BENSALEM TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES

Monday
October 26th, 2026

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:
Edward Tokmajian, Jr., Council President
Jesse Sloane, Council Vice President
Joseph Wenzel, Jr., Council Secretary
Edward Kisselback, Council Member
Joseph Knowles, Council Member

SUPPORTING STAFF PRESENT:
Mayor Joseph DiGirolamo
Debora McBreen, Council Clerk/Recording Secretary
Joseph Pizzo, Township Solicitor
Nicole Khan, Township Engineer
Philip Wursta, Township Engineer

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 their microphone.

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING:

Council President Tokmajian opened the meeting with a moment of silence and/or prayer, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. INTRODUCTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS AND STAFF:

Council President Tokmajian introduced the Council Members and Supporting Staff.

Council President Tokmajian – Mr. Pizzo, any changes to the agenda this evening.

Solicitor Pizzo – Yes, Mr. President the Township received earlier this afternoon an email from the engineer representing Holy Ghost Prep on agenda item number 5, the minor land development for the tennis courts, asking that the item be tabled from this evening's agenda and move to a date certain of December 14th.

Council President Tokmajian – asked for a motion to move agenda item number 5 to a date certain of December 14th.

Council Vice President Sloane – made a motion to table agenda item number 5 to a date certain of December 14th.

Councilman Kisselback – second and the motion carried 5-0.

Council President Tokmajian – indicated that if there was anyone in the audience for agenda item 5, it will be heard on December 14th.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT – LIMITED TO AGENDA ITEMS ONLY:

Council President Tokmajian indicated the Public Comment will be heard at the time the agenda item is heard. Seeing no one come forward the first of two Public Comments was closed.

4. APPROVAL OF COUNCIL MINUTES:

Council President Tokmajian – indicated agenda item number 4 the approval of Council Minutes for October 13th, 2026. Council was asked for any changes, revisions, updates that they wanted to make.

Councilman Knowles indicated that he spoke to Mrs. McBreen, Recording Secretary, in regards to some grammar issues regarding his comments.

Councilman Knowles motioned to accept the Minutes from October 13th as presented with the corrections that were indicated in a conversation with Mrs. McBreen.

Council Vice President Sloane – second and the motion carried 5-0.

5. CONSIDERATION OF A MINOR LAND DEVELOPMENT FOR:

Applicant:	Holy Ghost Prepatory
Location:	2429 Bristol Pike
Proposed Use:	Tennis Courts
Zoning Classification:	IN - Institutional
Tax Parcel:	02-061-288

This item was tabled by a prior motion.

6. PUBLIC HEARING ON THE DESIGNATION OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT 4626 SOMERTON ROAD, TREVOSE, TAX PARCEL NO. 02-003-002-055 AS AN ELIGIBLE PROPERTY AND A DESIGNATED AREA UNDER THE PENNSYLVANIA LERTA ACT:

Council President Tokmajian – indicated that agenda item number 6 and 7, both items are related to the same topic. Before the presentation Mr. Tokmajian indicated over the past several months, they have taken a proactive approach to the shaping of Bensalem's future. That includes developing protections around potential data center development, while also to attract businesses that bring jobs, investment, and lasting benefits to our community. Helping secure productive uses for existing properties and also to keep those sites from becoming candidates for data centers and as we all know has been a hot topic this year.

This property that they will be speaking of this evening is an example of that effort and through ongoing discussions with the potential buyer we have an opportunity to bring an established business to Bensalem. With substantial private investment and potential for nearly 300 jobs, attracting an employer to be able to

fill this and occupy this space of this size is of significant opportunity. To be transparent with everyone up here I will tell you that I visited the business firsthand to really better understand the operations and I came away encouraged that they would be a really strong community partner for Bensalem.

Bensalem was competing with another community in another state for this investment. And this incentive has been an important part of bringing the project here. And we are respecting the company's confidentiality just simply as they manage their own communications.

The proposed LERTA would provide a 10-year exemption from township real estate taxes on the added assessed value of eligible construction and improvements and taxes on the land existing improvements remain payable and the added value becomes taxable after the exemption ends and the designation applies to the property and the exemption would continue for its remaining term. We would be foregoing taxes on just strictly on those improvements temporarily to help secure long-term benefits. Those long-term benefits meaning including employment opportunities for Bensalem residents spending at local businesses and potential additional earned income tax revenue.

