

BOROUGH OF CONSHOHOCKEN BOROUGH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, February 7, 2024

PUBLIC MEETING

PRESENT: Tina Sokolowski, Council President
Kathleen Kingsley, Council Vice-President
Anita Barton, Senior Council Member
Alan Chmielewski, Council Member
Stacy Ellam, Council Member
Ralph Frey, Council Member
Adrian Serna, Council Member
Yaniv Aronson, Mayor

ALSO PRESENT: Stephanie Cecco, Borough Manager
Michael E. Peters, Borough Solicitor

CALL TO ORDER

The Public Meeting of the Conshohocken Borough Council duly advertised, was held at the Conshohocken Borough Hall, 400 Fayette Street, Conshohocken, PA. Ms. Sokolowski, Council President, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Sokolowski announced that an Executive Session was held immediately prior to the regularly scheduled public meeting on a personnel matter.

PRESENTATIONS

There were no presentations.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

a.) Conduct an interview for a vacancy on the Zoning Hearing Board

Ms. Sokolowski introduced Dennis Fay who was present to interview for a vacancy on the Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. Fay expressed his interest in serving on the Board. He discussed his previous experience, both professional and personal, that are relevant to the work of the Zoning Hearing Board.

LAND USE MATTERS, PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ORDINANCES

a.) Public Hearing on the adoption of a Main Street Overlay District Ordinance, Judy Stern Goldstein, Gilmore & Associates

Mr. Peters opened the public hearing. He reviewed the intent of the overlay ordinance, amending chapter 27 of the zoning code by adding a Fayette Street Corridor District and amending the zoning map for the Borough of Conshohocken to include the Fayette Street Corridor Overlay District. Mr. Peters also gave an overview of the nine (9) Borough exhibits to the ordinance.

Mr. Peters turned the hearing over to Judy Stern Goldstein with Gilmore & Associates. Ms. Goldstein briefly reviewed the timeline of the ordinance, noting its adoption in 2018. The plan included action items such as updating of ordinances to support redevelopment efforts, revising local codes to encourage flexible design

options, mixed use development, providing incentives for vacant or underutilized commercial properties, updating parking policies and updating ordinances to support alternative modes of transportation. Ms. Goldstein continued to discuss the efforts made by the Main Street Overlay Task Force to generate the draft overlay ordinance.

Ms. Goldstein shared a photo of the proposed zoning map indicating which districts are part of the proposed overlay. She then shared three (3) concept renderings to help illustrate the maximum potential development that could be done in zone 3 of the overlay. Ms. Goldstein asked for comments from Council.

Ms. Kingsley inquired about off-street parking, specifically shared parking, and the overlay's boundaries.

Ms. Barton recommended reducing the maximum size allowed for signs from 12 feet to 9 feet.

Mr. Frey asked what other types of stores/businesses, aside from a farmers' market, could functionally afford a store front on Fayette Street.

Ms. Ellam requested a further explanation on the maximum impervious coverage for each zone.

Mr. Chmielewski inquired about the discussions that were had around promoting the district's walkability during the Task Force meetings. He also asked for an explanation as to why there are limits on driveway cuts.

Ms. Kingsley asked why the decision was made to cut off a block in the RO District and asked if the already standing Historical Overlay was taken into consideration for the RO District. She also asked for clarification regarding building heights in residential districts.

Ms. Sokolowski asked for clarification regarding new development going through the land development process.

Ms. Sokolowski asked if there were any other questions from Council. There were no other questions. Ms. Sokolowski called for Task Force member comments.

Bill Tsoubanos, member of the Task Force, discussed the overall intent of the overlay ordinance.

Brian Magrann, member of the Task Force, explained that a goal of the ordinance is to create additional opportunities for the types of uses that can be developed along Fayette.

Ms. Sokolowski thanked the Task Force members for all their work.

Mr. Peters opened for public comment.

Donna Coll, 324 Fayette Street, asked for clarification regarding the definition of underutilized properties.

David Rollins, 1013 Fayette Street, expressed his concerns on parking, traffic, and spot zoning as an attempt to benefit Provco. He asked for clarification on accessory uses to retail in the ordinance and if that includes gas stations.

Rudolph Schatz, 1009 Fayette Street, voiced concerns that the proposed ordinance would change the character of a neighborhood through overdevelopment.

Mary Tiernan, 1016 Harry Street, voiced her concerns regarding the potential impacts the overlay might have on parking, property values and impervious coverage for her and her neighbors. She asked if there will be any additional tax benefits or incentives for current property owners as a result to having the increased development. Ms. Tiernan asked for clarification regarding how the ordinance interacts with the Historic Overlay.

Jackie Coll, 810 Forrest Street, stated her concerns regarding parking, stormwater management, the character of zone 3, historical protection and consolidation of lots.

Betsy Horning, 404 East Tenth Avenue, commented on the affects it may have on property values, stormwater runoff and traffic flow at the Provco site.

Mary Ann Cook, 401 East Tenth Avenue, voiced her support in increasing the town's walkability. She asked if there was a potential need for parking permits in the overlay zones. Ms. Cook commented on the lack of clarity regarding how the proposed ordinance interacts with the Historic Overlay.

Mike DeNolfi, 114 West Tenth Avenue, stated his concerns regarding infrastructure, stormwater management and financial gain.

Jean Thompson, 344 East Tenth Avenue, asked for clarification regarding the character of potential new development.

Ms. Sokolowski called for any more public comment. There were no additional public comments.

Mr. Peters closed the Public Hearing on the record and informed the public that Borough Council would consider adoption of the proposed ordinance at the February 21, 2024 Public Meeting at 7:00pm at Borough Hall.

