

**BENSALEM TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday
July 27th, 2020**

Zoom – Virtual Public Meeting

VIRTUAL COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Edward Kisselback, Council President
Joseph Pilieri, Council Vice President
Joseph Knowles, Council Secretary
Jesse Sloane, Council Member
Ed Tokmajian, Council Member

OTHER VIRTUAL PRESENCE BY:

Mayor Joseph DiGirolamo
Joseph Pizzo, Township Solicitor
Russell Benner, Township Engineer
Quinton Nearon, Principal Inspector
Debora McBreen, Council Clerk/Recording Secretary

PLEASE NOTE:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and all of the orders and declarations from the Federal, State, and County governments, the Bensalem Township Council held its' regular monthly meeting as a virtual public meeting utilizing the Zoom Meetings platform.

PLEASE NOTE:

The minutes are not verbatim but rather a synopsis of what transpired during the meeting, and while I do my best to attribute remarks and questions to the correct individual, there may be mistakes or omissions because of the “back and forth” dialogue and the lack of the use of the microphone

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Council President Kisselback opened the meeting with a moment of silence or prayer which was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

publiccomments@bensalempa.gov

3. **APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:**

Council Member Sloane motioned to approve the Minutes, as presented, of the Council Meeting dated June 22nd, 2020. **Council Member Tokmajian** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

Solicitor Pizzo indicated Council met in an Executive Session on Tuesday, July 21st, 2020 for approximately 90 minutes. Present for the Executive session were the 5 members of the Township Council, the Mayor, the Director of Public Safety and the Solicitor. Two topics were discussed. There was a discussion between the members of Council, the Mayor and Solicitor regarding the potential acquisition of real estate by the Township. No official action was taken during the Executive Session in regards to that discussion and no official action is required this evening as a result of that Executive Session. The other matter discussed during the Executive Session was a presentation to Council by the Public Safety Director, Fred Harran. A question came up prior to the Executive Session from Councilman Sloane in regards to a few issues involving the Township Police Department and the operations of the Township Police Department. As a result, Mayor DiGirolamo asked that the Council be briefed and provided a variety of information in regard to, and not only Councilman Sloane's questions, but other aspects of the operation of the Police Department relevant to the things that are happening in the country. No official action was taken during the Executive Session in regards to that information and no official action needs to be taken at this time as a result of that Executive Session.

Director Harran indicated he was asked to respond to 5 points from Councilman Sloane and to also give an overview in light of the events that are taking place nationally in the last six weeks regarding the unrest within the country and the issues regarding law enforcement throughout the country. **Director Harran** was asked what are we doing in Bensalem to make sure the public has a trust in the Police Department and that the Police Department is doing everything possible to continue to fight crime and to continue to make the residents of our town safe and the continuance of the Police outreach programs which the department has been doing since the 1990's. **Director Harran** wants the residents to be safe, feel safe and be comfortable reporting any problems they have with the Police. This overview was given at the Executive Session and is being repeated this evening for the welfare of the residents of Bensalem which can be heard in its entirety, including Council's response, on YouTube and the Townships website www.bensalempa.gov.

4. CONSIDERATION OF A MINOR SUBDIVISION:

Applicant: AV Hotels
Location: 1329 Bristol Pike
Proposed Use: Mixed Use
Zoning Classification: PCD – Planned Commercial Park District
Tax Parcel: 2-30-108