That's an opportunity to shape what comes to Bensalem and put an existing property to productive use. And for those reasons, I would certainly support what we're looking at this evening.

Solicitor Pizzo - Certainly. Thank you. So, before council this evening in succession are two items. The public hearing on the designation of the eligible property and designated area under the LERTA statute and then the adoption of the LERTA ordinance itself that would establish the exemption for eligible properties and set forth the manner in which the program would be put into place. LERTA, for those who are unaware, stands for local economic revitalization tax assistance. It's a program that's existed in the state for a number of years now, probably for as long as I've been a municipal solicitor. So, 25-30 years, the program's been in place.

Here this evening for the public hearing presentation is Jeff Darwak from the Bucks County Redevelopment Authority. Senator Farry is here as well, I believe, to speak to the KOIZ that was put in place as part of the designation of this property. Prior to this property being considered for the LERTA first and foremost, at the state level the property was sought and was given designation as a keystone opportunity zone. With that designation comes certain tax advantages again to help incentivize the relocation of this business to Bensalem. I think that's as much as I need to say at this point. With your permission, we'll call Mr. Darwak up to start the hearing on the designation of the property. The property, by the way, is located at 4626 Somerton Road for those who aren't familiar with it. And Mr. Darwak will describe the property and describe its eligibility for alerted designation.

Council President Tokmajian - Thank you, Mr. Darwak. Do you want to come forward please?

Mr. Jeff Darwak - I do have a PowerPoint display. Hopefully that's good enough for the viewers. Okay, great. Well, I appreciate the opportunity to be here tonight to address council and the residents of Bensalem Township. For those of you who don't know me, my name is Jeff Darwak. I am the executive director of the redevelopment authority of the county of Bucks. And for those of you who don't know what the redevelopment authority of the county of Bucks is or what we do, just very briefly, we are an authority created under state statute called the Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law or Act 385 that it's more

commonly known to. So, we assist municipalities, we assist businesses, private developers, nonprofits, homeowners, pretty much any type of entity, in the county of Bucks who are looking to locate to the county of Bucks in the rehabilitation of, blighted properties or underutilized, distressed areas. And again, that's all throughout Bucks County. So, that's generally what we do in a nutshell.

So again, I'm here tonight to talk about LERTA, the Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance Act for the public hearing. And just for a really quick overview of what LERTA is, I think it was already kind of discussed, but I'll wrap it into my presentation. I'll also try to be quick, so I know there's an Eagles game coming up. So, the statute was actually passed in 1977. So next year will be 50 years of the LERTA statute. The law authorizes local taxing authorities to provide a temporary tax abatement for new construction or improvements to industrial, commercial or other business properties within defined areas. The LERTA areas are defined by the local Municipality and that takes into account the criteria that's established under the Pennsylvania urban redevelopment law for blighted areas. So that's where we come into play. And those are a listing of some of those criteria as defined under the Pennsylvania urban redevelopment law.

I won't get into each of those but that's generally a defined term under our act. The statute requires a public hearing regarding the location of the LERTA are boundaries. Which of course is the purpose of tonight's meeting. After the public hearing, the taxing authorities, which in Bucks County of course are municipality, the school district, and the county will adopt the terms of the LERTA and the abatement schedule. and that's done via either are a resolution or an ordinance. Um the statute provides for a maximum abatement period of 10 years. Again, it's a temporary abatement that applies only to the increase resulting from the new construction or the improvements.

The abatement does not apply to the existing real estate taxes being paid currently. The taxing authorities determine the abatement schedule and there's flexibility under the statute, but it has to be within that 10-year window. You can't go beyond 10 years. So, a lot of communities may do a 10-year LERTA with a 10% tax increase over 10 years or some combination of anything in between. There's quite a variety.

Some of the benefits that we see of the LERTA program. It provides a very strong incentive for businesses to invest in improving properties. It provides an incentive to attract new businesses and new capital to Pennsylvania and Bucks County. As council president said, this site in particular, it's a competitive site, so we're always competing against our neighboring states with incentives to attract businesses to our state and to the county.

