

BOROUGH OF CONSHOHOCKEN BOROUGH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, July 20, 2016

SPECIAL PUBLIC MEETING

PRESENT: James Griffin, Council President
Karen Tutino, Council Vice-President
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 Special 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 6:02 PM.

Consider Keystone Property Group's petition to create proposed SP-4 zoning district through the adoption of a zoning ordinance amendment

Mr. Manfredi introduced the item and asked Mr. Savona to elaborate. Mr. Savona shared that the current draft of Keystone Property Group's SP-4 zoning ordinance amendment now incorporates all of the conditions and recommended changes made by the Planning Commission and that Council has this draft available to review. He further explained that Council would need to come to a consensus on whether or not they would like to schedule a hearing on the proposed ordinance amendment for the SP-4 district.

Mr. Savona discussed areas of the proposed ordinance that he recommends Council consider closely such as how the project would interface at street level and parking which has been made a conditional use. Council members asked questions about the next steps for the SORA project related to traffic flow and traffic studies that would be conducted and whether or not the SP-4 district could be limited to only this area of the Borough if approved which Mr. Savona and Mr. Manfredi answered in detail. Mr. Savona clarified that the hearing process would provide the opportunity for Council to dissect the proposed ordinance amendment and offer suggestions for improvement as well as allow the public to provide comment on the subject and that the hearing process itself could consist of several hearings until Council is ready to make a vote. Following the discussion, Mr. Savona asked if there was a consensus of Council to schedule the hearing and all Council members were in agreement to move forward with the hearing. Mr. Savona added that he would like to have the review letter from the Montgomery County Planning Commission prior to the hearing; once the letter is received, Mr. Manfredi would set a date.

On a related subject, Mr. Manfredi then asked Mr. Savona to elaborate on how the Comprehensive Plan relates to the Zoning Ordinance. Mr. Savona shared that now is an ideal time for the Borough to review its current zoning regulations to determine if they have become out of sync with what the present demands and needs of the Borough are. Mr. Savona explained that, in order to complete the comprehensive re-zoning of the Borough, Article 5 of the

Municipalities Planning Code states that communities should adopt a new Comprehensive Plan prior to re-writing the zoning ordinance since the zoning ordinance must reflect a community's Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Manfredi and Mr. Savona explained that Council would have to determine whether to delegate the task of developing a new Comprehensive Plan to the Planning Commission or if they would prefer to form a Steering Committee. Council inquired about the process that would be involved with adopting a new Comprehensive plan before moving on to the final agenda matter.

Roseland, 51 Washington, and SEPTA Parking Lot

Mr. Savona explained that the 51 Washington Street project would be a 315-unit residential apartment building and shared that the project was approved by a court stipulation that contained a number of conditions, one of which was that the developer proposed to build a permanent parking lot for SEPTA alongside the SEPTA tracks. Mr. Savona shared that SEPTA currently has an arrangement for temporary leased parking at the site but they are in need of a long-term solution for parking. Mr. Savona continued by explaining that the developer applied for and was awarded a \$400,000 multi-modal grant from Penn-DOT that he planned to use to build the parking lot but Council had to agree to contribute part of its impact fees to assist with the construction. Mr. Savona shared that the developer estimated that the budget for the lot construction would be \$585,000 and Mr. Manfredi clarified that the \$585,000 budgeted was actually set by the DCED grant and the developer set the cost at \$675,000 in their preliminary budget for the project. Mr. Savona explained that Council was divided on whether or not to contribute a portion of the \$365,000 in negotiated impact fees to assist with the parking lot construction and they ultimately agreed to allow \$185,000 to be used for the parking lot construction since it could benefit the Borough. Mr. Savona explained that the project is now owned by Roseland and, in a recent meeting with the Borough and SEPTA, they shared that the project costs have increased and they provided a budget summary that shows that the lot is now expected to cost \$793,357.

Mr. Savona explained that Council needs to decide how much of the impact fee they are comfortable contributing to help fund the parking lot at this time. Council inquired on whether SEPTA would contribute to the project costs, where the funds would come from to contribute and when SEPTA was planning to move forward with the train station improvements which Mr. Savona and Mr. Manfredi answered. Mr. Manfredi explained that he had a conversation with the President at Roseland prior to the special public meeting and that the President asked if the Borough would give any consideration to the possibility of dedicating the lot to the Borough or other improvements if they agreed to contribute additional funds but Mr. Manfredi was unable to answer the without Council's approval and additional information. After further discussion, Mr. Savona made a recommendation that Council seek assurances from SEPTA that the Borough would be given priority use of the lot during off-peak hours and on weekends, parking would always be free, and that the developer would not have any claim to spots in the lot. Council was supportive of Mr. Savona's recommendations but did not take any action on the final decision that evening.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:59 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard J. Manfredi,
Borough Secretary