Council President Kisselback asked **Solicitor Pizzo** if there was representation for this applicant. **Solicitor Pizzo** indicated **Attorney Richard DeMarco** would be representing AV Hotels. **Solicitor Pizzo** reminded Council this was a tabled item from a previous agenda. **Solicitor Pizzo** indicated the legal notices are in compliance, further, in advance of this evening's meeting, Mr. DeMarco supplied copies of the notices that were sent to the adjacent property owners. Mr. DeMarco addressed Council's concerns involving the easement for utilities and drainage. A copy of the deed was forwarded to Council which actually references an easement for ingress, egress, drainage and utilities within the legal description, which means it's in the chain of title and runs with the land. A copy of the letter from the buyer was sent to the Clerk of Council, Mrs. McBreen, and to Mr. Pizzo indicating the buyer will ensure the easement language will remain in the new deed. Mr. DeMarco indicated there is no problem with Council's decision being contingent on the client attaching the easement agreement to the new deed or referencing it more specifically, whatever condition is needed. **Council President Kisselback** asked if the client would agree to an agreement indicating any utility maintenance agreements that are existing at this time be included, Mr. DeMarco agreed. **Council Secretary Knowles** asked if there is currently an existing association among the properties within the development. **Mr. DeMarco** indicated the easement language in the deed's legal description mentions Ben Associates Business Park which should include the group of businesses in that development. **Council President Kisselback** discussed the T and M letter dated November 19th, 2019 with Mr. DeMarco, Section (D) Chapter 201 – Subdivision and Land Development 1 through 5 which Mr. DeMarco would comply with all requirements listed.

Council Member Tokmajian asked **Mr. DeMarco** if the zoning variance was a side yard setback. **Mr. DeMarco** indicated there were two setbacks, one being a side yard setback. **Council Member Tokmajian** asked where it was exactly and if Mr. DeMarco had a copy of the plan that he could show. **Mr. DeMarco** indicated the plan was in his file and could send a copy but indicated where the setbacks were positioned on the topography separated by physical barriers.

Council Member Sloane noted there had been a question about parking conformance and on July 23rd, 2020 Council did receive a letter from the Director of Building and Planning, Mr. Kenneth Farrall and the Zoning Officer, stating after the subdivision both parcels do comply with the parking requirements.

Solicitor Pizzo in response to the earlier question regarding variances, the variances granted on March 5th, 2020, were from Section 464 (C) 2, which is the side yard and from Section 464 (C) 3, which is the rear yard.

Solicitor Pizzo received a question from **Nancy Rosenberg**, 1224 Highland Avenue, asking if the subdivision being presented by AV Hotels has anything to do with rainwater run-off basin in back of Holy Family near Biddles and Highland Avenue parallel to her home. The water basin has been an issue for the area for years. One is the lack of maintaining or cleaning out the basin from overgrown weeds and debris. Several weeks ago, the area had been cleaned out and attached pictures of the area. **Engineer Benner** indicated the work being done in this area was actually in conjunction with the Ben 21 Office Building Addition. Businesses in that particular park drain to that basin and part of the condition of the plan approval was to clean a swale, and as a result of the swale being cleaned the basin was then subsequently cleaned out of any sediment and weeds. The improvements were a requirement for the Ben 21 Office Addition. **Solicitor Pizzo** indicated the final thrust of Mrs. Rosenberg's comment was is it a coincidence this basin is being addressed at the same time this application is being presented, or is one directly related to the other. **Engineer Benner's** response was yes, it is a coincidence because the township was focused on those improvements as a result of the Ben 21 Land Development Project.

Council Member Tokmajian motioned to approve with **Solicitor Pizzo** further clarifying **Council Member Tokmajian's** motion in regard to the question of the deeds and covenants for the property will want the applicant to provide deeds for both of the newly created parcels to be reviewed by the Township Engineer and the Township Solicitor. Those have to be acceptable in form and content to the Township and have to be recorded with the Record Plan either before or at the time of recording of the same. Insofar as the language of the deeds or other documents related to this transaction are concerned, again, the applicant will provide to the Township whatever documentation the Township requires to make sure all of the easements, covenants, rights and the like that currently exist on the property, will continue to apply against the newly created lot and will be enforceable against the new property owner. **Council Secretary Knowles** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

5. **CONSIDERATION OF A PRELIMINARY AND FINAL LAND DEVELOPMENT:**

Applicant:	McDonald's USA, LLC
Location:	1930 Street Road & 2932 Hulmeville Road
Proposed Use:	Quick Service Restaurant
Zoning Classification:	GC- General Commercial & BP- Business Professional
Tax Parcel:	2-43-16 & 2-43-18-1

Solicitor Pizzo introduced **Matthew McHugh**, Esquire for the applicant introduced the following people: **Mike Jeitner** from Bohler Engineering, **Kirsten Calibro** form Bohler Engineering are the site Engineers, **Johnathan Baske** from McDonald's Corporation and **Kathy Kingston**, the franchisee Director of Operations. **Solicitor Pizzo** indicated the notices to the adjacent property owners were provided in advance to this evenings meeting by **Mr. McHugh**, were reviewed and appear to be in order. **Mr. McHugh** indicated this is the existing McDonald's at Street and Hulmeville Roads and the proposal is to demolish the existing building and to construct a new approximately 4,800 sq. ft. McDonald's restaurant with two drive-through lanes. This project is being done to modernize in conformance with McDonald's branding and because it's a demolish and rebuild it is considered a new application for development.

