

BOROUGH OF CONSHOHOCKEN BOROUGH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, September 5, 2018

PUBLIC MEETING

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

ALSO PRESENT: 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. Leonard, Council President, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Leonard announced that there was an Executive Session held immediately prior to the meeting regarding a legal matter.

PRESENTATIONS

a.) Firefighter Commendations

Fire Chief Timothy Gunning presented Firefighter Commendations for two (2) water rescues that occurred in August of 2018.

Fire Chief Gunning read aloud the first commendation that recognized Captain Justin Weidamoyer and Firefighters Justin Coogan, Christopher Dixon, Sean Gregory and Thomas Sesko for rescuing an individual from a vehicle submerged under water on August 13, 2018.

Fire Chief Gunning read aloud the second commendation that recognized Deputy Chief Gary Davis and Firefighters Justin Coogan, John Costello, Christopher Dixon and Carmen Lilick for rescuing an individual from an overturned jet ski on the Schuylkill River on August 17, 2018.

Council and the residents that were present applauded the emergency services personnel for their good work before moving on to the next agenda item.

b.) Consider a fee waiver request for Hoop It Up for the Heart, Debbie Lewis, Applicant

Ms. Leonard invited Debbie Lewis, resident and applicant, to the podium. Ms. Lewis shared that she is hosting a basketball tournament to raise awareness and funds for "Simon's Heart." She provided details for the event and requested a fee waiver for use of the Community Center.

Mr. Stokley made a motion to approve the fee waiver request for Hoop It Up for the Heart, seconded by Ms. Barton. The motion carried 7-0.

c.) Consider preliminary/final approval for subdivision and land development for 701 Jones Street and 720 Spring Mill Avenue: Mr. Ty Borkowski, Applicant

Mr. Peters provided an overview of the land development application for 701 Jones Street. He shared that the applicant proposes to remove the existing, vacant manufacturing building and subdivide the property into eight (8) lots, which would contain four (4) semi-detached single-family homes and four (4) single-family homes. Mr. Peters explained that the property was the subject of a court ordered settlement agreement, which incorporated a plan that established the layout of the proposed development. He added that the court settlement agreement also granted several variances, which were discussed in further detail. Mr. Peters reviewed the requested waivers and conditions of approval per the resolution.

Ms. Barton inquired about the height of the houses. George Ozorowski, the applicant's attorney, responded that the building height would not exceed the zoning requirement of 35 feet.

Mr. Ozorowski confirmed for Ms. Flanagan that the removal of two (2) existing driveways would result in two (2) additional on-street parking spaces.

Ms. Barton made a motion to approve preliminary/final subdivision and land development for 701 Jones Street, seconded by Ms. Flanagan. Mr. Stokley recused himself. The motion carried 6-0.

Mr. Peters provided an overview of the land development application 720 Spring Mill Avenue. He explained that the applicant proposes to remove the existing, vacant manufacturing building and subdivide the property into 23 lots, which would contain eleven (11) single family homes, four (4) twin homes and eight (8) townhomes. He shared that the property was subject of a court order settlement agreement, which dictates the site layout, number of homes and type of homes. Mr. Peters added that the court order settlement agreement also granted several variances, which he reviewed in further detail. He stated that a homeowner's association (HOA) would be established to govern and run the property, and provided an overview of the requested waivers and conditions of approval per the resolution.

Ms. Barton inquired about public access to the green space on the property. Mr. Ozorowski replied that the three (3) proposed pocket parks would be managed by the HOA and that decisions regarding public access would be left to the HOA. Ms. Barton also inquired about making the alley one-way. Mr. Ozorowski stated that the applicant is not proposing a one-way alley at this time.

Ms. Sokolowski stressed the importance of ensuring that future homeowners have adequate parking at the proposed site. Mr. Ozorowski provided an overview of the proposed parking plan, stating that each unit would have two (2) parking spaces, one in a garage and one that would be uncovered in the driveway. He added that that project would be adding some off-street parking as well.

Mr. Griffin made a motion to approve preliminary/final subdivision and land development for 720 Spring Mill Avenue, seconded by Ms. Sokolowski. Mr. Stokley recused himself. The motion carried 6-0.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

a.) Conduct an interview for the Dog Park Advisory Committee

Ms. Leonard introduced Georgina Weber, 330 West 3rd Avenue, who was present to interview for the Dog Park Advisory Committee. Ms. Leonard asked her why she would like to serve on the Committee. Georgina replied that she is passionate about dogs and community service. She added that she currently volunteers at Main Line Animal Rescue and served as President of Panhellenic at West Chester University. Ms. Flanagan asked Georgina what her top priority would be as a member of the Committee. She responded that she would like to focus on the Committee's upcoming sponsorship and fundraising events.

Ms. Tutino made a motion to appoint Georgina Weber to the Dog Park Advisory Committee, seconded by Ms. Barton. The motion carried 7-0.

b.) Consider creating a Parking Task Force

Ms. Sokolowski stated that during the process of drafting the Comprehensive Plan Update, the Borough received feedback from Borough stakeholders and that one of the primary concerns identified was parking in the Borough. She recommended that Council consider creating a Parking Task Force to conduct an analysis of the Borough's current parking rules and regulations, current parking conditions and needs for the future. She presented specific ideas related to the composition of the Task Force and the scope of duties.

