

Upper Milford Township – Act 537 Sewerage Plan Fact Sheet & Notice of Public Meeting

Upper Milford Township is poised to adopt a new Act 537 Plan, which recommends public sewer service for the Vera Cruz area. To help residents understand the proposed public sewerage project and its true costs and impacts, the Township's Board of Supervisors will hold a public meeting at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, August 17 at the Vera Cruz Fire Company Social Hall located at 4093 Main Road West, Emmaus. During this meeting, the project will be explained in detail, and residents will have an opportunity to ask questions and voice concerns. The Supervisors will consider the Plan for formal adoption at its August 30th meeting (starting at 7:30 p.m. at the Township building).

Note: Please use the information in this fact sheet to evaluate the financial impact of this project, rather than the calculations provided in The Morning Call's recent news article. The information in this fact sheet is a current and accurate representation of the proposed project costs. Please review this notice and bring your questions and comments to the August 17 public meeting, or contact the Township.

Project Area & Mandatory Connections

The proposed project will provide sewer service to 251 properties in the Village of Vera Cruz and adjacent areas including properties within the address ranges listed below.

5220-5329 Acorn Drive
All of Barney Avenue
All of Bow Lane
2641-2784 Brunner Road
2462-2540 Chock Road
All of Javis Drive
5161-5251 Limeport Road
2795-3851 Main Road East
3883-4093 Main Road West
All of Marion Place
4031-4391 Mill Road
3471-3501 Quarry Drive
4102-4287 Shimerville Road
All of Sickle Circle
5123 - 5311 Sickle Road
All of Spruce Road
4521-5501 Vera Cruz Road

A map of the project area is attached for your reference.

This project area was determined after careful consideration of many alternatives to meet the sewerage needs of this area, including a variety of routes for the sewer system, the use of a gravity system vs. pump stations, constructing a small, local wastewater treatment Plant vs. connecting into the regional system, or doing nothing at all. This proposed project includes providing sewer service to the Vera Cruz area of the Leibert's Creek Basin and connecting to Lehigh

County Authority's (LCA) existing facilities in the area of Route 29 for transmission into the regional sewer system and final treatment at the City of Allentown's wastewater treatment Plant. The project will utilize a combination of gravity and pump stations to transfer waste into the LCA system.

This project was determined to be the best alternative for the Township because it will address the high concentration of failing septic systems in the Vera Cruz area. Nearly 85% of the homes in the project area were determined to have confirmed, suspected or potential malfunctioning septic systems, according to an analysis based on Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) criteria. This proposed project will take advantage of the regional sewer system and treatment Plant already in place, thereby avoiding the high cost of constructing and operating a separate treatment Plant in the Township.

In accordance with the Second Class Township Code, all properties that are adjoining or adjacent to the sanitary sewer, or whose principal building is within 150 feet of the sanitary sewer, will be required to connect.

Project Costs & Impact on Residents

The estimated total project cost is \$7,245,000. This is due to the length of pipe (more than 6 miles), the two pump stations required for this project, restoration of Penn-DOT roadways, as well as the required precautions that must be taken to preserve historically significant archaeological resources in the project area.

To help pay for this project, the Township will allocate \$924,000 from an EPA grant received previously for sewer projects. LCA is also contributing \$310,000 to the project. Both Township and LCA officials are applying for additional grants and loans to help pay for this project, and will continue to seek ways to reduce the cost to residents.

Based on the available financing outlined above, the cost to individual property owners will be reduced from estimates advertised in prior years. The individual property costs are split into three parts, each being one-time, upfront costs.

(more on back)

U P P E R M I L F O R D T O W N S H I P

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Old Zionsville, PA 18068
Phone: 610-966-3223
Fax: 610-966-5184
Email: info@uppermilford.net
Website: <http://www.uppermilford.net>

Property Assessment: Property values are expected to increase in this area because this project will solve a major environmental problem in the Township and provide a much-needed public service. Therefore, the Property Assessment fee is based on the estimated increase in the assessed value of your property based on the availability of public sewer service. The fee will vary from \$40 to \$18,000. The average fee will be \$1,100. All properties within the project area, except those exempted by law, will pay an assessment fee.