Mike Jeitner, Engineer, Bohler Engineering, indicated the existing building, with a basement, is approximately 5,600 sq. ft. in area, the new building will be approximately 5,300 sq. ft. in area, a smaller one floor building which is set back further away from Street Road in order to provide a much needed front wrap lane so that you have access to all four sides of the building, which as you know today, does not exist. The access points on Street Road will remain, they will be improved, as necessary, by PADOT, a street sidewalk connection will be provided. The Hulmeville Road driveway will remain in its current spot but will be modified to meet ADA and also Township and PADOT requirements so slight widening will be occurring on Hulmeville Road to meet the Municipal Ordinance in regards to lane widths. Overall impervious coverage should be reduced about 3,000 sq. ft. so they are improving the condition on site in regards to stormwater. The number of parking spaces is being reduced from 79 to 72 to make way for wider access drives and improvements on site. Residents along the south property line had concerns with the location of the trash disposal so the placement for the trash receptacles was moved more towards the interior of the site.

Mr. McHugh indicated there were three review letters, June 10th, 2020 T and M letter, the June 2nd, 2020 TPD letter and the June 8th, 2020 Fire Marshall letter is a will comply to all three of the reviews which also included the recommendation of the relocation of the trash enclosures which is shown on the plan. **Mr. McHugh** indicated 7 waivers have been requested which are outlined in the T and M letter and were met with favorable recommendation from the Planning Commission.

Mr. Jeitner indicated the request is for 6 waivers, the waiver for providing information within 400 ft. of the site was discussed with the Township Engineer, Mr. Benner, who recommended they provide an aerial photograph or an aerial within the plan set that would address that concern. Second waiver form Section 201-62(a) is regarding a preliminary and final land development due to the nature of the project. Section 201-106(a)(2)6 to permit grating within 3 feet of the property line along the northwest property line where the applicant is reconstructing the sidewalk within that area which in no case shall cuts and fills endanger adjoining properties. Section 106(c)(2) regarding street trees, the applicant is required to have a total of 10, the applicant would instead provide 2 along Street Road where there are none and along Hulmeville Road the applicant is required to have 5 street trees instead, will be providing 4. The applicant is asking for a waiver of 4 street trees. **Council President Kisselback** indicated the applicant will either provide 4 more trees to the tree bank or the appropriate amount that would designate the cost of those trees. **Mr. Jeitner** continued with Section 201-111(h) this is to provide less than 5 ft. of separation between sidewalk and angle parking spaces and these are the ADA parking spaces along the westerly side of the building, currently today the ADA parking spaces are further away from the building, the applicant is within 5 ft of the building, so therefore, are asking for a waiver. Section 201-112(d) this is to provide less than a 10 ft. landscape strip between the edge of parking and the outside wall of the building and for the obvious reason of having the sidewalk against the outside of the building, ADA parking, so in that location they do not have a landscape strip of 10 ft. in width. Waiver number 7 is for consisting non-conformity this is to provide parking setback at 2 ft. along the north westerly property line, this is where the applicant is reconstructing the curb line in its existing location. As the applicant is removing the curb line in that location they are putting it back in the exact same spot, therefore, they are requiring a formal waiver of 2 ft in lieu of the required 15 ft.

Council President Kisselback indicated 27 comments on the land development. **Mr. McHugh** agreed and noted some of those, therefore, as indicated in Engineer Benner's letter, have been addressed and a revised plan set, the ones that are outstanding comments are noted by variances or waivers and anything else, is a will comply.

