

BOROUGH OF CONSHOHOCKEN BOROUGH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, December 7, 2016

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: Richard J. Manfredi, Borough Manager
Michael J. Savona, Borough Solicitor

CALL TO ORDER

The Public Meeting of the Conshohocken Borough Council duly advertised, was held at Conshohocken Borough Hall, 400 Fayette Street, Conshohocken, PA. Mr. James Griffin, Council President, called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Council President announcements.

PRESENTATIONS

a.) Millennium Block 'A' Land Development Project: Millennium Waterfront Associates, L. P.

Mr. Griffin invited Mr. Manfredi to introduce the presentation. Mr. Manfredi shared that the project developers were present before Council to provide an overview of the proposed development and to answer any of Council's questions on the subject prior to it appearing before the Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. Savona then introduced the project attorney, Mr. Ed Campbell, as well as Mr. Brian O'Neill of the O'Neill Property Group, to present. Mr. Campbell explained that they currently have approvals to allow the construction of a 420,000 square feet office building on Block 'A' and that there is an application that is pending before the Zoning Hearing Board to increase the building size to 685,000 square feet and approximately 230 feet in height. Mr. Campbell then invited Mr. O'Neill to share a presentation on the project.

Mr. O'Neill shared a PowerPoint and discussed in depth the building's features and the amenities that the project would provide to its tenants and to residents, which included an amphitheater, parking lots that would be open to the public, green space, restaurants, fitness centers, and other items. Council inquired about the building capacity, whether traffic studies had been performed, the floodplain, riverfront access, and the mixed-use status of the property during the presentation. Mr. Manfredi also announced that the application for the Millennium Block 'A' Project would be before the Zoning Hearing Board on December 20, 2016.

Mr. Griffin called for public comment and Mr. Bernard Griggs, Jr. of the Philadelphia

Building & Construction Trades Council shared that Mr. O'Neill has a 100 % commitment to the union for the project and expressed his support for Mr. O'Neill's project.

Recess Public Meeting

Mr. Griffin called the meeting to recess and convened the hearing on the Proposed SP-4 ordinance.

b.) Continue Hearing on Proposed SP-4 Amendment, Keystone Property Group.

Mr. Savona opened the hearing at 7:40 PM and the hearing was closed at 7:48 PM.

Reconvene Public Meeting

Mr. Griffin then reconvened the public meeting.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

a.) Consider the 2017 Borough Council Calendar.

Mr. Manfredi introduced the matter and provided options to Council for the meeting schedule. Council discussed the options that were presented and determined that they would maintain a schedule of meetings for the first and third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM and would build in Saturday work sessions as well. Mr. Manfredi shared that they would vote on the final schedule on December 21st so that it could be duly advertised.

b.) Consider boards and commissions vacancies.

Mr. Manfredi explained that there are several boards and commissions with vacancies and members whose terms would expire December 31st and asked Council how they would like to proceed with filling the existing and upcoming vacancies. Council determined that they would schedule a special meeting at 6:00 PM on December 21, 2016 to interview the Zoning Hearing Board and Planning Commission members whose terms were expiring. Ms. Leonard discussed the need to make more people aware of the Borough's Human Relations Commission and Mr. Manfredi commented that Council would also need to consider appointments to the Comprehensive Plan Task Force in the near future which prompted a discussion on the possibility of applying for grants to assist with the plan update and the need to consider other grants for other Borough projects as well.

MANAGER MATTERS

a.) Consider rejecting the Harry Street Project Bids.

Mr. Manfredi invited Mr. Paul Hughes, Director of Engineering, Licenses and Inspections, to discuss the matter. Mr. Hughes shared that bids for the Harry Street Project were received on Tuesday, November 29, 2016 and eight bidders responded. He reviewed the bid tabulation and explained that this project had been bid previously and the difference between the low bidder the prior time and the lowest responsive bidder, Anrich, Inc., this time only represents a 5.4% reduction in project cost. Mr. Hughes also explained that the project was not included in the 2017 budget and could not be considered for award without an amendment to the budget.

Following Council discussion, Ms. Sokolowski made a motion to reject the Harry Street Project Bids, seconded by Ms. Flanagan. The motion carried 7-0.

