

PUBLIC HEARING
Chartiers Township Board of Supervisors
Conditional Use Application for
Bird Run Gas Well
May 26, 2015
5:00 p.m.

A. William Kiehl called the Public Hearing, on the Conditional Use Application for Bird Run Gas Well., at 5:00 p.m., Tuesday May 26, 2015.

ATTENDANCE:

Attending the hearing were Supervisors Richard W. Metzler, John M. Marcischak and Mr. Kiehl. Also in attendance were: James Liekar-Solicitor; Jodi L. Noble-Township Manager; Daniel Slagle-Township Engineer; Samuel Stockton-Community Development Coordinator; Kim Strinisa-Court Reporter and Wendy Williams-Recording Secretary.

Mr. John Marcischak-Supervisor went on record stating: "I have gas lease with Range Resources which is a part of the Bird Run Unit. Therefore I will abstain from active participation with the Bird Run Conditional Use Hearing this evening and will be prepared to abstain from voting on the issue. I would like our Solicitor to comment on what I have come to understand as a rule of necessity in law."

Mr. Liekar: "If it is necessary for this Board to do what they are legally obligated to do is vote on an application, by necessity Mr. Marcischak may be required to vote on that motion."

STAFF COMMENTS:

Mr. Stockton: "On March 18, 2015 Range Resources Appalachia LLC applied for a Conditional Use under Ordinance 2012-334, Section 2, Paragraph 2, Subparagraph A for a proposed gas well pad, for three (3) proposed gas wells at 2,990 L.F. access road on properties zoned R-2 Residential owned by Blue Herron L.L.C. Upon preliminary review an official filing date March 23, 2015 was designated. The Conditional Use Application was reviewed by the Chartiers Township Planning Commission on April 21, 2015. The Planning Commission made a recommendation for the Conditional Use by the Board of Supervisors. The Bird Run Conditional Use Application was advertised in the newspaper of local circulation; notices were sent to affected residents within 300-ft. A notice was posted on the property in compliance with the Municipality Planning Code and applicable Township Ordinances."

Mrs. Noble: "We would like to enter into the record the following items: Chapter 350 of the Chartiers Township Code of Ordinances, Zoning; Public Notices for this hearing; Conditional Use Application for the Bird Run Well; Planning Commission recommendation regarding the Conditional Use Application Bird Run Well; Minutes of the Planning Commission Meeting of April 21, 2015 and a letter received, dated May 21, 2015, from residents of the Summit."

PRESENTATION BY THE APPLICANT:

“Jim Cannon and my position is Director of Local Government Relations.” The proposal calls for a three (3) well pad site constructed for 10 wells. Construction is projected to start this summer with drilling to begin next year. This is located on the Blue Herron L.L.C. and C.W. Brothers. Time frames: The Air Rig in January 2016 and the Big Rig: June 2016 and the Frack to be determined. The closest house is approximately just over 1,000-ft. from the end of the pad. Water for the frack, right now, is proposed to come from the Carol Baker property. Range has agreed to provide “Sound Walls” on the sites on the Southern and Southwestern sides. Traffic Directions: Coming off Kings Road. The access road is approximately 2,900-ft (air feet). The access road is primarily on the Blue Herron, but it crosses over C.W. and Brothers L.L.C. Two of the three twirling permits have been approved and waiting on the third. The ESGP2 was submitted in February 2015 and still waiting approval. The property owners have approved well site agreement.

Q: Mr. Metzler inquired: The plan is for three (3) well pad - construction for 10 wells. What does that mean?

A: Mr. Cannon Responded: That means it’s going to be constructed to accommodate up to 10 wells, right now we are drilling three (3).

Q: Mr. Metzler inquired: If this plan gets approved for three (3) wells; how are the seven (7) additional wells approved? Do you have to come for this process all over again or does the State approval on the well give you permission to drill additional seven (7) wells?”

A: Mr. Cannon Responded: The process is we would have to apply through the State to get new drilling permits for additional wells, but as it stands now we would not have to come back for a Conditional Use to drill additional wells on an existing pad.

Q: Mr. Metzler inquired: Once you get approval for three (3) well pad, you can add up to 10 wells with just the State’s permission and the Township won’t get involved in that?

A: Mr. Cannon Responded: Regulatory standpoint that is correct.

Q: Mr. Metzler inquired: What distance out from the well are you going to test the water?