Council Member Sloane asked about the comments from other sources and if they would be a will comply. **Mr. McHugh** explained, for record purposes, the June 2nd, 2020 TDP letter is a will comply and the June 8th, 2020 Fire Marshall letter is a will comply. Those will be addressed in a revised plan set that will come, hopefully, with conditional approval.

Council Vice President Pilieri indicated McDonald's has been a good partner and neighbor in the community.

Council Member Tokmajian wanted to confirm some of the big-ticket items such as truck turning plan, clarification on lighting, the approval required from the Bucks County Conservation District, is all of that a will comply. **Mr. McHugh** indicated they would be a will comply and they have relocated the trash enclosure, and one of the comments in Engineer Benner's letter was to provide the truck turning templates. **Council Member Tokmajian** asked about signage. **Mr. McHugh** indicated Engineer Benner did not review the signage package. There was a number of variances granted by the Zoning Hearing Board, a lot of them related to the menu boards you see are digital they are treated as electronic changeable copy signs, which have very strict regulations under the Townships Ordinances. **Mr. McHugh** stated he has the relief he believes necessary to receive the sign permit. There will be four boards, a pre-browse menu board then the actual menu board where you would place your order. There will be two boards for each drive through lane. **Mr. McHugh** indicated the original sign on Street Road will remain.

Solicitor Pizzo indicated Public Comment from Bill and Diane Eppler regarding the placement of the trash dumpster. The testimony this evening had addressed their concerns. Kathy Walgate, who lives on Virginia Avenue, commented the plan on the television screen still shows the trash dumpsters being located in the back. **Solicitor Pizzo** asked Mr. McHugh if he had the updated version. **Mr. McHugh** emailed Solicitor Pizzo the updated version for the public to see.

Council Secretary Knowles motioned to approve conditioned upon the will complies and waivers as previously discussed. **Solicitor Pizzo** indicated the applicant has verified they will comply with all of the items in the T and M review letter, and the most recent TPD review letter along with the most recent review from the Township Fire Marshall. **Council Vice President Pilieri** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

6. CONSIDERATION AND SIGNING OF AGREEMENTS FOR:

Applicant:	Faith Unity, Inc.
Location:	Corner of Richlieu and Galloway Roads
Proposed Use:	Religious Facility
Zoning Classification:	IN – Institutional Zoning District
Tax Parcel:	2-1-55-2

Solicitor Pizzo indicated, before Council this evening, are the Land Development Improvements Agreement and the Stormwater Best Management Practices Operations and Maintenance Agreement for the Faith Unity Islamic Center which is preparing to break ground at its location on the corner of Richlieu and Galloway Roads. All of the required monies called for under the agreement have been posted with the Township and the agreements are in a form acceptable for Council's consideration and approval.

Council Vice President Pilieri motioned to approve as presented, **Council Member Sloane** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

7. CONSIDERATION AND SIGNING OF AGREEMENTS FOR:

Applicant: 1411 Ford Road, LLC (VIP Wireless Holdings, LLC)
Location: 1411 Ford Road
Proposed Use: Addition with additional parking area
Zoning Classification: LI – Light Industrial
Tax Parcel: 2-45-31-1

Solicitor Pizzo indicated, before Council this evening, are the Land Development Improvements Agreement and the Stormwater Best Management Practices Operations and Maintenance Agreement for 1411 Ford Road, LLC (VIP Wireless Holdings, LLC). All of the required monies and documents called for under the agreement have been posted with the Township and the agreements are in a form acceptable for Council's consideration and approval.

Council Member Sloane indicated in the prior agreements for Faith Unity it stated regarding any delays and completion under the COVID-19 Pandemic would not count against the one-year completion period for the improvement work. **Council Member Sloane** asked **Solicitor Pizzo** if the same wordage should be added to this applicant. **Solicitor Pizzo** indicated in this case the improvements that are anticipated are not nearly of the size and scope as they are for the Faith Unity project. The developer is confident they can accomplish them within the time period allotted. If necessary, they will come back for an Extension Agreement as is otherwise provided for in all of the agreements.

