscaping between Whitehall Road homes and the facility, the helipad and the loading dock location and noise issue that Ms. Bennett brought up.

Mr. Schottmiller commented about his concern about stormwater issues and added that he would like to see issues raised addressed with a future plan submission.

Mr. Schmidt added that all of the questions raised tonight should be addressed.

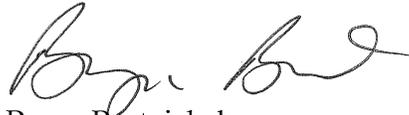
Mr. Bell noted that he is concerned with traffic and that he feels that traffic could be a concern.

Ms. Wiernicki again expressed her desire for a caution signal at the secondary driveway and that she still has concerns with traffic queuing on Germantown Pike. There is a real need for adequate signage. Ms. Wiernicki added that Einstein's Board needs to make decisions as to what services will be provided at the hospital.

Chairman Tornetta thanked the audience for their patience and participation. Chairman Tornetta then made a motion to recommend approval of the preliminary land development plans to the East Norriton Township Board of Supervisors. Mr. Schmidt seconded the motion. The motion was approved 9-0.

Mr. Griffin made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gavanus. The meeting was adjourned at 10:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Bryan Bortnichak
Zoning Officer



Keith Tornetta
Chairman