A: Mr. Cannon Responded: 2,500 feet.

Q: Mr. Metzler inquired: “Is this type of testing where you are going to get a bench warrant test on the water people currently have? Some people have wells and some have sustains. Will this be an initial test or base line? Are you going to testing and monitoring quality of the water continuously?”

A: Mr. Cannon Responded: We will be testing before drilling activity; after drilling activity. We will be testing ground sources of water.

Q: Mr. Metzler inquired: Is it going to be continuous monitoring program? For those people who have sustrons and are going to be drinking water that comes off the roof, there might be dust and so forth conditions of water in their sistrons may change. Is it your intention to monitor for health effects or just monitor to see what contribution drilling might be making to the quality of water?

A: Mr. Cannon Responded: Our testing centers around the drilling activities and testing around our ground water sources. We're not going to say we are going to test sistron sources.

Q: Mr. Metzler inquired: Water from Carol Baker impoundment. Is there going to be a water line brought out to serve certain people on Paxton Farm Road? If you're bringing water out from the Carol Baker impoundment it sounds like it won't be a water line out to serve those people.

A: Mr. Cannon Responded: We have been investigating the potential of a water line up Paxton Farms Road by Pennsylvania Water Company. We are still getting final cost estimates. There are three different ways to get water up there. We bring a water line up there. We will be using that water to frack the wells. We don't have a final decision on that line yet.

Q: Mr. Metzler inquired: You said there would be a sound wall on the Southern and Southwestern boarders. Are you talking about the Kingston Estates area and the Summit area? Is there going to be any sound wall to protect the residents on Paxton Farm Road or Kings Road?

A: The sound wall on the Southwestern side is intended for the area you are talking about. That portion of the well pad in the direction we are going is a great giant cut in the well pad and the sound will bounce into the side of the hill and there will be no noise to the homeowners on Paxton Farm area.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Harold Hall of 311 Windsor Circle, Washington, PA. Chairperson Kingston Estates Homeowners Association. The sound walls from the three pads - What is the distance of these three pads from Kingston Estates?

Response: 2,900 feet.

Mr. Hall: "How much traffic will occur on these roads coming from Allison Hollow from January through the summer?"

Response: The heaviest truck traffic will be during the delivery of the rock for the well pad.

Mr. Hall: "Will the sound walls be constructed before the construction of the well pads?"

Response: No. They will be constructed after the pad but before the air rig comes on site.

Allison Pagano, of 403 Summit Court, Houston PA expressed a concern was air and water pollution.

Mrs. Kristie Schussler of 406 Summit Court, Houston PA expressed a concern was the health and safety for the children and families in the area.

Miss Sandy Politan of 306 Windsor Circle, Washington, PA. asked, "Where exactly is this well going? Is it off Kings Road or Paxton Road? (the location was pointed out on the map)"

Mr. Michael Dorish of 202 Summit Circle, Houston PA's biggest concern health and safety issues; disruption of life styles, loss of property value.

Mr. Craig Bieda of 405 Summit Circle Houston PA advised the Board that he currently works in the gas field being on 40-50 Township locations; six to 8 companies in the tristate area. He advised that he has had more than one occasion evacuate a location due to a natural gas release.

Mr. Doug Rush of 206 Summit Circle Houston PA addressed the Board, saying we are not against the exploration of the gas industry. We are against our lives being disrupted for who knows how long, by something that is taking place in a residential area which shouldn't take place in the first place. People have the right to clean air, pure water and the preservation of the natural scenic, historic and esthetic values of grounds. He also had a concern of the health of individuals.

Mr. Rush question: "What are the number of abandon wells in Chartiers Township and are they plugged?" Mr. Rush provided the response that there are 15 abandon wells in Chartiers Township documented that haven't been plugged. There have catastrophic consequences because of that.

Mr. Rush question: "Is the water being trucked in or is there going to be a pipe line? I believe you said it was going to be a pipe line."

Response: "It's going to be a pipeline"

Mr. Rush: "Is that 100% it's going to be a pipeline? The reason I ask is that's 75 trucks an hour."

Response: A pipeline.

Mr. Rush: "Do you have the name of your 24-hr complaint liaison?"

Response: We have a response center.

Mr. Metzler: For clarification from Range. I asked earlier concerning water the answer was we are looking into options for bringing water from the mine on the property, but Jim's opening remarks indicated the water would be coming from the Carol Baker impoundment.