Council Member Sloane motioned to approve as presented, **Council Member Tokmajian** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

8. CONSIDERATION OF ESCROW RELEASE FOR:

Developers Request: Samarpan Hindu Temple – Release #2
Location: 2746 Mechanicsville Road
Tax Parcel: 2-36-8
Amount: \$ 217,306.28

Engineer Benner indicated they have reviewed the release and checked it against conditions in the field and are essentially approving this release in the amount of \$217,306.28.

Council Member Tokmajian indicated there were some issues one being a silt fence and the other trash in the area and wanted to know if that was being addressed. **Engineer Benner**

indicated **Quinton Nearon, Township Principal Inspector**, has been at them to get the work completed and cleaned up. **Mr. Nearon** indicated there were some changes to the plan and there was some additional work they had to do so they have amended that plan to the County, not sure if it has been approved by County, but the amended plan has been submitted. **Council Member Tokmajian** asked if the trash was from the adjoining townhomes or was the applicant taking responsibility for the trash. **Mr. Nearon** indicated a landscaper had rented space from the property owner before the project started and the landscaper had dumped some logs but a new landscaper had taken down the silt fence in order to get to the trash, but has since been replaced.

Council Member Tokmajian motioned to approve, **Council Secretary Knowles** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

9. CONSIDERATION OF ESCROW RELEASE FOR:

Developers Request: **BSV Housing LP (Bensalem’s Veterans Housing) – Release #1**
Location: 3055 Mechanicsville Road
Tax Parcel: 2-37-63
Amount: \$ 226,236.00

Engineer Benner indicated the Release was for \$226,236.00, once again, **Mr. Nearon** has been to the sight and reviewed the itemized request, checked the filed conditions and found it to be in order.

Council Member Sloane motioned to approve as presented, **Council Member Tokmajian** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

10. CONSIDERATION OF A LAND DEVELOPMENT EXTENSION AGREEMENT:

Applicant: **BSV Housing LP (Bensalem’s Veterans Housing)**
Site Information: 3055 Mechanicsville Road
Tax Parcel: 2-37-63

Solicitor Pizzo indicated this is the project Council just approved the Escrow Release. The applicant is asking for the Extension Agreement to be extended out to December 31st, 2020. The project is well underway, they, like, most projects in the Township, were slowed down by COVID and at this point the Extension Agreement is in a form acceptable for Councils consideration and approval. It is recommended that any approval is conditioned upon a review of the Escrow account by the Finance department and the Township Engineer to make sure sufficient funds remain in place for the completion of the project.

Council Member Sloane asked if there was an estimated time of completion for this project. **Township Engineer Benner** indicated they are 75-80% completed and does not see any issue for this project to be extended to the end of the year. **Mr. Nearon** was not sure of the interior of the building but did indicate the exterior was 75-80% completed.

Council Vice President Pilieri motioned to approve, **Council Member Sloane** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

11. CONSIDERATION OF A LAND DEVELOPMENT EXTENSION AGREEMENT:

Applicant: Republic First Bank
Site Information: Southwest Corner of Street Road and Mechanicsville Road
Tax Parcel: 2-37-31

Solicitor Pizzo indicated this developer, like everyone, was shutdown by the Governor in response to the COVID crisis early this year, they are asking for their current Land Development Agreement be extended to October 31st, 2020. It is recommended that any approval is conditioned upon a review of the Escrow account by the Finance department and the Township Engineer to make sure sufficient funds remain in place for the completion of the project.

Council Member Sloane asked if three months was enough time for the completion of this project. **Township Engineer Benner** saw no problem and **Mr. Nearon** agreed.

Council Member Tokmajian motioned to approve subject to an audit of the current Escrow by the Finance department, **Council Secretary Knowles** seconded and the motion carried 5-0.

