

BOROUGH OF CONSHOHOCKEN BOROUGH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, February 3, 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
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 7:00 PM.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

a.) **Consider filling the Ward 5 Council vacancy.**

Mr. Griffin introduced the matter and asked if Council would like to make any motions.

Ms. Sokolowski made a motion to appoint Ms. Jane Flanagan to fill the Ward 5 Council vacancy and approve Resolution 2016-01, seconded by Ms. Leonard. Mr. Griffin called for public comment and Mr. Kevin McMonagle commented that he was elected for Ward 5 and asked for Council to provide comment to the people that voted him in; Council did not comment in response. Mr. Griffin called for a roll call vote and the motion carried 6-0. Ms. Flanagan presented her Affidavit of Residency, took the Oath of Office, was sworn-in by Mayor Frost, and took her seat on Council.

PRESENTATIONS

a.) **Mr. Paul Vernon, KSK Architects, Planners, Historians, Inc.: Draft Leeland Mansion Market Assessment performed by Urban Partners.**

Mr. Paul Vernon introduced Mr. Chris Lankenau of Urban Partners to provide a summary of the study. Mr. Lankenau stated that, in September, Council told him to focus on using the building as a bed and breakfast, event space, or office space. He discussed various models of each option and shared research and feedback received from residents, employers, and individuals running similar outfits. Mr. Lankenau concluded that each option has potential; the next step is to examine financial and market feasibility so that Urban Partners can provide a model of the operations to see if the use could generate revenue for the Borough.

Mr. Lankenau invited questions and Mr. Stokley inquired about the Carriage House. Ms. Barton replied that she and Mr. Manfredi had determined that it would be very expensive to include it as part of the bed and breakfast so she suggested making it office space and keeping the front for the Borough. Mr. Manfredi clarified that Ms. Barton is adding an alternative to combine uses. Ms. Barton stated that Leeland is the Borough's last beautiful mansion, shared that Mr. Leeland has a building on the historical registry already and asked why not add his mansion as well; Mr. Stokley replied that it would add to construction costs.

Mr. Manfredi then provided a history on how the determination on the mansion got to this point for the benefit of the new Council Members and asked if the Council was inclined to expand this study or to revisit other alternatives. Mr. Griffin suggested expanding the current study and requested that it be added on a future agenda for further discussion.

Ms. Leonard asked Mr. Lankenau why his original report suggested that the office space in Conshohocken is empty and Mr. Lankenau replied that it might be an error since available office space tends to turn over quickly. Mayor Frost then asked Mr. Lankenau if there were any options beyond the three that Council should consider and Mr. Lankenau replied that the three that were selected are the best choices for the building. Ms. Tutino commented that she agreed that the building is beautiful and should be retained in its present form; she also asked Mr. Lankenau to provide consultative advice on which use or combination would work best. In response to Ms. Tutino's comment, Mr. Manfredi asked Mr. Lankenau to provide a summation of his thoughts to share with Council before the matter was placed back on a future agenda.

Mr. Griffin called for public comment and Mr. Eric Peal asked if there was mold or other damage that would require repair before it could be repurposed; Ms. Barton replied that there was water damage and that the mold that was present was rectified; Mr. Stokley corrected that it was not rectified. Mr. Peal also asked when a cost analysis of the necessary repairs would be ready for review and Mr. Lankenau replied that the costs are determined based upon the use Council is considering and are forthcoming.

Mr. Dennis Beaver asked if there is any tax advantage that comes with a building being added to the historical registry and Ms. Barton replied that there is no tax advantage but the building would then be eligible for grants to assist with repairs. With no further comment from Council or the public, Mr. Griffin introduced the next presentation.

b.) Mr. Robert W. Gundlach, Fox Rothschild, LLP: Keystone Property Group SORA West Project update.

Mr. Gundlach introduced himself as the attorney for Keystone Property Group and shared that Ms. Jennifer Wunder, Mr. Bill Glazer, Mr. Richard Gottlieb, Mr. Michael Brookshire, Mr. Carl St. Pierre of Pennoni Associates, Ms. Theresa Sheils from the architectural firm Gensler, and the traffic consultant, Mr. Peter Spisszak of Traffic Planning and Design, were all present as well. Mr. Gundlach then summarized the background of the project and stated that he was present to provide an overview to Council of where the project stands presently. Mr. Gottlieb then provided an overview of Keystone Property Group and Ms. Sheils shared that creating a destination that talks to the community of Conshohocken was their goal; she discussed the plaza and how it will help to create activity in the development 24/7. Mr. Gottlieb then explained the components in more detail specifically focusing on the heights and capacity of each building as well as pedestrian and vehicle access points.