Response: There are two potential pipe line projects. One is the fresh like up Paxton Farm Road. The other is a pipe line that will go to the Carol Baker where we will bring water from the Carol Baker impoundment to the well pad.

Mr. Metzler: If water is being brought from Carol Baker it will be piped and not trucked? Is that what you are saying and then is there a third pipe line anticipated to take the gas back to MarkWest rather than flaring? Did I understand there would be a third pipeline?

Response: That's a natural pipe line.

Mr. Metzler: My question to our Solicitor: Is it an incomplete application if all these pipe lines are not specified in the details of the decision we're going to have to make.

Mr. Liekar: "I would not consider it an incomplete application."

Janna Luton of 404 Summit Court Houston PA – What we are asking that you consider moving further back from our properties because we all have small children in the neighborhood.

Dr. McIntyre of 102 Meadowview Court (Pediatrician) Having an office in Peters Township: Gas extraction is a heavy industrial process that is highly pollutant especially to the air. This causes serious and adverse physical and mental health problems. Consider the effects of this type of development would have the health of residents especially children. Air impurities increase the risk of asthma in children that have acute as well as chronic respiratory diseases, also, childhood obesity, autism, attention deficit, hyperactivity, congenital heart disease, cancers, anxiety, and depression.

Mr. Blaine Lucas Legal Counsel for Range – Wishes to go on record that the Doctor is not a resident of the Township and all his testimony is essentially his professional opinion as pediatrician. All his testimony refers to a list of studies being or here say linked to oil and gas. We object to the relevance of hearsay of those items.

Miss Dolores Roppelt of 135 Adlin Ave. Houston PA – the traveling of these trucks – Was Western Avenue considered of one of the main roads or is just Allison Hollow being considered?

Response: Allison Hollow was considered the access.

Mr. Metzler: "It is our understanding the trucks will come down Hickory Ridge to Allison Hollow to Kings Road and across Kings Road to the access road to the well pad."

Miss Roppelt: "What monetary value does Chartiers Township getting from this drilling, if any from Range?"

Mr. Metzler: "The park we have Arnold Park some of the land have mineral rights small acres (31 acres something like that)."

Mr. Kiehl: "That is where we get the Act 13 money whether it is here or not. That is where we get the Act 13 money."

Mr. Metzler: "I think there is a misconception. We as a Board did not invite oil and gas drilling into the Township so we could make money. There is an oil and gas drilling ordinance and state requirements which are being followed, but there was no invitation for the Township to make money."

Mrs. Melony Rush, 206 Summit Circle Houston PA – From past meetings we have come to this particular well site has been on and off; on and off. This came from the Range Community and not the Supervisors. This has been on and off the table. This is mainly safety because this is the first well that has been so close to these many houses. Another concern was emergency

evacuation concerns and notifications and procedures for our neighborhood and I would like Range to answer the question

Response (from Range): “There is a Countywide Plan that addresses any potential issues or hazards for incidents on an active center. Township by Township, we have an in house safety department and our Safety Coordinator has a good relationship with all the First Responders in the area both at the Local level and County level. We work with the Countywide Emergency Management Folks and then we work on a Township Municipal level with Fire Department, Police Department and First Responders where we operate and from there they can work with their response plan. The notification will come from the Emergency Management folks or the First Responders. They will develop that plan.

Mr. Metzler: The Emergency Plan has been updated and periodically updated and when we meet the next time if there are any additional wells those will be worked in into the emergency preparedness plan. We have one. We modified it. We have a current emergency plan. The site they are proposing will be integrated into the plan.

Mr. Dan Grossman, of 409 Summit Circle, Houston PA – We moved here from Pittsburgh because we like it the way it is as it should be. Is the Township prepared to enforce traffic safety on Allison Hollow Road? We don’t want to be placed into the position that my safety, my daughter’s safety or anyone else’s safety is compromised to benefit the oil and gas industry.

Mr. Scott Mazutis, of 104 Summit Circle Houston PA. – Moved to the Summit area from Cummins Avenue because of the quieter neighborhood. No un-natural light at night. No traffic that the Summit Community has provided. These gas wells are not in the best interest of the residents of the Summit. Is this going to be one of the closest wells to a community this large?

