

IMPACT ANALYSIS – PROPOSED CREBILLY DEVELOPMENT

OVERALL CALLS FOR POLICE SERVICE:

Data from the 2015 U.S. Census indicated that the national average for the number of individuals residing in a household is 2.6; the same census data indicated that the average number of individuals in a household in Westtown Township is 2.72. Utilizing this information, a proposed development which includes 317 units will increase the population of Westtown Township by approximately 863 residents (rounding up from 862.24).

The 2015 census indicated that Westtown Township had 10,913 residents. The addition of 863 individuals will bring the total to 11,776 residents (a 7.9% increase for the Township). It is important to note that the Westtown-East Goshen Regional Police Department currently serves Westtown, East Goshen, and Thornbury Townships. The 2015 census indicated that the population for the three Townships was approximately 32,269 and therefore, the increase of an additional 863 residents would constitute an increase of 2.55% for the overall amount of citizens served by the Department. Although it would be extremely difficult to calculate, the Department also serves a significant transient population (individuals attending school in Westtown Township or traveling through the Township on U.S. Route 202 and PA Route 3). Based upon this, the impact of the development would in all likelihood have a minimal impact on the overall staffing of the Department and the service offered to the three townships.

However, it is important to note that the police department's budget is based upon a system in which each Township's share of the overall budget is based upon the amount of time that the officers spend in each township addressing calls for service. Due to the financial impact on Westtown Township that a change in its share of the police department budget could have, examination of this issue should be considered. Although there is a possibility that an increase in population could cause a corresponding increase in calls for service from the police, the correlation between population size and calls for police service is fairly weak. For example, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) strongly discouraged utilizing population as a basis for staffing. Traditionally, several other factors have a stronger correlation to calls for service. Three of these factors are articulated below.

1. Type of facility: Schools, senior care facilities, and prisons commonly generate more calls for service than a traditional residential neighborhood. Since the proposed development would not include these components, an increase in police calls is not anticipated.
2. Population density: Residential facilities that have a higher population density (such as apartment complexes) generally have a higher rate of calls

for service than single family homes. This appears to be caused by the proximity of residents. For example, a resident playing music or having a verbal argument in an apartment complex is more likely to disturb a neighbor (resulting in a call to the police) than if the subject resided in a single family house on a one acre lot. The proposed development would be primarily single family houses with a portion of carriage houses (townhomes) and therefore, an increase in police calls is not anticipated.

3. Socioeconomic factors: Current research in this area indicates a strong correlation between calls for police service and socioeconomic status, with higher calls for service being reported in lower socioeconomic areas. The proposed development, based upon the expected housing costs, would be inhabited by individuals of higher socioeconomic status and therefore, an increase in police calls is not anticipated.

In order to estimate the potential impact that the development could have on Westtown Township's share of the police budget, a comparison between comparable developments in the Department's coverage area was conducted. The developments were selected based upon number of homes in the development and the amount of acreage included in the development. Since there were no comparably sized developments with comparable average home values, three larger developments with above average home values for the area were selected. The three developments utilized for this comparison were: Pleasant Grove, Brandywine at Thornbury, and Bow Tree. The calls for police service over the last three years (and the corresponding time spent handling the calls) were reviewed and it was determined that the average amount of calls for the three developments was 121 calls and that the average time spent by the Department addressing the calls was 51 hours per year. Based upon the current system of calculating budget responsibility for the Townships, the proposed development could be expected to increase the Township's cost for police services by approximately .05% (~ \$3,000 for the 2017 budget).

TRAFFIC CONCERNS:

1. TRAFFIC CALMING DEVICES: A significant amount of traffic travels on Route 202 in Westtown Township. Traffic backlogs frequently occur, particularly between Skiles Boulevard and Route 926, and many motorists subsequently utilize side streets to circumvent the traffic. This "cut through" traffic ultimately results in a significant amount of traffic complaints about speeding and stop sign violations from residents.

RECOMMENDATION: Consideration should be given to installing traffic calming devices at the entries to the development to proactively address these potential issues.

2. ACCESS POINT BETWEEN ROUTE 202 AND THE DEVELOPMENT: The proposed development plans show an access/exit point for traffic traveling on southbound Route 202. Due to the speeds at which vehicles are traveling on that section of Route 202 (which frequently exceed the posted 45 mph limit), the Department has concern about safety for vehicles entering/exiting at this location. Additionally, there is a strong probability that a substantial amount of the commercial vehicles (i.e., school buses, landscaping vehicles, trash trucks, deliveries) entering/exiting the development will utilize this entrance. Failure to adequately design to accommodate these vehicles may increase the amount of crashes at this location. Due to the posted speed of Route 202, an increase in crashes should not be taken lightly.