Mr. Savona commented that the group has met with Borough staff and consultants on a few occasions and that there are still many points that they will need to work through; since they are on a six-month extension through June, it was advantageous to bring them before Council for feedback on the plans and they would be back again in March to continue the discussion with Council. Mr. Manfredi asked Mr. Gundlach to provide an executive summary as follow-up. Mr. Griffin then introduced the item of new business.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

- a.) **Discuss request to modify the land development approval for 603 Spring Mill Avenue, the Conshohocken Italian Bakery.**

Mr. Manfredi explained that Council would consider a change of the conditions of a land development approval and changes to be made to the parking lot that were requested by the bakery so that they can move forward with their development; he then asked Mr. Paul Vernon of KSK Architects Planners Historians, Inc. and Ms. Chris Stetler, Community Development and Zoning Officer, to elaborate. Ms. Stetler shared the history of the land development submitted by the Conshohocken Italian Bakery and that, based on discussion with staff and the Borough Solicitor, it has been determined that the land development approval resolution must be amended; she read the current conditions and then added that the changes that should be made with the amendment would still help to improve the parking lot but would not be so onerous for the property owner. Mr. Vernon shared a sketch that he had prepared to illustrate the changes with Council and Mr. Savona clarified that they were not asking for approval of the sketch but rather to approve the amendment to the approval resolution. Ms. Sokolowski and Ms. Tutino asked clarifying questions about access to the retail establishment and the parking lot and Ms. Christina Gambone, the property owner who was present, explained. Mr. Manfredi explained that the matter would be on the next agenda for a vote and Mr. Griffin then asked Mr. Manfredi to review his Manager Matters.

MANAGER MATTERS

Mr. Manfredi highlighted the consent agenda, shared that a hearing and adoption of the new floodplain ordinance would occur, and that Council would be asked to consider appointing a firm to conduct the Borough's annual financial audit for FY 2015, 2016, and 2017 at the next meeting. Mr. Manfredi then invited Mr. Dan Sheedy and Mr. Marty Eckert of the Archbishop Kennedy Alumni Association to introduce a request to add plaques at the A-Field to honor two former football coaches, Mr. Chris Bockrath a former coach at Archbishop Kennedy, and Mr. Charlie Heavey, a former coach at St. Matthew's High School; they requested Council approval to move forward with the request and to set a date to hold a ceremony to dedicate the plaques. Mayor Frost suggested that they bring the final version of the plaques for Council approval before they are engraved and they agreed to do so. Council was open to permitting the plaques.

Mr. Manfredi then continued with his matters by commenting that the Public Works Department did an excellent job in dealing with the recent snowstorm that resulted in the accumulation of approximately twenty-six inches of snow. He also provided updates on the upcoming fireworks event, a debrief on the mercury leak, the St. Patrick's Day Parade, Relay for Life, interviews for the Planning Commission and Environmental Advisory Council vacancies on March 2, 2016, the Equus comfort station, and the Pulver beer garden request. He continued that the Borough is advertising for the bid award of the installation of rectangular rapid flashing beacons on Fayette,

possible participation in a streetlight procurement program, the YMCA has signed a lease for space on the first floor of the Borough Hall, and that the Borough is wrapping up several audits and that one discovery is that Mr. Manfredi would need to be appointed by resolution as Chief Administrative Officer of the Borough's Pension Plans on the next agenda.

Lastly, he updated Council on the Schuylkill Riverfront plan status, that a parking evaluation study would be forthcoming, as well as proposed changes to the zoning ordinance and a final change order for the Borough Hall.

LEGAL MATTERS

There were no legal matters to share.

COUNCIL MEMBER AND MAYOR MATTERS

Mr. Stokley commented that he would like to share an article related to SEPTA at the next meeting. Ms. Flanagan shared that it is an honor to have been appointed to Council. Ms. Barton thanked all for putting up with her comments on the Leeland Mansion bed and breakfast. Ms. Sokolowski and Ms. Tutino reiterated Mr. Manfredi's comments on how well the Public Works Department removed the recent heavy snow from the snowstorm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Dennis Beaver shared that alleys should have speed limits, signs stating no "thru-traffic" and that the alleys at the 400 Block of 10th and 11th are deteriorating. He also shared that people are picking up trash in the alleys at 11th and Mr. Stokley replied it is not the case. Mr. Savona commented that the process of installing stop signs in the alley has already begun following the last meeting and Mr. Stokley added that there are problems with traffic that need to be addressed before they install stop signs. Mr. Stokley, Mr. Manfredi and Ms. Tutino explained that the matter would appear on a future agenda in and thanked him for his comment.

Ms. Rosemary Northcutt thanked Public Works for their work and suggested that it be a priority to clear sidewalks and crosswalks of snow so that pedestrians can access public transportation, buildings, residences and other areas. She asked that Borough officials survey the walks, especially on Fayette Street, following a storm so they can understand how safe or unsafe they are for pedestrians.

Mr. Larry Imhoff, an employee of a business located at Eight Tower Bridge, shared ideas and a presentation to prevent traffic congestion around the area. Mr. Manfredi commented that he would follow-up with Mr. Imhoff and would share the ideas with the Borough's traffic engineer.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard J. Manfredi,
Borough Secretary