

COLLEGEVILLE BOROUGH COUNCIL  
PUBLIC HEARING & MEETING AGENDA  
August 5, 2020 @ 6:00PM - VIA ZOOM

The Public Hearing was called to order at 6PM by Council President Cathy Kernen.

Roll Call: Council President Cathy Kernen, Council VP Shannon Spencer, Council President Pro Tem Gary Hoffmann, Council Member Marion McKinney, Council Member Craig Farr, Council Member Kathy Costello and Council Member Valerie Beckius. The Mayor had a conflict and could not attend. Also in attendance were Borough Manager Geoff Thompson, Engineer Dave Leh and Solicitor Dan Grieser.

Ms. Kernen noted that Chris Canavan from WB Homes is here to participate in the conversation. Mr. Grieser explained that this public hearing is to discuss and vote on Ordinance No.602, the Main Street Commercial Residential District. He said that it is for four land parcels and, if accepted, will allow townhomes and conditional use. There are two exhibits to be recorded with a court reporter: Ordinance 602 and proof of advertisement and a letter from the Montgomery Planning Commission. Chris Canavan from WH Homes introduced himself. He said his company is working through the process to take a functionally obsolete industrial building at Chestnut St. & 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave and turn it into a residential district that will support Main Street. They have worked through design, parking and traffic concerns. He acknowledges that there will more review from the Planning Commission and the Borough through the Land Development process.

**Public Comment:**

Janet Knipe 8 Jonlyn Lane: Ms. Knipe said she has lived at this address since 1984. She said she thinks the plan for 40 townhomes is too dense and worries about the storm water. Mr. Canavan said there are plans for the storm water and that with the new development there will actually be less impervious surface than there is now.

Charles Knipe 8 Jonlyn Lane: Mr. Knipe asked if there would be a perk test. Ms. Kernen said that this hearing is just for the zoning and that this will be addressed in the Conditional Use hearing. She noted that Council visited a development in Lansdale that is similar to the proposed plan here and that they were happy with the result. She noted that if the use is not changed, many less desirable uses could go into that location, such as automotive repair and manufacturing. She said that the borough's long range goal is to attract new businesses to our Main Street and a robust new residential area would be a positive start to do that.

Tim Mahon 151 Derr Dr: Mr. Mahon asked if there was a plan for open space.

Ms. Kernen said that the developer has agreed to pay \$750 per unit (total of \$30K) that the borough can use for park equipment or to purchase or create new open space. Mr. Grieser noted that there is a minimum of not less than 30% grass and 7% central open space.

Brenda Hunsberger 193 Park Ave: Ms. Hunsberger is concerned about rainwater. She feels there are too many units and they will be too tightly packed in. Mr. Canavan said they are required to submit a storm water management plan that will comply with the borough ordinance.

Norm Hunsberger 193 Park Ave: Mr. Hunsberger is concerned about 80 more cars in the community and the traffic that will bring. He feels the \$750 per home fee is laughable and will not nearly compensate for loss of

green space. Mr. Canavan pointed out that the property is not virgin land that is being developed and that there is no green space there now! He believes these new residents will bring value to the borough. A traffic study has been done which showed limited impact to the borough streets.

Alex Tweedie 316 Colonial Ave: Mr. Tweedie said there was a lot of discussion at the Planning Commission meeting regarding the retail portion of the ordinance. He noted that it passed but that the vote was almost split. Mr. Tweedie commented that a project like this costs a lot to a developer. There is a high cost to buy the property, demolish it and then prepare the plans. He wanted to be sure that we all realize that to have someone willing to take on these costs does not come along often. If this is rezoning not approved, it could take 20 years to find another company willing to take on the project. He feels that is something to consider.

Ms. Kernan noted that the rezoning only applies to the Rees property, not the other three M&I parcels in the borough. Mr. Grieser clarified that yes, this vote is only for the Rees property.

Mike Maniscalco 69 W 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave: Mr. Maniscalco said that he lives very close to the Rees property and that his back deck looks out onto it. It is in terrible shape and he is for the new development, and that it will be an improvement to the neighborhood. He is ready for it to be turned into something good for Collegeville.  
Carol Maniscalco 69 W 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave: Ms. Maniscalco asked about the other M&I properties and their zoning.

Chris Canavan WB Homes: Mr. Canavan said he is only developing from Chestnut to Walnut between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>.

Janet Knipe: Ms. Knipe said she is disappointed that it sounds like Council is willing to give the developer anything they want just to keep them. She said the Collegeville website touts its desire to maintain open space and that this plan will do the exact opposite. She believes 40 homes on 2.23 acres will make a very hectic environment in the borough with traffic and parking.

