

BOROUGH OF CONSHOHOCKEN BOROUGH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, September 6, 2017

PUBLIC MEETING

PRESENT: James Griffin, Council President
Karen Tutino, Council Vice-President
Robert Stokley, Senior Council Member
Anita Barton, Council Member
Tina Sokolowski, Council Member
Colleen Leonard, Council Member
Jane Flanagan, Council Member
Robert Frost, Mayor

ALSO PRESENT: Stephanie Cecco, Interim Borough Manager
Michael J. Savona, 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. Mr. James Griffin, Council President, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Cecco announced on behalf of Mr. Griffin that there was an Executive Session held immediately prior to the meeting regarding a property matter and a contract negotiation matter.

PRESENTATIONS

i.) Public Hearing on 120 W. Eleventh Avenue, Burt Property Holdings LLC, Conditional Use Application

Mr. Savona introduced the item and explained that the applicant, Mr. Bob Burt, is requesting conditional use approval, which would allow the demolition of a property that is greater than fifty (50) years old in order to construct two (2) single family detached dwellings. Ms. Cecco invited Ms. Chris Stetler, Community Development and Zoning Officer, to the podium to provide a summary of her zoning determination. Ms. Stetler explained that the proposed plan for the site meets the requirements of the zoning ordinance with one (1) exception. Ms. Stetler elaborated that if conditional use application is approved, the developer will have to present his project to the Zoning Hearing Board in order to review a zoning ordinance, which pertains to parking.

Mr. Savona then introduced Mr. Jerry Rath, the applicant's attorney. Mr. Rath distributed a packet of exhibits and called his first witness, Mr. Bob Burt. Mr. Burt was then sworn in under oath. Mr. Rath asked Mr. Burt to describe the current condition of the property. Mr. Burt stated that the property is in disrepair, noting various structural issues and outdated systems. Council asked several questions regarding the existing condition of the property. Council Members expressed concern about tearing down a historic home without sufficient evidence.

Mr. Rath called his second witness, Mr. Bradley Gaul, Professional Land Surveyor, who was then sworn in under oath. Mr. Gaul supported Mr. Burt's description of the existing condition of the property and submitted an amended plan, which addressed concerns raised by Planning Commission and Zoning Hearing Board regarding the building setbacks. Mr. Gaul stated that per the revised plan, the front yard setback is consistent with the established building lines. Mr. Gaul also noted that Mr. Burt does not own or have rights to access the alley behind the property.

Mr. Savona reiterated that this application would not be compliant in the absence of variance from the Zoning Hearing Board to allow the front driveways and the garages facing West 11th Avenue. Ms. Stetler explained that scheduling the zoning board hearing is dependent upon conditional use approval. Council

Member Leonard requested more evidence as to the current condition of the property. Mr. Burt agreed to provide photographs and a third party inspection report regarding the condition of the property. Mr. Savona recommended that Council continue this hearing on September 20, 2017, in which the applicant will provide Council with the requested documentation.

Mr. Savona called for public comment before the hearing was adjourned. Judy Smith-Kressley of 4th Avenue then approached the podium and inquired about impervious land coverage and conservation of mature trees on the property.

ii.) Consider preliminary and final approval for 100-102 Forrest Street plans for subdivision and land development

Mr. Savona shared that this matter was discussed at the previous Council meeting in August and at that time, Borough staff raised concerns with respect to the configuration of parking in the rear of the proposed structures as well as the configuration of certain bump outs. Mr. Savona invited Mr. Paul Hughes, Borough Engineer, to the podium to share whether the issues from the last meeting have been addressed to the satisfaction of Borough staff. Mr. Hughes explained that Mr. Estock, the applicant's Engineer, submitted a revised plan with a solution that would accommodate the curb ramp crossing without the introduction of the bump outs as well as the installation of a trench drain for stormwater management. Mr. Estock provided an overview of a turning radius template study that was conducted.