Importantly, the property owners continue to pay the existing real estate tax and then at the end of the abatement period, the property owners pay the full amount of the taxes due on the improved property. And I think I always like to point this out. The abatement is not automatic. So, the property owner has to make the investment. they have to spend the money to improve the property and then apply for the abatement to receive the benefit. It's not an automatic tax abatement.

Now, to the proposed boundaries for the Bensalem Township LERTA designation, it’s pretty straightforward. The subject area is identified as a single tax parcel. That's parcel number 02-003-002-055.The property is better known as the address 4626 Somerton Road and that's in the Trevose section of

Bensalem Township. The map there highlights the approximate boundaries of the tax parcel. The area size is in the neighborhood of 19 ½ acres. It's again a single parcel improved with an approximate 320,000 square foot building. Its current use is 100% vacant and it's within the GI the general industrial zoning district of the township.

A couple state designations apply to this site. Number one is the property is within the state designated enterprise zone. That designation is again a state designation aimed at addressing distressed and blighted industrial and manufacturing sites. And as was noted, the site is in a state designated Keystone opportunity expansion zone that was recently approved. And that program aims to stimulate job creation and investment in underutilized or abandoned properties.

And then I also thought it was important to note a few federal designations that don't necessarily apply to the subject area, but immediately adjacent census tracks. So, immediately adjacent to the site on the south side is census tracks with the last four digits 6400. That's in Philadelphia. And as you can see there by the red highlighted area, it is a severely distressed status designation. Census track 0208 that's in Bensalem Township. Was it immediately adjacent to the easterly side of the subject site's census track? That's a proposed federal opportunity zone designation. So, with the newer federal opportunity zone that is one of the few areas in Bucks County that actually qualifies and is proposed to be in the opportunity zone and it again is immediately adjacent to this census track where this property is located.

And then to the northwesterly side, that's census tract 1405 is in lower Southampton Township and that also meets the eligibility criteria for new market tax credits. So again, somewhat of a impoverished or low-income community designation. So those are the areas that immediately touch this census tract where the property is located. So based on that it's my opinion as the director of the redevelopment authority that the LERTA designation area meets the statutory obligations under the LERTA act for this property.

And then from our perspective LERTA will provide a significant redevelopment incentive for the subject area and the vacant 320,000-foot industrial property. It'll enhance the property's competitiveness to attract extensive industrial investment within the Mid-Atlantic region. It's going to support the property's return to productive manufacturing use. It's going to leverage large-scale private capital investment in Bensalem. It's going to support job creation and long-term economic growth within the area. And it's going to ultimately expand the long-term tax base for all the local taxing authorities. And that concludes my presentation. I'll be happy to, I guess, answer any questions that I can. If not, thank you for your time.

Council President Tokmajian - Council, any questions?

Council President Tokmajian - Just one. The state designation, and correct me if I missed it, but that occurred through budget period.

Jeff Darwak - for the KOZ?

Council President Tokmajian - Yes.

Jeff Darwak - I believe so. We're not directly involved in the KOZ designations, but I know that was recent. And it's not easy to get. I know that. And it has to go through state approvals.

Councilman Knowles – I asked Mr. Chaykowski very similar questions that I didn't know you were going to answer anyway, but I asked John a lot of the questions that you covered, so I appreciate that and being so thorough about. Thank you.

Jeff Darwak - Thank you. Okay, thanks everybody.

Senator Farry - Thank you. Good evening, sixth senatorial district. I'm joined by Representative Tomlinson. Thank you for the opportunity to be here with you today. I can answer your question. I'll start with that. Yes, it was included as part of the budget. It was a comprehensive effort through my advocacy on the Senate side, Representative Tomlinson's advocacy on the House side and working with the Department of Community Economic Development and the administration.

So that that was legislatively authorized earlier this year in the state budget. So, a little bit of history. I actually met the gentleman who is the CEO of the company. It is a family-owned business, fourth generation. They were planning to relocate from a different state. We were competing with other states as you mentioned earlier. And I met him actually at another site in the sixth senatorial district by happen stance where I was asked by that property owner to come talk to him about how we could help them come to Bucks County. Ultimately, they continued shopping for sites and to the benefit of the sixth district, the 18th district and Bensalem Township, they found a building they thought met their needs better here in Bensalem. The company is a going concern. They're a manufacturing company, so they still have responsibilities to continue producing their product and having enough of that product to keep the shelves filled while they transition their operation ultimately down here. They estimate between 230 and 250 manufacturing jobs ranging from unskilled to highly skilled.