12. CONSIDERATION OF A REDUCTION OF PERMIT FEES FOR LOWER SOUTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP:

Permit Description: Replace Emergency Backup Generator
Permit Location: 4115 Chestnut Avenue

Solicitor Pizzo indicated, in this case, Lower Southampton, who owns their Sanitary Sewer System, is in the process of making an emergency backup generator replacement at their pump-station which is located at Carver and Chestnut Avenues within the territorial boundaries of Bensalem Township. The pump-station is in about a block off of Brownsville Road. While the pump-station serves Lower Southampton and contributes flows to the Poquessing Interceptor, the building happens to be located within the Township. It is therefore subject to our Building Code requirements, and in this case, building permits are required for the work that is being done and proposed by Lower Southampton Township. They requested the 50% reduction in fees which Administration requested we grant with the exception only of the State Surcharge Fee which cannot be reduced, therefore, is not included in the workout that was provided to Council in advance of this evenings meeting. The request is in order, and in keeping with Councils' policy for such reductions, if council is in a mind to grant this to a neighboring municipality.

Council Member Sloane indicated Council has always done these for religious institutions and for the school district would this be akin to granting this for the school district since it is a neighboring municipality? **Solicitor Pizzo** indicated they would fall in the category of either a non-profit or a fellow governmental entity, whichever one Council would like to categorize them in, or perhaps both.

Council Secretary Knowles motioned to approve the reduction of \$418.50 for Lower Southampton Township, **Council Vice President Pilieri** seconded and motion carried 5-0.

13. PUBLIC COMMENT EMAILS:

Council President Kisselback asked **Solicitor Pizzo** if there were any Public Comment Emails that needed to be addressed.

Solicitor Pizzo indicated the following Public Comments were submitted. These comments can be heard in their entirety at the following websites:

www.bensalempa.gov or www.youtube.com

Below are the correspondents and a short synopsis of their email:

Joseph Connelly, 568 Bristol Pike, looking for an update on the pile of dirt behind his house and other concerns regarding his property and his neighbor's property. **Solicitor Pizzo** told Council he could advise them on the issues with Mr. Connelly and Mr. Popli regarding the Township who did in fact have Mr. Connelly in court today on a number of violations and Mr. Popli has been sited on a number of violations. A discussion ensued.

Toby Kahn, 27 Freedom Lane, proud to have been a part of B3T Coalition and the B3T Diversity Committee.

Rabbi Travitsky, Bensalem Kollal and Outreach Center, 2446 Bristol Road, spoke of the amazing relationship he and his congregation has experienced with the Bensalem Township Police Department.

Carol Johnson, Bridgewater Rd., spoke highly of her involvement with B3T Diversity Committee.

Larry Leith, 19 Rucker Rd., Richboro, PA is the President of the Bensalem Police Officer's Union and honored to represent the men and women who serve the Bensalem community.

Rowayda Jaaf, 2500 Knights Rd., Apt. 161-01 is a proud member of the B3T Committee since it started.

Frank Vendetti, proud to be the neighbor and fellow HGP alumni of Councilman Ed Tokmajian.

Linconia Concord Park Historical Association, spoke about Councilman Jesse Sloane's article in the Bucks County Courier Times and the disconnect between leadership and constituents.

Director Harran commented there is a lot of misinformation out and about in the community. For comments or information to Director Harran: fharran@bensalempa.gov

Mary Ann Griffin, 3101 Addison Ct., joined B3T 3 years ago and since joining has been amazed at the outreach with other organizations to join forces in helping the Bensalem Community.

Bob Norkus, commented on the tone of the article from Councilman Jesse Sloane being far too critical.

Sr. Shaun Thomas, Principal St. Ephrem's School, spoke highly about the Bensalem Police Department.

Leann Hart, 832 Cliff Rd., supports Councilman Jesse Sloane's push for a Diversity and Inclusion advisory board.

Director Harran, again, the Director stressed misinformation regarding the diversity of who sits on the hiring board for the police. Any comments or information may be sent to fharran@bensalempa.gov

Raju Easterling, "Black Lives Matter in Buck", commented on holding police officers accountable for misconduct and reallocating funds from the police department to other services.

Director Harran, tried to address this group several times and they refuse to cooperate.

Alana Hardison, 1053 Bolton Ct., spoke about her concerns regarding police brutality in Bensalem.

William Bennett, commented if there is anyone in the community who has concerns about diversity, why not join one of the committees already established.

Teri Mayberry, 2659 Finley Avenue, commented on his disappointed in Councilman Jesse Sloane's "guest opinion" published in the Courier.

Diane Eppler, commented on the position of the trash receptacle at McDonald's.