LEGAL MATTERS

- a.) Consider authorizing the advertisement of the proposed 2017 Traffic Ordinance Amendment.**

Mr. Savona shared that he had prepared a draft ordinance amendment to correct parking issues around the Borough Hall building. He explained that it would correct directional indicators for spaces, provide for new provisions concerning special purpose parking areas and parking areas surrounding Borough Hall, provide for parking restrictions and regulations, and repeal prior inconsistent ordinances and parts of ordinances. Mr. Manfredi commented that there might be additional changes to the amendment needed because areas around 4th near the neighborhood may become a permit zone later.

Following discussion, Ms. Barton made a motion to authorize the advertisement of the proposed 2017 Traffic Ordinance Amendment, seconded by Ms. Leonard. The motion carried 7-0.

COUNCIL MEMBER AND MAYOR MATTERS

- a.) Consider dedication in memory of former Council Member Gerry McTamney. (Mr. Stokley)**

Mr. Stokley explained that former Council Member Gerry McTamney had been very influential to the development of the Borough and had served 32 years as a Councilman. Mr. Stokley shared that he would like to dedicate a plaque to him and adopt a resolution in his honor in February. Mr. Savona commented that Mr. McTamney was the father of redevelopment in Conshohocken and was a formidable, legendary, individual. Other Members of Council, and Mr. John Costello and Mr. Harvey Buek who were present in the audience, shared similar comments in Mr. McTamney's memory.

- b.) Consider a Zoning Ordinance Amendment to promote single-family dwellings. (Ms. Leonard)**

Ms. Leonard explained that she would like to set a restriction so that properties that have single-family homes prior to undergoing any type of development can only have another single-family home built in its place; she also requested that, in cases where there is no home prior to building, only a single home could be constructed. In response, Mr. Savona explained that his office could put an amendment together for Council discussion in January to create a historic conservation overlay district that would require individuals to appear before Council for a conditional use approval before they could demolish a historic single-family home within the Borough's residential zoning districts. Council granted their consent for Mr. Savona to draft the amendment as discussed.

Mr. John Costello gave public comment that it is a good idea to send the signal to developers now about the plan for the future of Conshohocken so that they can adapt to it. Mr. Leo Costello shared that his daughter had been looking for a home in Conshohocken but had difficulty finding one because house flippers and developers purchased many of the homes she considered before her.

Council also discussed the possibility of limiting rental properties and Mr. Savona explained that the Borough had already adopted a comprehensive rental licensing

program and establishing quotas or attempting to ban rentals would be fraught with issues.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Joe Forino gave public comment about housing in the Borough in response to Councils' prior discussion.

Mr. Matthew Briedenstein shared that he is the Chair of the Borough's Environmental Advisory Council and requested that the members whose terms would be expiring on the council be renewed; he also asked Council to consider allowing the Environmental Advisory Council to expand from five members to seven members and advocated for two new members that had applied for seats.

Ms. Flanagan commented that there are fundraising opportunities to establish adaptable playgrounds and requested that Mr. Ray Sokolowski, Director of Public Services, work with Vince Flocco and the AMBUCS to start working on them for 2018.

Ms. Barton shared that she had a petition from Parkview regarding the establishment of a new dog park and that they had offered to maintain it. In response, Ms. Leonard suggested making an existing park into a dog friendly park and Council discussed which parks could be considered. Ms. Tutino also suggested looking into the 212 Wood Street project's proposed park as another possible location. Council determined to discuss the matter further as part of an upcoming agenda.

Mr. Hughes discussed that the Borough Hall landscaping project contract had expired and nothing has been done to finalize the landscaping. Ms. Barton requested Council's consent to work with Holod's and Mr. Hughes to come up with landscaping options so long as the price would stay under the bid thresholds. Council gave their consent for Ms. Barton to research and provide landscaping alternatives and Mr. Manfredi and Mr. Savona advised Mr. Hughes that he would need to draft a formal notice of termination to Mayfield Gardens, Inc. for the expired landscaping contract.

Ms. Sokolowski inquired whether there had been any complaints from residents about the brightness of the new LED streetlights. Ms. Kate Kosmin, Communications and Receptions Services Manager, responded that there had only been one complaint. Ms. Sokolowski asked Mr. Buek whether the lights could be dimmed and he explained that they could. Mr. Manfredi asked Council if they would grant the administration authorization to adjust the levels provided that the amount of light meets PennDOT standards; Council gave their authorization.

Mr. Griffin requested that Mr. Gary DeMedio of the Conshohocken Economic Development Corporation come in to discuss the Old Borough Hall on a future agenda so that Council can make a determination on next steps.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:29 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard J. Manfredi,
Borough Secretary