RECOMMENDATION: See #3

3. ACCESS TO DEVELOPMENT FROM W. PLEASANT GROVE ROAD: At the current time, southbound traffic from Route 202 turning on to W. Pleasant Grove Road utilizes the paved portion of the roadway to the right of the fog line as a “shoulder” to execute the turn. The shoulder at its widest point is nine feet and the nine foot width is only present for a short distance before W. Pleasant Grove Road. Since the development will increase the amount of traffic turning on to W. Pleasant Grove Road, including commercial vehicles, there is a potential for it to create more crashes due to its design.

RECOMMENDATION FOR #2 AND #3:

- Consideration should be given to widening and lengthening the shoulder on southbound Route 202 approaching W. Pleasant Grove Road (to serve a deceleration lane sufficient to accommodate commercial vehicles). The widening will reduce the likelihood that vehicles turning on to W. Pleasant Grove Road will encroach into the straight through lanes of vehicles traveling at 45 mph or higher.
- Consideration should be given to extending the acceleration lane/on ramp from W. Pleasant Grove Road to southbound Route 202 to the access point of the development. This lane would serve two purposes: as a sufficiently wide deceleration lane for vehicles entering the development from Route 202 and as an acceleration lane for vehicles trying to merge from W. Pleasant Grove Road on to southbound Route 202.
- Consideration should be given to adding an acceleration lane/on ramp for traffic entering southbound Route 202 from the development with a configuration similar to the W. Pleasant Grove Road ramp.
- To ensure a distinct separation between the deceleration lane for exiting at the development and the acceleration lane for entering from the development, a traffic island should be installed.

4. ADDITION OF AN ACCESS ROAD BETWEEN S. NEW STREET AND THE DEVELOPMENT: Traffic from the development that desires to travel north on Route 202 is forced to utilize either the Route 926 access point or the W. Pleasant Grove Road access point – both of which are poor choices from a traffic volume perspective.

- The entire area around the Route 926 access point has significant traffic backlogs, particularly during morning and evening rush hours. Forcing the majority of the traffic from the development on to Route 926 will further exacerbate the problem.
- There is currently a substantial amount of traffic traveling on W. Pleasant Grove between Route 202 and S. New Street. The proposed future connector road that will be part of the Arborview Commercial development will add to the volume, particularly at drop off/pick times for the schools and proposed day care center. Forcing traffic from this development that desires to travel north on Route 202 to choose the W. Pleasant Grove access point (via S. New Street/via Route 926/via Route 202) will further exacerbate the traffic situation on W. Pleasant Grove Road.

RECOMMENDATION: Provide an access point to the development via S. New Street if an adequate sight distance is present. However, it is strongly suggested that the design of access roadway should discourage speeding or cut through traffic. For example, adding the roadway to either Roadway “H” or “I” with a substantial curve would achieve access without promoting violations or cut through traffic.

5. ACCESS POINT BETWEEN ROUTE 926 AND THE DEVELOPMENT: The location of the proposed access point between the development and Route 926 would result in additional traffic backlog and increased crashes at the location (a site which already experiences a high volume of traffic and crashes).

RECOMMENDATION: The Department is in full agreement with the recommendation made in both the CU Kimley-Horn Traffic Engineering Review and the CU PennDOT Scoping Application Preliminary Review that the access point be moved west to align with the Bridlewood Boulevard intersection. However, the Department strongly encourages that a traffic signal also be added to permit traffic to turn on to Route 926 eastbound (from both the proposed development and the existing development (Brandywine at Thornbury) for safety.

6. CONNECTOR ROAD BETWEEN ROUTE 926 AND W. PLEASANT GROVE ROAD: The CU PennDOT Scoping Application Preliminary Review recommends that the development include a connector road that provides a

direct connection between Route 926 and W. Pleasant Grove Road. The current plan provides a roadway, although it is circuitous, that connects the two roadways.

RECOMMENDATION: The Department strongly recommends **AGAINST** the inclusion of a direct connector road between the two roadways. Although this would reduce traffic on Route 202 and provide an alternate route for motorists to use to avoid Route 202 backlogs, it would encourage more traffic to cut through residential areas – a problem that has traditionally brought complaints of traffic violations from Westtown Township residents.