And perhaps one of the more important parts, this will become the corporate headquarters for that fourth generation nationally branded manufacturing company. As the council president mentioned earlier, we're all trying to respect the confidentiality of them because they are going concern and they would like to convey to their workforce once everything gets settled here in Bensalem, they want to be able to convey to the workforce under their terms the transition. The opportunity as somebody's been elected office for a little bit the opportunity to negotiate with these national companies is a very rare opportunity.

I was part with Congressman then Mike Fitzpatrick on keeping Crown Court and Seals corporate operation in Pennsylvania for what amounted for another 15 years before they ultimately relocated out of state. Urban is another company we've been negotiating with. Now, unfortunately, they are choosing to expand their operation the 10th senatorial district, but that's still in Bucks County. So, that's still a wonderful thing. But a lot of negotiations with them, you know, a lot of our work, and I think you guys are experiencing this with the work you're doing on this project as well. A lot of our work isn't just, you know, you guys passing an ordinance, us passing a piece of legislation. It's ensuring the right companies are coming to our community.

So, I know the council president has spent time with the company. I know the mayor spent time with the company. I've spent significant time with the owner of this company and its family held and I think that is something that's important. It has stood the test of time. I look forward to when we can announce who it is that's coming here. Because I think we'll all be very proud that they're choosing Bensalem not only to be their manufacturing home but their corporate home. Their investment in the community here between purchase, construction and equipment is probably going to be a minimum of $150 million. And then when

we talk about the job creation, you're going to be able to literally have people that currently have no skill get hired by them, ultimately learn a skill, and end up with a family sustaining job. And that means so, so much. We've talked about things like developing programs through the tech school, the community college. We're going to have a huge workforce here. We're going to have to ramp up. So, we're going to need to continue working together on that as they get closer to locating here. But I thank you for the efforts you're putting forth today because this is the stuff that's in your belly wick to help them come here.

I will say having been, you know, fairly intimately involved with the recruitment of them coming here, they may have had some other alternatives that could have been potentially more attractive, from another state and they ultimately chose to come here because they want to be here. And I think that is something that we shouldn't lose sight on. The financial opportunities in some of the other states may have been better maybe in the short term, but they want to be here. And I think that's important. I thank you, guys, for the work you have done on that both prior to this and leading up to your efforts tonight. And I think it's going to be a very exciting time for our community when we can unveil them being here and then ultimately when those jobs are created and I think Councilman Wenzel will recognize that. We all know with this construction jobs come as well. So, there's going to be a lot of construction jobs while they're doing that transitional work of building out that facility. So, I'm happy to answer any questions. It was, by the way, the timeliness of my first meeting with them in the spring. This all happened very rapidly. And as Mr. Darwak mentioned, it is not easy to get these Keystone designations. It can take quite a long time and we were able to do that because everything just landed at the right time and we had the right people pushing to get it done. So, thank you.

Council President Tokmajian - Thank you. Just two comments. I agree with you. Pretty proud that they ended up choosing that town. I'm glad you brought up the college, too, as well. I mean, as you know, you know, there's a lot of work that we're doing up there at the college to really ensure that the workforce is ready and prepared.

Senator Farry - Yes. And I did have a conversation with the college president, let him know a major manufacturer is coming here a year or so from now and that they may need to be some specific job training programs tailored to it, and he was certainly interested in that.

Councilman Tokmajian - Yes. Thank you. I'll open it up to council before I open up to public comment. Any questions? Anything else that anybody has for Mr. Pizzo?

Council Secretary Wenzel - I do have a question. This seems like correct. It's a three-step process. Are we the first step in the process, then school, then the county to pass this or…

Solicitor Pizzo - Yes, you're correct. It's actually a four-step process. We're doing two steps tonight. And then and the township has to take the lead. The township designates the LERTA district. The township establishes the LERTA. Subsequently the school district and the county will adopt resolutions and to similar to the ordinance that you'll be considering tonight. And each one has to act independently. If for some reason the school district or the county were not to join in on this project, then their portion of the real estate taxes would not be exempted and candidly could put the project in jeopardy.