Equivalent Dwelling Unit Charges (Tapping Fees): An Equivalent Dwelling Unit (EDU) is a single residential unit such as a single-family home or one apartment. Businesses will be assigned multiple EDUs based on their usage. The EDU Charges (also called Tapping Fees) are based on the appropriate share per EDU of the cost to treat the wastewater at Allentown’s treatment Plant, the facility cost to transmit the wastewater through LCA’s regional system, and the cost of the project itself. The total per-EDU Charge will be \$3,250. This means that a single-family home (1 EDU) would pay \$3,250; a single-family home with attached rental unit (2 EDUs) would pay \$6,500; and a three-unit apartment building (3 EDUs) would pay \$9,750. All properties required to connect will pay these fees.

Private Plumbing Connection Costs: Property owners will be responsible for making the physical connection from their property to the public sewer system as well as other required plumbing modifications. These private plumbing costs are estimated between \$3,000 and \$5,000, with the typical property being approximately \$3,500.

In summary, the one-time, upfront costs to individual property owners is calculated to be:

Property Assessment	\$ 1,100 (average)
EDU Charges (Tapping Fees)	3,250 (1 EDU)
Private Plumbing Cost	<u>3,500 (typical)</u>
Total Upfront Cost	\$ 7,850 (average)

Ongoing Sewer Rates

The upfront costs outlined above will significantly offset the project costs. However, remaining project costs must be recovered through the sewer billing rates, which will be calculated on a per-EDU basis.

The sewer rates will be composed of two parts:

- Upper Milford Twp. sewer rate - currently \$451 per year
- Vera Cruz Project surcharge - estimated at \$927 per year

This combined rate comes to a total of \$1,378 per EDU per year (or \$115 per month).

These estimated sewer rates will be reduced if additional funding becomes available through grants or other sources that the Township and LCA are currently pursuing.

Financial Assistance

The Township and LCA will pursue all available alternatives for funding in order to reduce project costs as much as possible. Residents may be asked to take a salary survey in order to determine if the project would qualify for a Community Development Block Grant. If the project doesn’t qualify for the Block Grant, individual property owners may still be eligible, based on financial need, for assistance with the upfront costs. Information will be sent to residents in the future, and all are encouraged to apply.

In addition, LCA will offer property owners low-interest financing options to help alleviate the impact of some of the upfront costs. More information about this program will be sent to residents as the project moves forward.

Project Schedule

Following the Township’s approval of the Act 537 Plan, DEP will review the Plan for approval. Once the Plan is approved, the Vera Cruz project must then be authorized by the Township’s Board of Supervisors, and additional public meetings will be held to review a more detailed project analysis at that time. Should all of these steps be successful, then system construction is estimated to begin in early 2007.

Other Areas Addressed in the Act 537 Plan

South 7th Street Extension and Pike Road – Sewer service will be provided through a separate project via a Planning module amendment. Information will be provided to residents in this area in a timely manner.