14. OTHER BUSINESS:

All remarks can be heard in their entirety at the following websites:

www.bensalempa.gov or www.youtube.com

Council Member Sloane thanked everyone for having this discussion this evening and his intent was to get it out to the public and discuss some constructive ideas. **Council Member Sloane** fully supports the Police department and the B3T and their mission.

Council Secretary Knowles commented he didn't want people to get the impression other colleagues on Council do not care about race relations or diversity in our Township. **Council Secretary Knowles** is very proud to be a resident of Bensalem Township.

Council Member Tokmajian commented B3T was a great group. Thanked Director Harran for going over the facts. Thanked his colleagues for being open and having this discussion.

Council Member Tokmajian asked **Mr. Nearon** for an update on the Victory Square development. **Mr. Nearon** indicated he did a walk through but needed to do a final punch list and went into detail on other areas of the project.

Council Vice President Pilieri indicated he was proud to be a resident in Bensalem and proud of what this Administration has done to try and provide for everyone in our community. The Police department is seconded to none and the Roads department does their job seconded to none. There are so many good people who care about this Township.

Director of Public Safety, Fred Harran, indicated if anyone has an issue please contact him at fharran@bensalempa.gov; and thanked everyone for giving him the opportunity of being the Director of the best Police department in the United States.

The **Mayor** indicated he stays out of the political arena regarding the media. The Mayor believes in TEAMS and TEAMS work together, not against each other. We certainly can have differences and dialogue he believes is great when putting things on the table and discussing those issues. For 27 years the Mayor has had an open-door policy for anyone who has an issue and has always tried to solve the constituent's problem. Bensalem itself, the word, "City of Peace", takes the meaning of the name of his community seriously. The **Mayor** talked about B3T and how it was started with Rosemary Adiletto, and how it was all about the community and to this day is still making the community better. If anyone would like to join to make a difference please do so. The **Mayor** touched on the hard times during the pandemic. The **Mayor** asked for the dialogue to be peaceful. The **Mayor** indicated he asked for the Executive Session because he wanted to have communication, as being an outreach, with the Council members to keep the community safe. The **Mayor** would like the dialogue to be constructive, not destructive. The **Mayor** continued to say "we all have the same goals" and to reach those goals peacefully and not political. The most important thing is the safety and welfare of the community and with the Mayor being sworn in 7 times, he has kept true to his oath of office.

The **Mayor** asked **Council Member Tokmajian** if he received the email from his office which basically indicated the answers from the question he proposed to **Mr. Nearon**. **Council Member Tokmajian** indicated she, **Dawn Davis, Primary Assistant to the Mayor**, did send the response he requested through his email regarding Victory Square and was just confirming with **Mr. Nearon**.

Solicitor Pizzo indicated as a resident of this township, if you take nothing else away from tonight, it should be as the Mayor has said and the Director of Public Safety has said throughout, the things that happen in this community, particularly as they involve diversity, particularly as they involve our police department and other departments, these things didn't just start to happen in the last 6 weeks, in the wake of the murder of George Floyd, they are things that have been a part of this community for decades, they are things that are a part of this township, this administration does business. It's every day, it's not to grab a headline, it is part of what gets done every day. Every day, every year, every decade, as you heard this evening, the first in the County to do this, the first in the State to do that, it is part of what has been the agenda, it is part of what has been the plan, it is part of what the community's' government has been doing for decades. Solicitor Pizzo pleaded if you have something on your mind the people in this government are accessible to hear what you have to say.

Council President Kisselback read a statement and reiterated everything that was said throughout the evening. Bensalem Township has addressed racial equality for several decades and have come up with positive results. Examples of that, of course, Bensalem has been called the “Model of America” by the Courier Times. Also, Bensalem has bestowed the honor of not once, but twice as being “1 of 100 Best Places to Live in the Country” and again, “1 of 50 Best Places to Live in the Country”.

15. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no other business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

The Bensalem Township Council Meeting of July 27th, 2020 can be viewed in its entirety at the following websites:

www.bensalempa.gov

or

www.youtube.com

Respectfully Submitted,

**Debora F. McBreen
Recording Secretary**