Mr. Stokley made a motion to approve the subdivision and land development plans for 100-102 Forrest Street, seconded by Ms. Sokolowski. The motion carried 7-0.

iii.) Consider approving PECO Small Business Direct Install Proposal for the Community Center at the Fel

Ms. Cecco invited Mr. Sokolowski, Director of Public Services, and Mr. Eric Bayliss from the PECO Direct Install Program to the podium. Mr. Sokolowski explained that an energy audit was conducted at the Community Center. Mr. Bayliss discussed the results of that audit. Mr. Bayliss explained that by upgrading standard fluorescent lights with more efficient LED lights, the Borough could save a significant amount of money in utility costs. Mr. Bayliss added that the total cost of the project would be \$9,598.63.

Ms. Tutino made a motion to approve the PECO Small Business Install Proposal for the Community Center at the Fel, seconded by Ms. Leonard. The motion carried 7-0.

iv.) CMAQ Grant and Project Update

Ms. Cecco introduced Mr. Brian Keaveney, Traffic Engineer from Pennoni Associates, who was present to provide a brief update on the Traffic Signal Improvement Project. Mr. Keaveney shared that the project is being funded through the Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program. Mr. Keaveney shared that the goal of the project is to improve traffic flow by providing traffic signal improvements. Mr. Keaveney explained that full modernizations would be installed at 11th, 9th, and 3rd Avenue, partial upgrades would be installed at 6th Avenue, and adaptive signal upgrades would be installed at some of the more congested areas in the Borough. Mr. Keaveney also provided an anticipated timeline for the project.

v.) Capital Improvement Financing Options

Ms. Cecco introduced Mr. Christopher Gibbons of Concord Public Finance Advisors who was present to discuss capital improvement financing options for the 2018 Infrastructure Program. During the presentation, Mr. Gibbons provided a broad overall perspective of the bond market in order for Council to understand current interest rates; reviewed the financing that was completed in 2014 in order to provide a concept of what plan is presently in place; and introduced financing options for possible infrastructure improvements.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

a.) Council Discussion on 2018 Infrastructure Program

Ms. Cecco introduced Mr. Hughes and Mr. Sokolowski to discuss the direction and structure of the 2018 Infrastructure Program. Mr. Hughes and Mr. Sokolowski shared with Council, from their perspective, areas of concern within the Borough with regard to infrastructure. Mr. Hughes provided a summary of the infrastructure projects that have been completed over the last five (5) years, which included a stormwater rehabilitation program and a road program. Council discussed the benefits of completing a Borough wide infrastructure project over the next several years compared to completing a smaller scale project that targets specific troublesome roadwork areas. Council authorized the Administration to work with Gilmore Associates to develop a proposal for professional services to develop a large-scale infrastructure project. The professional service fees would be considered for the 2018 fiscal year budget.

MANAGER MATTERS

a.) Consider approving the auction of an International Trash Truck through Municibid

Ms. Cecco shared that the Borough has an International Trash Truck that is out of service and requested that Council consider approval for auction of this truck through Municibid.

b.) Consider approving a fee waiver request, Pink Pearls of Hope Tea, Historic St. John AME Church

Ms. Cecco explained that the Historic St. John AME Church was requesting a fee waiver for the Pink Pearls of Hope Tea at the Community Center.

c.) Consider approving supplemental appropriations for FY16 carry-over projects

Ms. Cecco requested that Council consider approving supplemental appropriations for carry-over projects from 2016, including the finalization of the monument sign project outside of Borough Hall and an unpaid invoice from the 2016 road program. Ms. Cecco shared that the reconstruction of the exit of the alley on to 10th and 11th been tentatively tabled for further consideration. Ms. Cecco stated that these supplemental appropriations would be up for consideration at the September 20th Council meeting.

DEPARTMENT MATTERS

a.) Consider approving a Fire Prevention Demonstration for Fire Prevention Week

Ms. Cecco shared that Mr. Zinni, Borough Fire Marshal, and Mr. Gunning, Borough Fire Chief, were requesting Council's approval to host a fire prevention demonstration for Fire Prevention Week on October 12th from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Ms. Cecco explained that West 4th Avenue between Fayette Street and Forrest Street would be closed for the event beginning at 6:00 pm.