Mike Maniscalco: Mr. Maniscalco said he is the closest of all to the site and he disagrees.

Linda Nielson 348 E Main St: Ms. Nielson said she sees both sides, but has concerns about the density of the homes. She also is concerned that people will use her driveway as a cut through.

Ms. Kernan noted that the borough has 20 parking spaces at the trail head and that there could be discussions with Ralph Yocum at the Collegeville Station and the new owner of Key Bank about having some spaces available for overflow parking. She also said that the Royal Farms road work is supposed to alleviate backups on Main Street.

Mr. Canavan said their plan is to have the new neighborhood pedestrian friendly to Main Street.

Carol Maniscalco asked about the new sidewalk on Third Ave. She noted that the sidewalk has made 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave more narrow and asked if the same will be done with the new project at that end. Ms. Kernan said there were issues with trees on Third Ave and that the way it was done has allowed for traffic calming on the street.

Ms. McKinney said the sidewalk was done that way because the borough cannot take someone's property to make a sidewalk. She said she also has concerns about the amount of homes in the WB project and about the water issue. She wondered if there is a compromise for how many homes are to be built.

Mr. Canavan stressed that the property now is 50,000 SF with no storm water management. His plan is to have 30,000 SF with green space and a water management plan. There is an economic issue of value vs.

return. With the expense of the project and the amount of people they will employ for the project, the numbers have to make sense.

Mr. Farr said the Rees property now has building right up to the property line. He anticipates with the setbacks, this project will look much better.

Ms. Beckius asked Mr. Canavan if the density will be the same as Cannon Square in Lansdale.

Mr. Canavan said that actually this project will be less dense. Those homes only have a one car garage with a single driveway. These will have a two car garage. There will be 18 units per acre here and there were 20 per acre there.

Ms. Spencer said the other M&I properties that are not a part of this plan would not be eligible to be developed in this way. She said she has concerns about the way the ordinance is worded in that as long as the builder complies with it as written that Council would not be allowed to turn it down. She does not agree with taking the power away from Council.

Ms. Costello said that all the way through this process she had been against it. Not until they did the site visit in Lansdale, did she come around. She feels that this is the best option available for the property. She does not want to let it sit looking as it does for possibly another 10 years.

**MOTION** to approve Ordinance 602 by Ms. McKinney with a second by Mr. Hoffmann.

Roll call: Kern Y-Spencer N-Hoffmann Y-Costello Y-Farr Y-Beckius Y-McKinney Y

**MOTION** carries 6-1

\*This concludes the Public Hearing. There will be no further discussions about the townhouses tonight. There will be a 5 minute break before the regular Council Meeting.\*

**The regular meeting was called to order at 7:05PM by Council President Cathy Kern.**

Roll Call: Council President Cathy Kern, Council VP Shannon Spencer, Council Pro Tem Gary Hoffmann, Council Member Marion McKinney, Council Member Craig Farr, Council Member Kathy Costello, Council Member Valerie Beckius. Mayor Wright-Riggins was absent. Also present were Borough Manager Geoff Thompson, Engineer David Leh, Solicitor Dan Grieser and Police Chief Bart Bucher.

Ms. Kern noted that there were two executive sessions on July 15 and July 29 to discuss a personnel matter. Ms. Kern announced that after 17 years at the Borough, Geoff Thompson has resigned to follow his dreams of coaching softball. The Borough appreciates all of his hard work over the years and noted that he will be missed!

Mr. Thompson said he has enjoyed his time here and thanked everyone for their support.

**MOTION** to approve the minutes from the July 1, 2020 meeting by Ms. McKinney with a second by Ms. Spencer. **MOTION** carries 7-0

BUDGET & FINANCE: Mr. Thompson noted the balance in the borough's general account of \$690,043.00. He noted that we have collected funds for sidewalks from the 8<sup>th</sup> Ave project and also for the landscape fund from Royal Farms land development. He also said that the mid-year budget is in better shape than anticipated. Our EIT & LST numbers are actually exceeding this time last year and Berkheimer has projected perhaps a 3% decrease from last year. All in all, not a huge impact to our budget.