Per the request of Council, Mr. Peters stated that he would draft a resolution for the creation of a Parking Task Force.

MANAGER MATTERS

a.) Consider approving a request for an extension to the hours of operation of the Helipad

Ms. Leonard shared that Fanatics Retail Group North, LLC is requesting an amendment to its License Agreement with the Borough to extend the hours of operation of the Helipad until 12:00 midnight. She added that the Helipad is currently permitted to operate until 11:00pm. Mr. Stokley requested information related to the license agreement, specifically the license fee. Ms. Flanagan recommended that the request for an extension be discussed with the residents in the surrounding apartment buildings. Ms. Sokolowski requested information on the Borough's noise ordinance.

Ms. Flanagan invited Marissa Buck, resident of Londonbury apartments, to the podium. Ms. Buck reported that the helicopter noise is a concern for the residents of Londonbury. She stated that the helicopter is extremely loud and disrupts her sleep.

Mr. Peters stated that the item would be tabled until Council has further information.

b.) Consider approving the Borough's 2019 Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) as required by Act 205

Mr. Peters explained that the Borough is required to adopt the Commonwealth's Minimum Municipal Obligation in September of each year. He added that the MMO for each plan represents the amount of money that the Borough must contribute to for each of the three pension plans.

Ms. Barton made a motion to approve the Borough's 2019 Minimum Municipal Obligation (MMO) as required by Act 205, seconded by Mr. Griffin. The motion carried 7-0.

c.) Discuss adopting a support animal policy for Borough property and events

Mr. Peters shared that Borough Administration received requests for the presence of Service Animals, Emotional Support Animals and Therapy Animals on Borough property and at Borough events and that Administration recommends that adoption of policies for said animals. Per the request of Council, Mr. Peters confirmed that he would draft a resolution.

DEPARTMENT MATTERS

There were no Department Matters.

LEGAL MATTERS

a.) Consider approving the easement agreement for 130 West 5th Avenue

Mr. Peters stated the applicant is requesting a waiver of land development for properties located at 130 West 5th Avenue and 126 West 5th Avenue. He shared that 130 West 5th Avenue contains a vacant building, previously utilized for a daycare and that 126 West 5th Avenue contains a residence. Mr. Peters explained that between these two properties are two (2) strips of ground owned by the Borough of Conshohocken.

Ed Campbell, the applicant's attorney, explained the history of the properties, including the Borough's ownership of the two (2) strips of land. Mr. Campbell requested Council's approval to enter into an easement agreement with the applicant to effectuate the improvement and use of the Borough property for a parking area and associated improvements as proposed on the plan.

Mr. Peters stated that the applicant had agreed to pay \$20,000 to the Borough for the easement, which is the total amount of taxes on the property over 40 years. Council agreed to the easement fee.

Ms. Sokolowski made a motion to authorize Borough Administration to finalize the easement agreement for 130 West 5th Avenue, seconded by Mr. Stokley. The motion carried 7-0.

b.) Discuss adopting ordinance revisions, specific to feral cats and fruit droppings

Mr. Peters shared that Borough Administration has been examining the Borough's ordinances and that two (2) subjects, feral cats and fruit-tree droppings, were identified as a potential focus for the next round of ordinance amendments. With regard to the feral cat issue, Mr. Peters explained that an ordinance would protect the safety, and welfare of feral cats as well as residents by setting standards for management of the community of cats. With respect to the fruit-tree droppings, Mr. Peters explained that the concern relates to the failure of some property owners in the Borough to pick-up the fruit falling from their fruit trees, resulting in the presence of rotting fruit, slippery conditions and bees within the Borough's rights-of-way. Mr. Peters asked Council to provide feedback regarding whether Council has any specific concerns to be addressed with respect to feral cats and fruit-tree droppings and whether Council has any other Health and Safety issues to be addressed.

c.) Discuss adopting a process for recognizing long-term Borough residents aged 100 years or older

Mr. Peters shared Borough Administration received a request from Council to develop a proposed procedure for the recognition of Borough residents of age 100 years or older. He stated that the process for recognition would be established by resolution. Then, he discussed the proposed process, which included minimum eligibility requirements, nomination process and selection process.

COUNCIL MEMBER AND MAYOR MATTERS

a.) Sewer Authority Update (Council Member Barton)

Ms. Barton stated that the Sewer Authority hired a new Finance Director and provided an update on the liner project.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Aronson shared that the Borough of Conshohocken along with other Montgomery County municipalities would be recognized for passing a non-discrimination ordinance. He added that Conshohocken was one of the first municipalities to pass the ordinance in 2011. Mayor Aronson announced that the Police Department would be hosting a Trail and Bike Safety Class on September 15, 2018. He provided information on two (2) additional upcoming events: Dog Yoga at Riverside Dog Park and EAC West Side Clean Up. Ms. Sokolowski requested that all events be advertised on the Borough television channel.

Joe Collins, President of the Historical Society, voiced concerns regarding the operational procedures at the Mary Wood Park House. Council provided reasoning for the operational changes at the Park House and confirmed that Administration would continue to work with Mr. Collins during this transition period.

Ms. Leonard asked Council to consider making the Halloween Parade a Borough Special Event. Council requested that Borough Administration determine event logistics and present their recommendations to Council at the September Voting Meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:56 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Cecco,
Borough Secretary