Council Secretary Wenzel - Understood. Do we do we know how long this building's been vacant? It's brand new a few years ago and been vacant ever since.

Solicitor Pizzo - I believe so. And my recollection is that the building was constructed at the time for a business that was looking to relocate into Bucks County and into Bensalem from Philadelphia. Under the Kenny administration, they were having a difficult time getting what they needed in order to expand their business and keep their business going. It was that they manufactured cardboard displays of things like you might see tasty cake display in a Wawa. Huge business operation.

Unfortunately, again timing in these things is everything. Before we could actually get them into the township the mayoral administrations changed in Philadelphia. Mayor Parker came into office and she made sure that that business stayed put. Unfortunately, that 325,000 square foot building that was built for that business has sat empty since the day the ribbon was cut.

Council Secretary Wenzel - All right. Thank you.

Council President Tokmajian - And just to add, from what I understand, the intended occupant at this point would be of a lower impact than what they were actually looking at from that company that was in Philadelphia.

Solicitor Pizzo - You are correct. You're absolutely correct.

Councilman Knowles – That was one of the questions I had because I knew we had approved that, and I just wanted to make sure and it is the case that they weren't getting a tax break on what they already spent, what they already built, you know even though it's new already it's on new construction from now on. Because otherwise I thought maybe it was that they're just making a building worth more money by not having to pay any taxes on it you know but it's been verified. Also, that it's on new construction going forward.

Solicitor Pizzo - the property stays on the tax rolls the property continue to pay taxes every year. So, the school district, the township, and the county will still be getting real estate tax from this property at the same amount it is currently for the next 10 years, again assuming everybody proceeds with the LERTA. What happens is as the senator said, the investment here in a variety of ways is going to be upwards of $150 million. Somewhere between 30 to $50 million of that, as I understand it, is going to be in fixtures and equipment that are going to go into that building. That will, once it's installed, raise the tax assessment of that property. The difference between what they're paying today and the assessment considering $30 million of new equipment in there. That's what will be exempt from tax for 10 years as an incentive for this property owner to spend the $30 to $50 million in getting the building retrofitted for his business operations as well as buying the building and all of the other things that'll go into this project.

Councilman Kisselback -Yes, I'd like to make a comment if I may. First off, I'd like to thank the mayor for his work on this. He initially met with the owner of this property several times many months ago and convinced him that Bensalem had the amenities and the property that could meet his requirements. And in competition with Bensalem was a number of places from out of states, different states because this is an out of state company coming to Bensalem. And as Senator Farry had said, this is going to give us approximately 250 manufacturing jobs. It's going to be their corporate headquarters. It's going to create construction jobs for our citizens of Bensalem and it's going to give them the Keystone designation and the LERTA possibility. These are all things that the mayor had to convince the owner being in competition with some really big hitters. So, I do thank the mayor for all the work he did This was the very beginning

before anybody knew about it. Then we had our council president meet with him also confirming different things and such representing the council. So, we thank you too.

Council President Tokmajian - Well thank you very much councilman Kisselback I appreciate the acknowledgement and mayor it was a joint effort and did you want you want to add anything?

Mayor - It's an extraordinary opportunity. An out of state company leaving and coming here to bring all of those jobs here. I think it might even be more than 250 depending I think as they grow and the corporate headquarters, I think that's an absolutely a win win win of this and I think the opportunity came and I think we have the opportunity now to get them here. And certainly, LERTA is a way to bring these companies in and give opportunities. And like you said, they're still paying taxes where it's at right now. And you can imagine how much the taxes will go up once they retrofit and all that stuff. So that's their opportunity, us allowing them to have LERTA. So again, thanks Ed for your work on that.

President Tokmajian - Thank you. And just as a compensating factor is that you have to recognize that there is a substantial cost to them in terms of having the transition over to Bensalem.

Councilman Knowles – indicated because we have an earned income tax that these 250 jobs are going to start paying earned income tax when they start working not when the 10 years is up. So, the people who actually work there, they're going to get jobs, careers that they can raise their family on. Hopefully some of these people will come from the adjacent neighborhood that they'll be able to take jobs. And then if they're paying earned income tax, that'll come to us and help us out also with budgetary matters.