*Collegedale Borough, believing input is appropriate on any items coming before Council, will recognize any citizen wishing to address a specific item prior to the vote on the item. In order to be recognized, please raise your hand, state your name and address.*

**MOTION** to approve the checks and Treasure's Report by Ms. McKinney with a second by Mr. Hoffmann.

**MOTION** carries 7-0

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT: Ms. Kernan noted that their meeting was on July 27. They met with business owners from the Colledgeville Shopping Center and with Josh Blair from the Redner's shopping center and Josh Blair from the management company. The businesses have taken on a lot of expenses for PPE equipment to keep everyone safe. The Redner's Shopping Center had many vacant stores prior to COVID and is struggling to find new tenants. He said they are looking for other uses for the property and are considering making the Sears building into loft apartments. Mike Lowery from Montco Planning is working on an interactive map of the Colledgeville Business District. There is a new website called "Restart Montco" that will help businesses and residents deal with the changes mandated by COVID. The website also provides information on safe recreation and highlights low volume areas to walk and ride a bike. The link will be added to the website.

COMMUNICATIONS: Ms. Spencer said she sent out the latest newsletter this morning. She said that she has been training Suzanne (Robertson) to also work on the newsletter and the hope is to have one out mid-month going forward. Ms. Spencer noted that the Mayor is working on a Facebook live event to announce the winners of the new logo contest.

Mr. Farr said he noticed all the oval magnets on cars while walking and thought it might be a good idea to have Colledgeville magnets made up for residents. He spoke to Mayor Wright-Riggins about this idea and he thought perhaps the Rotary would fund it. Ms. Spencer liked the idea.

LPVRS: Ms. Stagliano was not present, but Mr. Thompson noted that while there have been weather delays, the regional sewer pipe replacement project is moving along.

CTMA: Mr. Farr said the big topic for CTMA was the continuing sewer project. There is a \$1.3M overage that has been negotiated down to several hundred thousand dollars.

PUBLIC WORKS: Ms. McKinney said at the meeting they discussed our police including Water Works Park as part of their patrol and handling the locking and unlocking of the park gate on the weekends. Joe Hastings will continue to do so during the week. Ms. McKinney asked if this is going for a vote tonight. She noted that something needs to be worked out to ensure the State Police can also gain access to the park. She also noted that the Salt Shed repayment agreement needs to be off our plate. Mr. Grieser said that we have already handled our portion of the repayment and that Trappe has its own plan that will take a little longer.

**MOTION** to approve the refund to Public Works for the Salt Shed by Ms. McKinney with a second by Mr. Farr

**MOTION** carries 7-0

Ms. Beckius asked about page 3, #8 of the Police Agreement. She noticed that it states that the borough would need to add Trappe as an additional insured. She asked how much that will raise our premium. Mr. Thompson said he does not know exactly, but he does not expect it will be very much. Ms. Beckius said she does not want to vote on this until she knows exactly how much it will be. Ms. McKinney asked for a rough guess. Mr. Thompson said he thought about \$100. Mr. Farr noted that this is a unique situation that the park is in Trappe Borough, but that it is our residents that have the complaints. He feels if it was said that we would not charge for the police service, it seem unnecessary to quibble about the insurance. Mr. Hoffman asked if Chief Bucher and the Mayor had a chance to look at the agreement and their thoughts. Chief Bucher asked if the Public Works building would be a part of the surveillance. Ms. Beckius said she did not think that the building is actually part of the park. Chief Bucher said that Mr. Hastings had requested that Public Works would be included. The Chief said he would like to support Mr. Hastings in any way he could. Mr. Hoffmann said that he supports the Chief in whatever he sees fit. Ms. McKinney asked that this issue be tabled until September. She feels we need the whole story and financial figures to make a decision.

Mr. Grieser added that he received an email that two extra parcels were approved by Trappe Council to be included in the police coverage: The annex and the Public Works office and shop.

Ms. McKinney did not like that that more things were added after their meeting with the Trappe Borough representatives and feels that they are taking advantage and using free Police work on our dime.

Mr. Farr thinks that it really does not add much to the original plan and makes sense. The police are only to run a loop through the park and lock the gate. If they see something that needs attention, they will have the jurisdiction to act.

Ms. Kernan tabled the issue until the September meeting.

Mr. Grieser explained the T Mobile lease cell tower agreement. He has worked with the Trappe Solicitor to keep the price of \$3160 per month for the next 5 years, with an increase of 15% for the following term and 15% increase the term after that. He noted that Public Works voted to approve the agreement and that Trappe did not vote yet.

**MOTION** to approve the T Mobile lease for the Trappe Tower by Ms. McKinney with a second by Ms. Spencer  
**MOTION** carries 7-0

CPVRPC: Ms. Beckius said they met on July 20. They reviewed the regional trail map that is almost finished. They also discussed the new residential commercial zoning for Collegeville and all were in favor. While they have their concerns about the density of the townhouse development, they recognize that it is what is necessary to be viable for the builder. Ms. Beckius noted that the next meeting is Sept 21.

