

**Lower Nazareth Township  
Nazareth Area School District  
Workshop Meeting  
Conceptual Discussion for New Elementary School  
June 30, 2025**

In Attendance:

Lower Nazareth Township:

James Pennington, Chairman  
Martin Boucher, Vice-Chairman  
Stephen Brown, Supervisor  
Nancy Teague, Supervisor  
Amy Templeton, Supervisor  
Gary Asteak, Esq.  
Lori Stauffer, Township Manager  
Lori Seese, Planning & Zoning Administrator

Nazareth Area School District

Arif Fazil, Engineer  
Victor Scomillio, Esq.  
Linda Stubits, School Board  
Wayne Simpson, School Board  
Jake Frey, School Board  
Mr. Santos, Lower Nazareth Elementary  
School Principal

A joint workshop meeting was held between the Lower Nazareth Township Board of Supervisors and the Nazareth Area School District Board. The meeting was duly advertised by both the Township and the School District.

Victor Scomillio reported the school district has been having continuing discussions with LVHN for lands near Hecktown Oaks. The price per acre is eight times the cost for the Fox property. He had no other property updates.

He further stated the Fox property is 43 acres. The school only needs 15 acres. He stated the balance could be left in open space. The school is willing to discuss joint needs with the Township, a joint venture, or leave the remaining acres open with no development.

Arif Fazil stated it has been very challenging to find a site with two separate road entrances. The Fox property has two roads for access. The shape of the tract allows for possibly two separate uses. The school would have a maximum of 600 students. The required parking is 80 spaces, and they have depicted 113 spaces. They have also provided room for 87 cars to line up for pick-up. Lower Nazareth Elementary currently has approximately 75 cars stacked at any time. They could also double stack the cars if necessary.

He further stated the proposal is for a single-story elementary school with a height of 16-17 feet. There would be full emergency access around the entire building. The proposed site plan and floor plan were reviewed. Mr. Fazil further stated a traffic study will be performed. A thorough geotechnical analysis has been performed. The site has public water access available. The elementary school has two peak times when cars will be coming and going from the site.

Attorney Scomillio stated the Board could use a text amendment or an overlay district that would permit a public school instead of changing the underlying zoning.

## **LOWER NAZARETH TOWNSHIP BOARD COMMENTS**

Supervisor Pennington stated the Township worked for two years on their updated zoning ordinance and prior to that the Township adopted an Official Map. He stated on both maps that this land has been marked for preservation. Attorney Scomillio stated the school district has been diligent in looking for other properties. The only other one where there has been any discussion has a price point that is eight times the cost of the Fox property.

Supervisor Boucher questioned if the school would consider putting a conservation easement on the remaining acreage and keeping it open space? Attorney Scomillio stated he was unable to commit to that request. Supervisor Boucher also questioned the depicted area on the map that shows “future septic.” Mr. Fazil stated the school district looked at the possibility of public sewer. Unfortunately, it is not feasible unless they spend an inordinate amount of money. Supervisor Boucher questioned if this site was being proposed for a future building. Attorney Scomillio responded that the location of the additional bed is only indicative of a requirement for the development.

Supervisor Templeton questioned if there was a potential for adding a second floor to this building if they needed to do that in the future? Mr. Fazil responded that there is a cost involved in building a school which would support a second floor. The proposed school would be for 600 students only.

Supervisor Teague stated the Township is sensitive to the needs of the Township’s farmers. The reason why the Fox property is priced as it is because it’s zoned agricultural. It doesn’t seem fair to rezone land after it’s been purchased.

She also commented that the public sewer requirement is there for a reason. The implementation of on-lot septic for this use doesn’t seem appropriate. Mr. Fazil responded it is not practical or feasible to bring public sewer to the site.

Supervisor Teague also questioned the location of gas line and what type of safety assessment has been performed about the proximity of the gas line? Mr. Fazil stated the school district has not met with UGI to discuss their protocols.

Supervisor Brown questioned if the school district made any consideration of adopting Act 4, which helps farmers to preserve their land by freezing real estate taxes. He stated the county and township have committed to implementing Act 4. He asked if the NASD was in favor of approving? Linda Stubits stated Stuart Whiteleather, NASD Business Manager investigated it and he would be the one to provide feedback on that topic.