Council Vice President Sloane - Yes. And I'll add I was fortunate enough to meet with the CEO and owner as well. And he's promised to be not just a business owner, but a community partner. Somebody that is looking forward to being invested in this community. Whether that's sponsoring baseball teams and or something, but you know, just wants to be part of the fabric of our community. That's no small thing. So, it's economic incentives, it's community incentives. I think this is a win-win for Bensalem and for the surrounding community.

Council President Tokmajian - Another great great point. Mr. Pizzo, I recognize these are two separate agenda items. Did you just want to note the small revision on the ordinance? And I know you and I discussed it earlier, but where there's no negative impact to it, but I just want to note it for council's own sake.

Solicitor Pizzo - Certainly. Did you want me to go through the ordinance now or just because actually you do need to vote separately to establish the district and a separate vote on the ordinance.

Council President Tokmajian - Then we'll hold off. Let me let me ask for public comment on the resolution. We'll take the vote on that and then we'll do the ordinance separately. Any public comment for or against the resolution that's in front of us this evening for the LERTA? Seeing none. Gentlemen, a motion would be in order.

Council Vice President Sloane - I'll make a motion that we approve the resolution designating an area of the township as eligible for participation in the local economic revitalization tax assistance act program.

Councilman Kisselback - I'll second the motion.

Council President Tokmajian - There is a motion and a second to approve. and adopt. Any questions on the motion? Is there any request for a roll call at all or everyone okay? All right. All in favor, and the motion carried 5-0.

7. CONSIDERATION OF AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A LOCAL ECONOMIC REVITALIZTION TAX ASSISTANCE (LERTA) DISTRICT WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP AND PROVIDING FOR CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS FOR ELIGIBLE PROPERTY LOCATED WITHIN THAT DISTRICT:

Mr. Pizzo - For the hearing on the ordinance establishing the LERTA the record should reflect that the ordinance was properly advertised in the Bucks County Courier Times and the proof of publication is on file in the office of the township clerk. Much of what I would normally say regarding the ordinance has already been said in the context of the discussion establishing and authorizing the designated area. So, in this case the ordinance now takes the information and the resolution from the hearing we just held and formally establishes the property at 4626 Somerton Road as both the eligible property and the designated district within the township. It will establish the LERTA for a 10-year period at 100% of the additional assessed valuation. So again, as everyone said, the property will continue to pay taxes at the preconstruction pre-improvement rate. And we'll do that during the construction period as well as during the 10-year LERTA exemption period.

As Mr. Darwak said, it's not automatic. What will happen is the owner of the property will submit an application to the township. The application will have to set forth all of the improvements that are going to be made, the estimated value of that work. And that will have to go in front of Council. It will also go in front of the school district and the county. The window for applying for the LERTA is a one-year window. So, if for some reason things should go sideways with this project, the opportunity to take advantage of this is only for a one-year period of time. Council can extend the application window, but the one-year application window pretty much limits the possibility that someone that you don't anticipate as part of this project might swoop in and take the building.

And then the other part of the changes that were made to the ordinance this afternoon after discussion with the mayor, after discussion with the council president, and after discussion with the redevelopment authority, with the township manager, and with the attorney for the school district. There is a tax assessment appeal that's currently pending for this property. It was brought by the school district believing that the property is currently under assessed. We believe the school district is correct. And so, part of what's going to be done as this overall process is that the assessment on the property is going to be raised. So, not only will the school district, the township, and the county be getting what's currently being paid, but we believe that an increase in the baseline that's going to be paid for the next 10 years is also going to come about as part of the resolution of the tax assessment appeal.

So, what we build into the ordinance that wasn't there when you got it in your packets on Friday is a provision that recognizes we had hoped that the tax assessment appeal might already be wrapped up by the time you were voting on the LERTA. It isn't. And so, the LERTA now takes into account that there is a tax assessment appeal pending and it requires that “A” whatever the new assessment is based on the resolution of that appeal regardless of when that's put into place that becomes the baseline for the 10-year period. And similarly, if it isn't resolved by the time, they're ready to move into the building, the tax abatement goes away. So that's the incentive to make sure that everything gets done in a timely fashion.

Beyond that, everything else is as it was when the ordinance was advertised. If council has any questions as to any aspect of it that we haven't already touched upon, I'm happy to field those questions now.

Council President Tokmajian - Council, any questions?

Councilman Knowles – Just a comment that John Chaykowski explained it to me. That's why we got the new ordinance printed out.