Range Response: There are a couple in Washington County. One of the Paxton Pads is closer (560-ft); Cross Creek: Stepovitch Pad: there were 42 homes 1,500-ft the closest stood at 750-ft. the Troyer Site in Cecil is a lot closer to homes (500-ft. 8 to 10 in a strip).

Mr. Steven Plonski of 401 Summit Court, Houston PA – This is an industry. This is an industrial activity. It will produce light, noise, air pollution. This application being submitted under Ordinance 2012-334 enacted to be consistent with Act 13. Act 13 has been ruled unconstitutional. A letter of May 21, 2015 was submitted, on behalf of the residents of the Summit, noting the invalidity of moving forward while having this invalid ordinance.

Mr. Jon Kelly of 110 West Country Barn Road, Houston PA – Two questions: Is there any access going up through the Summit to get to that pad? One of my neighbor’s house cracked at one time. We had mining underneath. Is there any chance of cracking during this process? As a School Board member I want to make sure that the Township – we never practiced those emergency evacuation procedures from the high school and the elementary school.

Mr. Kiehl: “That is the responsibility of the Emergency Management Coordinator.”

Mr. Doug Rush, of 206 Summit Circle, Houston PA – There was an explosion on a well pad over in Green County. We evacuated people in a five to seven mile radius for a better part of two weeks. That was a dozen homes.

Miss Sandy Politan, of 316 Windsor Circle, Washington PA – If approved, do we have any idea of what these pads look like?

Range Response – The dimension are 325-ft x 345-ft rectangular; the access road on one side coming into it. The land will be graded, rock it and once the pad is leveled off there is E& S Controls, all State mandated. Doing three wells beginning with the air rig with one or two work trailers; maybe a pick-up truck or two. Once the vertical portions are drilled to depth we will bring in the big rig and it finishes off the vertical portion and then do the horizontal portion and do the curve, .taking place at 1,000-ft.

Mr. Michael Dorish, of 202 Summit Circle, Houston PA – Mr. Dorish’s concern was the drilling within 1,000-ft. of the homes in the Summit because it disrupts the residents life styles and property values, safety concerns. The residents have no financial interest and the Supervisors are to protect and govern the interest of the majority of those affected.

Mr. Craig Bieda, od 405 Summit Circle, Houston PA concern is if there are any gas driven engines continuously running equipment used on location and if there is any exhaust burning making a continuous flame.

Range Respond – It is very common there are small engines on the pads. They don’t run continuously. They only run when certain pressure thresholds are recovered. A closed burner unit is basically a cylinder some in the neighborhood of 12-ft. high, an enclosed flare for back up purposes. Monitors work 24 hours a day; 7 days a week.

Mrs. Amy Bess, of 119 Summit Circle Houston – “Will sound barriers be in place, before the drilling process begins? Is there any data on the increase or decrease in values of property?”

Range Response: There is data through Washington County

Mrs. Bess: “How far were they 1,000-2,000 feet?”

Range Response: “Not sure.”

Mrs. Bess: “There are so many families starting out and buy homes expecting them to go up in value as they are building their families. We buy these homes; we don’t want to be near these well sites.”

Mr. Harold Hall, of 311 Windsor Circle, Washington – Being the gas lines have already been installed; improvements of Allison Hollow and Kings Road have been done to me this is more of an informational meeting than an approval for Range Resource.

Mr. Metzler: The information that a gas line has already been installed is a Sunoco Pipeline and has nothing to do with this well site.

SUPERVISORS COMMENTS:

Mr. Metzler: “It is my understanding there are no impoundments in this plan. Is that correct?”

Response: “That is correct?”

Mr. Metzler: “The same holds for compressor stations? There is none, to my knowledge, in this plan?”

Mr. Kiehl: “Range does not put the compressor stations in. That is a decision of Mark West. Is that correct?”

Response: “Yes. And also, there are no compressor stations on well sites.”