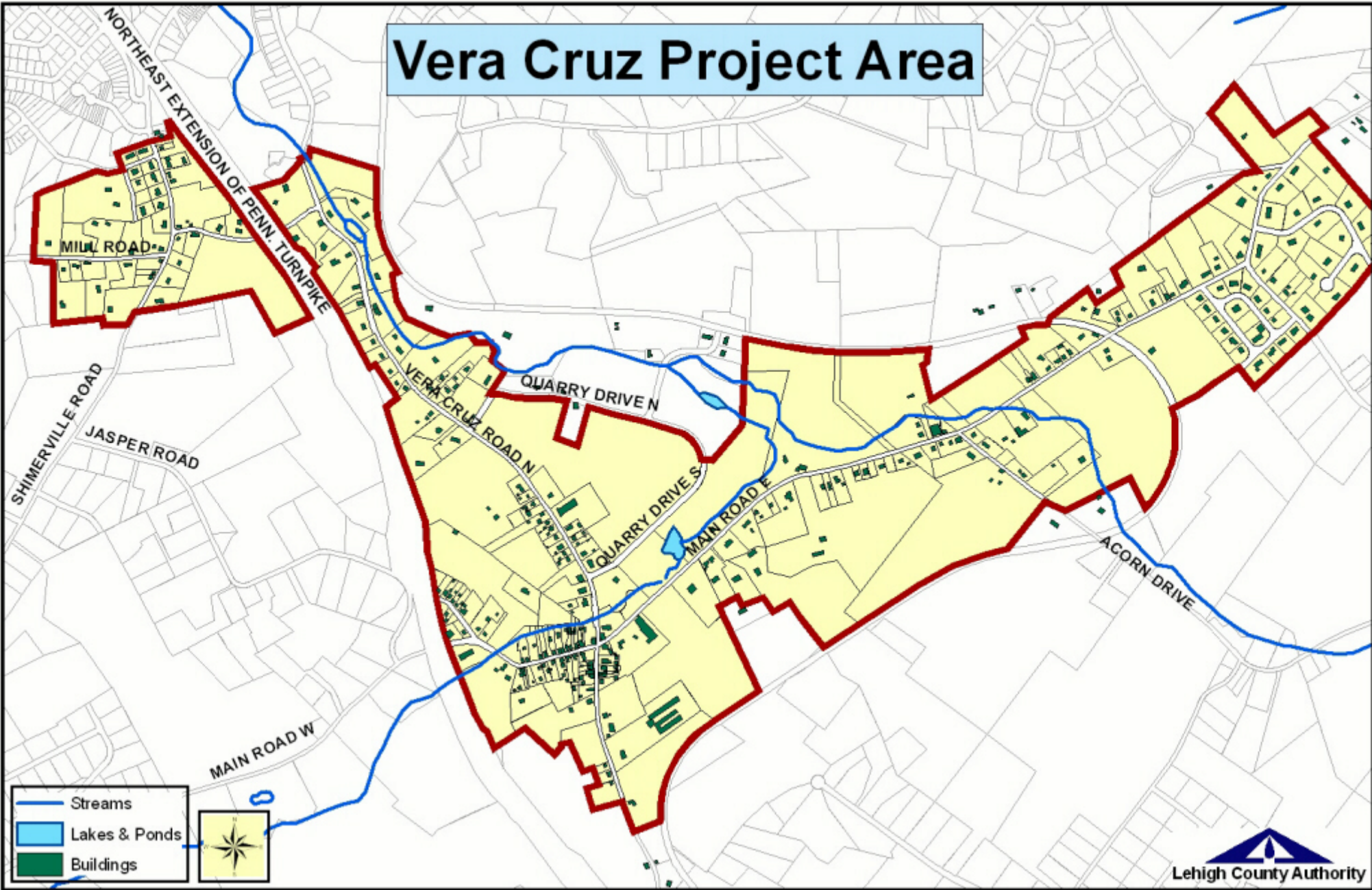
Remaining Areas of the Township – The remaining areas of the Township within the Act 537 Plan’s Proposed Sewer Service Areas will be serviced on an as needed basis.

Septic Management Program – The Township will, within nine months of the Plan’s approval, initiate the development of a Septic Management Program for all properties not connected to the sewer facilities. This program will be enabled through the adoption of a Septic Management Ordinance and require that all on-site systems are periodically maintained and inspected.

Plan Review & Comments

This fact sheet is a summary of the Township’s proposed Act 537 Plan. A complete copy of the Plan is available for review in the Upper Milford Township Building located at 5831 King’s Highway South, Old Zionsville. Send written comments to: Secretary, Board of Supervisors, Upper Milford Township, P.O. Box 210, Old Zionsville, PA 18068. All written comments must be received by August 29, 2005 for consideration by the Board of Supervisors at their August 30 public meeting. A copy of all written comments, together with the written response of the Township to each comment, will then be submitted to DEP for approval.

Vera Cruz Project Area



Upper Milford Township
PO Box 210
Old Zionsville, PA 18068

IMPORTANT INFORMATION
SEWER PROJECT