Solicitor Pizzo - That's correct. So, the one that's in front of you has the additional provisions regarding the tax assessment appeal. Otherwise, everything is as it was when advertised. And it also has an additional copy of the exhibit which is the map showing the property both…

Councilman Knowles - And I assume that the new potential person is aware that they might be paying a baseline that might be a little bit higher.

Solicitor Pizzo - They are aware. It's been the topic of multiple discussions over the last two months at least. And again, they were they were advised today that it was going into the ordinance and that was not causing any hesitation.

Councilman Knowles - They have a lot of incentive to do it.

Solicitor Pizzo - I can tell you without telling I don't think I'm telling tales out of school that the township has already signed off on the building being eligible for use and occupancy for the purposes of the sale if and when it occurs. Township has it all keyed up and ready to go.

Council President Tokmajian - Just to add to your point, Joe, the intended occupant went into it not knowing at the time that it was underassessed. They just they knew that they were okay with the fact that they were going to pay the whatever that assessed value was.

Councilman Knowles - Oh, yes. Right. Exactly.

Solicitor Pizzo - And the school district obviously is a party to the assessment appeals. So, whatever the ultimate number lands on is a number that the school district will be in agreement with.

Councilman Knowles - I just didn't want them to find out later, you know, and then back out of the deal, you know.

Mayor - Yes. I was just wondering, is that anything to do with the sale of the property, the present owner, and who's the new owner? As far as this tax appeal goes?

Solicitor Pizzo - The current owner has a say in the resolution of the assessment appeal because the assessment appeal looks back over the taxes that the assessment and the taxes paid over the prior two or three years. So, not only the buyer rather, but the seller also is at the table working through this issue.

Council President Tokmajian - Councilman Wenzel and Councilman Kisselback, anything?

Councilman Kisselback - I'm fine. Thank you.

Council Secretary Wenzel - I'm good. Thank you.

Council President Tokmajian - Okay. I'll turn it to public comment again. Is there anyone here for or against the adoption of this ordinance this evening? No. All right. Seeing none. Council, a motion would be in order.

Council Vice President Sloane - I will make a motion that we approve the proposed ordinance amending chapter 210 taxation of the code of the township of Bensalem to establish and enact article 11 for the LERTA district and providing for certain real property tax exemptions for eligible property located within that district.

Councilman Kisselback - I'll second the motion.

Council President Tokmajian - All right. Thank you, Councilman Sloane and Councilman Kisselback has since seconded. Any questions on the motion? And if not, I will call the vote. All in favor, vote "I" Okay. Any against? Okay. Any abstain? The motion carried 5-0. And that has since been approved and passed. Thank you.

Solicitor Pizzo - And as the mayor said, we're nowhere near done, but this truly has been a team effort up here at the Dais within this building within this township, within the Harrisburg, Doylestown. Everyone has played a role and will continue to play a role as we work to bring this home.

Council President Tokmajian - And Joe since you mentioned that how many times do you remember that we were able to actually get something like this done

Solicitor Pizzo - First time.

Council President Tokmajian - Yes. So, it's great to attract a really great business here in Bensalem. Thank you.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Council President Tokmajian - I'll move to agenda number eight public comment. For any other items if there's anyone here for public comments? No. Okay.

9. OTHER BUSINESS:

Council President Tokmajian - I'll turn to council and staff for any other business then. Anything else? Phil?

Engineer Wursta - I'm privileged to say go Birds.

Council President Tokmajian - Got it. I have a feeling we're going to hear that all the way around the table.

Council Clerk McBreen - Go Birds and You have to sign the ordinance and resolution.

Council President Tokmajian - Councilman Knowles, while you're signing anything?

Councilman Knowles - Yes, I just, wanted to remind everyone election day is coming up, so get out and vote. And, then the commercials will end on TV. I heard. Okay. So, that's a plus. But you know, enjoy this weather and go Birds.

Councilman Wenzel - I have two things. First one that this LERTA shows that Bensalem is definitely a place for businesses and people to live. I-95, Route One the Turnpike, you can get anywhere. This is definitely a prime location to live, work, and you know, have fun. So, thank everyone for getting this together and making this happen. The second item, my council colleagues, myself have heard reports from people in the township that there are safety issues here and there, and anytime we've reached out to the mayor, he's jumped right on it. I'd like to thank him for that. I'd like to thank the director McVey for going out and investigating any of these situations. We had parking issues. We've had people blocking roads, people leaving abandoned cars. They get reported. The mayor's been on top of it. So, thank you for, you know, taking that seriously. I really appreciate it.