Supervisor Brown stated the Board of Supervisors was caught off guard that the school district entered into an agreement of sale to buy the land. He thought we were collaborating. He also stated the school should be on public sewer.

Supervisor Brown questioned if the school is on the outer edge of Lower Nazareth Township, will there be redistricting? Attorney Scomillio stated some students may come from Tatamy and Nazareth Borough. Some redistricting will occur.

Supervisor Brown further questioned how will that shorten bus routes when it's on the far edge of the Township? Attorney Scomillio responded they don't have bus routes. The school district wants the minimal amount of disturbance to the students. Supervisor Brown inquired about the additional topics:

1. Traffic - There are a lot of intersections that the township would be responsible for updating the roads and intersections going to the school, at a huge cost to the township constituents. Attorney Scomillio stated there would be 12 buses. The traffic would not be as significant as other developments.
2. What is Plan B if the Township doesn't rezone this land? The Board previously told the school district multiple times that the township does not want to rezone the land. Attorney Scomillio stated the school would need to formulate a Plan B and Plan C.
3. At a prior meeting, Supervisor Templeton requested the school district to inquire with Northampton County about their feedback on the location of the school as it would abut against Louise Moore Park. Attorney Scomillio stated the school had not reached out to the county. He further stated the county should be aware of the proposal; however, no one from the county reached out to the school district.

Supervisor Pennington stated any improvements that are absolutely necessary to the intersection or other intersections should be the responsibility of the school district. Attorney Scomillio stated the MPC does not require off-site improvements by any developer, including the school district. Supervisor Pennington stated the Lower Nazareth Township taxpayers will end up paying for it.

Supervisor Teague stated the Nazareth Area School District is asking the Lower Nazareth Township constituents to bear the cost of improving these roads. She has a hard time understanding this request when the entire NASD School Board is not behind funding the school.

Supervisor Templeton questioned why the school district moved forward with the purchase of the property prior to coming to the Township for the necessary approvals. Attorney Scomillio stated the sale is not final. He is not at liberty to disclose the terms of the sale; however, the school is in their due diligence phase.

Supervisor Pennington stated he is not prepared to make a decision tonight. The Board will need more feedback from the school district on several issues.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Bob Hoyer, 365 Country Club Road – Mr. Hoyer questioned stormwater management of the site. Mr. Fazil stated the design includes the use of underground detention basins. The water will go to the same place it goes now.

Mr. Hoyer also questioned where is the parking for people to get to the ball fields? He thought they were willing to allow the Township to use the fields. Mr. Fazil stated use of the fields by the public would not be permitted during the school day. Otherwise, the public could use the 17 parking spaces on the side of the school.

Mr. Hoyer concluded his comments by stating the construction of a school on this site means that a local farmer will lose land that has traditionally been farmed at the same time his taxes are going to go up.

David McGinnis of 4206 N Mayfield Circle stated the school should have been setting money aside to purchase land and improve existing facilities. They have just been kicking the can down the road. The high school will also need improvements in the near future. The school district has placed the Lower Nazareth Township Board of Supervisors in a bad position by entering into a contract to buy land that isn't zoned for what they want to do.

Dave Halteman of 4065 Hecktown Road asked if the property was sold or under contract? Attorney Scomillio stated the property is under agreement.

#### **TOWNSHIP SUPERVISOR COMMENTS**

Supervisor Teague stated some of the original PowerSchool data is still incorrect. The Township Manager provided the correct information; however, the PowerSchool analytics have not changed.

The Lower Nazareth Township Board requested more information and/or answers to the following issues:

1. Analytics updated for the current housing projections.
2. Whether the district would place a conservation easement for the remaining acreage
3. Cost of road improvements and how that will be handled by NASD
4. Consider providing future expansion abilities for the building?
5. Sewer line feasibility: NASD will provide data on why public sewer is unavailable.
6. Gas line safety protocols / contact with gas companies.
7. Reach out to Northampton County to ask for feedback on the location of the school next to the park.

Supervisor Teague stated a response of "willing to consider" will not be an acceptable response to the issues. Attorney Scomillio questioned when the Board is seeking responses by. Supervisor Pennington stated he would like responses back in time for the July 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT** - Adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Lori A. Stauffer

Township Manager