Ms. Leonard made a motion to approve the fire prevention demonstration, seconded by Ms. Barton. The motion carried 7-0.

b.) Brake Retarder Prohibition Signage Installation and PennDot Resurfacing, West Elm Street

Ms. Cecco invited Sergeant Michael Conner to the podium. Sgt. Conner shared that the Police Department was receiving several complaints from constituents regarding the truck traffic and noise on West Elm Street. Sgt. Conner explained that with PennDot approval, brake retarder prohibition signage was installed, which enforces break retarder prohibitions from selected areas. Sgt. Conner also mentioned that the Police Department is working to re-implement truck route signage that was removed during Blue Route construction.

Ms. Cecco asked Mr. Sokolowski to provide a brief overview of PennDot's paving of Elm Street. Mr. Sokolowski shared that PennDot will be paving Elm Street from Fayette Street to Colwell Lane and possibly extending to the bridge. Mr. Sokolowski shared that the project would take place in mid-summer of 2018 and will take 4 to 6 weeks to complete. Mr. Sokolowski also shared that the roadwork would be completed at night.

c.) Consider donating the 2017 FunFest Proceeds from 3 Mile Race and 1 Mile Walk to Borough Organizations

Ms. Cecco announced the schedule for FunFest activities. Ms. Cecco explained that the FunFest Committee is seeking Council's approval to donate proceeds from race and walk registrations to three (3) Borough organizations: Fire Police, the Free Library and Conshohocken Elementary.

Ms. Sokolowski made a motion to approve the donation of FunFest run/walk registration proceeds to Borough organizations, seconded by Mr. Stokley. The motion carried 7-0.

COUNCIL MEMBER AND MAYOR MATTERS

a.) Temporary Stop Sign Installation Update (Mayor Frost)

Mayor Frost shared that temporary stop signs were installed at the intersection of West 6th Ave and Freedley Street. Mayor Frost explained that several residents had contacted him about removing the signs for various reasons. Mayor Frost added that the signs would remain installed until the 90-day trial period concluded.

b.) Consider approving appropriation funds for a Fire Police Recognition Event (Council Member Stokley)

Mr. Stokley asked Council to approve a Fire Police Recognition Event as a thank you for their service and support of the community. Ms. Leonard suggested that Council host the event and continue the conversation at a later date.

Mr. Stokley asked Council to consider donating an out of service fire truck to the Fire Academy; and in turn, the Fire Academy would provide free training. Ms. Cecco clarified that from legal perspective, the sale of the truck must go through a bidding process, but a stipulation that training would be accepted in lieu of payment could be noted in the advertisement. Mr. Savona added that the transfer of vehicle title to Montgomery County would not require the Borough go through public bid and then, in exchange, the Fire Academy could gratuitously provide training. Mr. Savona asked that Council table any motion, and he and Ms. Cecco would work out the logistics.

Mr. Stokley noted that there are many areas within the Borough that are overgrown with weeds. Mr. Hughes elaborated on the code enforcement process with regard to property maintenance.

c.) Consider making a motion to approve fee waiver request, Pink Pearls of Hope Tea, Historic St John AME Church (Council Member Flanagan)

Ms. Flanagan asked Council to make a motion to approve the fee waiver request for the Pink Pearls of Hope Tea.

Ms. Tutino made a motion to approve the fee waiver requests submitted by the Historic St John AME Church, seconded by Ms. Flanagan. The motion carried 7-0.

d.) Comprehensive Plan Task Force Update (Council Member Sokolowski)

Ms. Sokolowski announced that the electronic version of the Citizen Survey would be available on September 8th.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Sister Stacy Hudgen of the Historic St John AME Church thanked Council for approving the fee waiver for their charity event and invited Borough employees to an Appreciation Day luncheon on September 28th from 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm.

Scott Langstein, 200 West Elm Street, inquired about the Borough's process for choosing an electric supply company for Borough owned properties. Mr. Savona explained that the Borough is not required to bid competitively for utility providers. Ms. Cecco added that Borough Administration is currently conducting an energy audit and the results of

that audit will determine if a change in utility providers is deemed necessary. Mr. Langstein also inquired about possibility of PennDot patching and repairing parts of West Elm Street prior to the paving project scheduled for 2018. Ms. Cecco agreed to speak with the Borough's PennDot contact about Mr. Langstein's request.

Rosemary Northcutt, 112 East 6th Avenue, voiced concerns about the Borough's partnership with the Conshohocken Rowing Center.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:51 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Cecco,
Interim Borough Secretary