Councilman Kisselback -. I'm fine with everything and little birds to repeat what our engineer had just said a little bit ago. Okay. And Debbie, of course, but you were a Flyer's girl.

Solicitor Pizzo - nothing further. Go Birds.

Mayor - Just bring you up to date of the things going on. Tomorrow the township is hosting a blood drive A lot of people signed up for it. So, we thank them for that. The township is closed on Wednesday, November 11th for Veterans Day. Let's not forget our veterans. And I know we would like to thank Ed Kisselback and Jesse Sloane, for their service. And thank everybody that's out there. And when you see a veteran, thank them. They wear hats and easily noticeable and they are why er are here.

Council this is something we got to straighten out. December 28th council meeting is a township holiday due to how Christmas falls this year but at the time of the reorganization meeting we didn't make that decision on which day to close for the holiday. Do you want to wait until the next council to discuss the December 28th meeting?

Council President Tokmajian - We can or if we can just take the vote now to change it from the 28th to the 29th.

Mayor - It's a tough week.

Council President Tokmajian - Yes, it really is, All right, let us sit on it then. We'll make a decision next week.

Mayor - Yes. I just brought it up because it has to be done.

Council Secretary Wenzel - do we have to advertise that we would change that meeting?

Mayor – Absolutely. the other thing Halloween, every all the kids out there going out there hopefully with their parents. Be careful. Crazy world out there. So, we want everybody to watch. And guess what guys? Got to turn your clock back. It's coming up. Daylight saving time. I thought they were getting rid of that actually, but not quite yet.

Council President Tokmajian - Thank you, Mayor. Councilman Sloane.

Council Vice President Sloane - Well, first and foremost, go Birds. Halloween is Saturday. So, please be careful while you're out driving. It's getting dark earlier and earlier and there'll be lots of kids out on the streets. So, please, be very extra careful on Saturday, and throughout the entire weekend as festivities go on. And then I see Miss Khan here. I was wondering if you can give us an update on the Armstrong

property. I know I thought some work was supposed to start today and I was hoping to come up and give us a very quick update.

Engineer Khan - Hello. How are you? Yes, they did go out today and do some work at the Armstrong property cutting back the vegetation. They'll be back on Wednesday. We were told that they will be dropping machinery off and materials also this week and looking I think to start next week. Owner rep met with the owners last week on Friday we had a nice meeting discussed where the wall placement would go. They seemed encouraged and excited for the activity to start.

Council Vice President Sloane - Okay. I appreciate that.

Council President Tokmajian - So I'm sorry, just really quick. Next week?

Engineer Khan - mobilization this week. So, they're cutting back the rest of the vegetation on Wednesday of this week. Bringing materials out to the site and machinery and then hopefully to start work as soon as possible. Maybe the beginning of next week. I'm not too sure until we see when the materials arrive.

Council President Tokmajian - All right. And you're expecting that to arrive by next week.

Engineer Khan - I can give you guys an update in one more week when I get through this week. I don't want to make a commitment until I can definitively. That's why you guys asked for weekly and I'm trying to keep up with that based upon everybody else's involvement. But we are monitoring it, progressing, and we're working with administration to make sure it gets delivered.

Council President Tokmajian - Appreciate that. Thank you. Just a couple items for me. When I was driving over here this evening, at the light here at the township building, we had our fire crew going out responding to an emergency. So, every time you see them, you just know that they're going to take care of some emergency response. So, certainly appreciate everything they do and every time that they go out and respond. So, including our police. So, they're here for Bensalem. Halloween, just be safe. I think that's all I have. And go Birds, too, as well. Motion to adjourn. Have a good evening.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

Council Vice President Sloane - Motioned.

Council Secretary Wenzel - Second.

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

The Bensalem Township Council Meeting of October 26th, 2026 can be viewed in its entirety at the following websites:

www.bensalempa.gov or www.youtube.com

Respectfully submitted,

Debora F. McBreen
Recording Secretary