PARKS: Ms. Costello said there was no meeting this month. She asked Mr. Thompson if the new equipment for the park had been ordered. He said it had not, but that we can get that done this month.

PERSONNEL: Ms. Kernan said that she and Mr. Hoffmann met twice this month. Once to work on the manager job description so they could post it and another time to discuss hiring a firm to help with the search.

STREETS, LIGHTS & PUBLIC SAFETY: Mr. Farr said he is please the way this committee is coming together and really appreciates the Fire & Police joining in to help work through issues. He said they discussed ongoing speed complaints on Park and Clahor. He looked in the PA Traffic Calming Handbook and came across a possible solution: speed cushions. They are lower than typical speed bumps and are not the width of the street, only 6 feet wide. This allows for firetrucks to pass over without having to slow, but makes regular vehicles naturally slow down. Chief Bucher said he will find the closest town utilizing them, and find out if they have been found to be successful. Mr. Farr asked Mr. Thompson when the faulty new lights will be replaced. Mr. Thompson said he expected the work to be completed by the end of the month. Mr. Farr noted that the paving on 10<sup>th</sup> Ave is complete. Mr. Leh said that he and Mr. Hoffmann went to inspect after the big storm and that there was some overflow to a yard on 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. Mr. Leh has gone back to the contractor and they will be back to ensure this problem is fixed. He also noted that the contractor, while working on this project, did some damage to the Fire House driveway. He told them the repair they did was unsatisfactory and it will be redone. Mr. Farr said he heard from Josh Blair of the Redner's Shopping Center management team that some of the tenants there had complained that their insurance companies do safety inspections and they did not want to have to pay twice for the same thing. Mr. Farr said that Brian Freas asked for the checklist for these inspections to be provided to be sure all the pertinent aspects are being inspected. If so, he feels that we could consider accepting those inspections.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS:**

Engineer: Mr. Leh noted that Gilmore & Associates is in receipt of Breezecon Construction Inc's July 29, 2020 application payment for the West Third paving project and have inspected the completed work and find it to

be satisfactory. He recommends payment in the requested amount of \$24,517.00. This will leave \$12,715.00 remaining under the contract for completion of the project.

MOTION to approve 2<sup>nd</sup> payment to Breezecon by Ms. Spencer with a second by Mr. Farr

MOTION carries 7-0

Mr. Leh also noted that the completion of the parking lot behind 339-341 Main St will get underway in the next 3-4 weeks.

SOLICITOR: Mr. Grieser requested approval to file a Proof of Claim in the class action lawsuit against Purdue Pharmaceutical. Collegeville is a party to litigation along with every other municipality in the country that hasn't opted out. MOTION to ratify by Ms. McKinney with a second by Mr. Farr

MOTION carries 7-0

MANAGER: Mr. Thompson said he will keep a file with all the information collected on yesterday's storm in the hopes that there will be federal funding available.

POLICE: Chief Bucher told Council that regarding the patrolling issue discussed earlier for Water Works Park and the other properties that he will do whatever Council wants him to do. He thanked Steve Gehringer from Ursinus and Joe Hastings from Public Works for their efforts clearing Main Street yesterday after 2 trees came down. He also thanked Jeff Wentworth for all of his help and work yesterday. Ms. Kernan asked about damage at the Verizon office. The Chief said that they did have quite a bit of water damage and that the internet at the office was out most of the day. He noted another issue on E 9<sup>th</sup> Ave close to Glen Farms Dr. There was a tree on the wires that caused outages and the road closure. Leslen Lane also had a tree down blocking the road.

FIRE COMPANY: Brian Kuklinski noted that the Fire Company had 31 calls in July. Six EMS calls and 25 were fire related. The total Fire Company man hours for July was 114. They assisted on many calls yesterday and were out from 10:40AM until midnight. He thanked Public Works, the Police Department and Jeff Wentworth for their efforts.

Mr. Kuklinski also thanked Mr. Thompson for his service and wished him well in his new career.

Ms. Kernan thanked Mr. Kuklinski for his efforts during that long day!

MAYOR: no report

PUBLIC COMMENTS: none

#### **ACTION ITEMS:**

Ms. Kernan asked for consideration to hire the Meyner Center at the rate of \$95/hour not to exceed \$6000 as a professional consultant to assist the Borough to find a manager.

**MOTION** to approve by Ms. McKinney with a second by Ms. Spencer

**MOTION** carries 7-0

Meeting Adjourned at 8:25 PM