Mr. Metzler: “One of the issues I have, that I think we are going to have to get legal advice from our Legal Counsel on, and there are a lot of unknowns associated with this application. The pipeline, whether they are coming from Carol Baker, whether it is city water and a gas line to take the gas line from that well to the Mark West Plant. All these are unknowns associated with the well site for which the specifications that we have might lead us to make better recommendations of what the conditions will be. With regard to a Road Agreement; a road agreement is necessary to continue with a long term road maintenance and improvement program. Not just when the well is being put in, but because there is going to be truck traffic forever taking out the liquid condensate Depending how wet the gas is, there is going to be a need some support in maintaining roads that are used as long as these trucks are using our roads. With regard to each well it is my understanding that each vertical drill is a process is about one week in duration. Each horizontal drilling action is about two weeks in duration and then the completions. It sounds like a real nice word, but it describes the fracking and capturing the gas in a one month period. During those periods of vertical drill, horizontal drill and completions- it is my understanding that you need to work 24-hours around the clock. When I add that up with each well it’s about a half a year of 24-hour working around the clock doing the drilling. Do I have this right or wrong?”

Range Response: “It is correct that we have to work 24-hours.”

Mr. Metzler: “During vertical/horizontal drilling and completion?”

Range Response: “Correct.”

Mr. Metzler: “When you add that up with three wells; that’s about a half a year of work. A half a year around the clock work if I understand that correctly.”

Range Response: “I don’t think that quite correct, its 30-days for all the wells and not 30-days per well.”

Mr. Metzler: "Okay. Thirty days plus the three weeks for the other two operations."

Range Response: Yes.

Mr. Metzler: "Do I understand the application does not ask for living quarters at the site for employees that are working there, trailers on the property?"

Mr. Kiehl: "Will there be trailers on the site?"

Range Response: "Yes."

Mr. Metzler: "The number of people that will be living there and how long?"

Range Response: "During the drilling stage."

Mr. Metzler: "Do you have any staging areas for various trucks that have to pull over to wait their turn in line. Are staging areas identified that might affect traffic on Kings Road and along the access road?"

Range Response: "There is a pull off area identified on the plans."

Mr. Kiehl: "You only allow four trucks on the pad at a time?"

Range Response: "We also marked the in the length of the access road."

Mr. Kiehl: "You also show 100 some feet for access pull off on one section of that road. Am I right?"

Range Response: "Yes."

Mr. Kiehl: "That's maybe three trucks."

Range Response: "Correct. There is enough room for the trucks to stagger and pass."

Mr. Metzler: "Do you have any estimate of the total volume of trucks anticipated for the development of the wells, vertical/horizontal drilling and the completion of the wells and any projection of truck traffic after the site has been completed removing the natural gas?"

Range Response: "Yes, but I don't have that with me. We do have that broken down. I can certainly provide that to you."

Mr. Metzler: "Do you have plans for traffic control at the access of Kings Road off this maintenance road? I'm assuming you are going to need some traffic control at that location."

Range Response: “As we do at all sites, we employ flagmen. Any type of signage the Township would request.”

Mr. Kiehl: “Up to the Guard House – will that be black topped? (Kings Road to the Guard House.).

Range Response: “Not planned.”

Mr. Metzler: “What are your plans in keeping the dust down?”

Range Response: “Watering. Once the site is completed gravel will be spread.”

Mrs. Sherry Bieda:, of 405 Summit Circle, Houston –“You talk about the paving the road. That’s for the first three wells. What about the 10 additional wells....

Mr. Metzler: “Seven.”

Mrs. Bieda: “Seven total of 10. All of that time and all of this activity it’s going to bear on our community.”

Mr. Metzler: “We understand that and that’s why I am trying to get it in the record of the time of operation of 24-hours, then 7-7. I just have a general comment, the number of folks that spoke tonight requested the Supervisors do the right thing and make the decision and the residents put us in office and another brought up due process. What you need to understand is due process. We are in the midst of process on hearing an application requesting conditions for what an ordinance already permits and the ordinance has due process where people can come in and talk about what they wanted to see. I’ll say this: Our interest is making sure that the ordinance and regulations are implemented for the benefit of all and some of the laws that were mentioned here tonight are here to protect all property owners and each property owner. That means the property owner who wants to lease their land for something the State permits aren’t going to be bothered by that. If you a lease you have opportunity negotiating first hand what conditions you might want on the situation. If you don’t have a lease you are looking for this process to implement the rules and regulations properly for one and all. That’s what we are doing collecting information and then we are going to follow the rules and regulations that we can in making a decision.”

A motion was made by Mr. Metzler and seconded by Mr. Kiehl to adjourn the hearing on the Bird Run Gas Well at 7:15 p.m. The motion was carried.

John M. Marcischak
Secretary

Wendy Williams, Recording Secretary