MANAGER MATTERS

- a.) **Consider approving Resolution 2024-02 for a Supplemental Appropriation to the FY2024 budget in the amount of \$1,525,000 plus associated closing costs to buyout Keystone 402 Fayette LLC's lease interests in the Borough Hall Property**

Ms. Barton made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-02 for a supplemental appropriation to the FY2024 budget in the amount of \$1,525,000 plus associated closing costs to buyout Keystone 402 Fayette LLC's lease interests in the Borough Hall Property, seconded by Ms. Kingsley. The motion carried 7-0.

- b.) **Consider approving a revision to the Borough's Non-Uniform and Fire Personnel Manual**

Mr. Chmielewski made a motion to approve a revision to the Borough's Non-Uniform and Fire Personnel Manual, seconded by Ms. Ellam. The motion carried 7-0.

- c.) **Consider approving the 2024 Mayor's Arts Festival and Car Show on June 1, 2024, with a rain date on June 8, 2024**

Ms. Kingsley made a motion to approve the 2024 Mayor's Arts Festival and Car Show on June 1, 2024, with a rain date on June 8, 2024, contingent upon final administrative and emergency services review of final special event details, seconded by Mr. Frey. The motion carried 7-0.

- d.) **Consider approving payment certificate #2, final, for the 2022 CDBG Curb Ramp Project in the amount of \$8,124.74.**

Ms. Serna made a motion to approve payment certificate #2, final, for the 2022 CDBG Curb Ramp project in the amount of \$8,124.74 to Albert G. Cippolloni Jr. and Sons, Inc., seconded by Ms. Kingsley. The motion carried 7-0.

- e.) **Consider approving payment application no. 4 for Lenni Electric Corp., Inc., for the Fayette Street Pedestrian Crossings Project in the amount of \$15,209.10.**

Ms. Barton made a motion to approve payment application no. 4 for Lenni Electric Corp., Inc., for the Fayette Street pedestrian crossings project in the amount of \$15,209.10, seconded by Ms. Kingsley. The motion carried 7-0.

DEPARTMENT MATTERS

- a.) **Consider approving Sgt. Michael Connor's request to register for a 3-class GIS Systems Operation certificate from Montgomery County Community College beginning in the fall of 2024.**

Ms. Kingsley made a motion to approve Sergeant Michael Conner's request to register for a 3-class GIS Systems Operation certificate from Montgomery County Community College beginning in the fall of 2024 in the amount of \$1,881 plus the cost of books per the stipulations in the CBA, seconded by Mr. Chmielewski. The motion carried 7-0.

LEGAL MATTERS

- a.) **Consider approving a RACP Cooperation Agreement and RACP Sub-grantee agreement between the Redevelopment Authority of Montgomery County, Borough of Conshohocken, and Concord Keystone SORA West Owner, LLC**

Mr. Peters shared that the Montgomery County Redevelopment Authority (RDA) is processing a RACP (Commonwealth Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program) cooperation agreement and subgrantee agreement for a RACP grant on behalf of Concord Keystone Sora West. He explained that the agreements are required to satisfy certain special conditions of the RDA's grant agreement with the office of the budget for the state. He also explained that, per the RACP guidelines, the agreements require approval by the Borough prior to submission.

Mr. Chmielewski made a motion to approve a RACP Cooperation Agreement and RACP Sub-grantee agreement between the Redevelopment Authority of Montgomery County, Borough of Conshohocken, and Concord Keystone SORA West Owner, LLC subject to final review by the Borough Manager and Borough Solicitor, seconded by Ms. Ellam. The motion carried 7-0.

- b.) **Consider approving a Reimbursement Agreement between the Borough of Conshohocken and Concord Keystone SORA West Owner, LLC.**

Mr. Peters stated that per RACP program regulations, a reimbursement agreement is also required between the developer and municipality. He explained that the agreement would ensure that the Borough would be reimbursed by Keystone Property Group in case a payment is required to be provided to the State under the RACP agreement.

Ms. Barton made a motion to approve a Reimbursement Agreement between the Borough of Conshohocken and Concord Keystone SORA West Owner, LLC subject to final review by the Borough Manager and Borough Solicitor, seconded by Ms. Kingsley. The motion carried 7-0.

- c.) **Discussion on a revision to the Fire Ordinance to include the addition of Fire Captain in the Fire Department chain of command.**

Mr. Peters reviewed the proposed revisions to the Fire Ordinance, which included adding the position of Fire Captain to the chain of command.

- d.) **Discussion on a Memorandum of Understanding between the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority and the Borough of Conshohocken on Parcel No. 05-00-00040-00-9**

Mr. Peters shared that SEPTA would like to explore alternative options to the previously approved parking garage project, specifically a transit-oriented development (TOD). He explained that the proposed Memorandum of Understanding permits SEPTA to conduct an evaluation to determine whether an alternative plan would be feasible on the site. He also explained that SEPTA has agreed to construct an interim surface parking lot with 125 spaces during its explorative process. The Memorandum of Understanding includes a clause requiring SEPTA to construct the previously approved parking garage should the exploratory process indicate that a TOD is not feasible on the site or required approvals are not obtained. Additional terms of the agreement were discussed.

e.) Discussion on an Intergovernmental Agreement and Form of Bill Sale for the stormwater collection and management system between the Borough of Conshohocken and Borough of Conshohocken Authority

Mr. Peters reviewed the terms of the Intergovernmental Cooperation Agreement and Form of Bill of Sale for the Stormwater Collection Management System with the Conshohocken Sewer Authority.

COUNCIL MEMBER AND MAYOR MATTERS

Mayor Aronson reminded everyone about the Conshohocken Revolutionary War Hero event on February 20th. He announced that he and his family were raising money for the CHOP cardiac fundraiser. He shared photos from the annual Kindness Challenge event.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Cecco,
Borough Secretary