

Testimony of Southeastern Adams Volunteer Emergency Services Regarding Proposed Zoning Change from Agriculture (A) to Suburban Residential (R-1) in Conewago Township, Adams County Pa.

Presented May 20, 2019, and again on July 27, 2020, Public Hearing of the Township Supervisors

The following position of the Southeastern Adams Volunteer Emergency Services (SAVES) was unanimously approved by the members at the general membership meeting of May 7, 2019.

SAVES has several concerns for the Supervisors to consider regarding any proposed zoning change.

First, SAVES' position is that if the lands adjacent to the SAVES acreage, station and social hall are developed for residential houses, every subdivided deed should have a notation properly presented on the document that clearly notifies the buyer about SAVES operations and activities. This deed notation which would detail SAVES as both an emergency services and a volunteer organization, will conduct activities that are core to SAVES mission. Potential homeowners would acknowledge specifically, but not limited to, parking lot lights and noise, ingress and egress of a high volume of vehicular traffic from fund raising events, amplified music and verbiage inside and outside the social hall. Additionally, there would be the intrusion of emergency lights and sirens from multiple emergency vehicles responding in excess of 1500 calls per year. SAVES believes that such an acknowledgement by the potential homeowner will, in part, protect SAVES from unwanted conflicts with neighbors that would be rooted in the lack of understanding of SAVES activities and operations.

Second, in order to minimize the complaints regarding noise, light and emergency vehicle operations, SAVES agrees with the Adams County Office of Planning and Development recommendation that Conewago Township require screening and/or buffering around the SAVES property. The possibility still exists that SAVES will build a pavilion on the south side of our property as approved by our land development plan.

Third, SAVES also agrees with the Adams County Office of Planning and Development recommendation that procedurally, Conewago Township update the Comprehensive Plan first, with input from SAVES, before moving forward with the Zoning Ordinance Amendment.

Lastly, SAVES believes that the on-going build out of residential development will continue to place additional burdens on an already over-burdened emergency services delivery system, especially Emergency Medical Service (EMS). SAVES currently underwrites most of a \$1.28 million budget receiving less than 10% (126K) from Conewago Township. In fact, SAVES intends to request additional funds later this year for the 2020 budget to assist in addressing a continuing deficit in EMS & Fire Service operations. Conewago Township is one of the few municipalities that does not impose a .25 dedicated mill tax for emergency services.