

BOROUGH OF CONSHOHOCKEN BOROUGH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, June 1, 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 7:00 PM.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Griffin announced that Council intends to appoint a Fire Chief at its next meeting.

PRESENTATIONS

a.) SORA West: Request for Second Extension of the Firehouse Approval Period.

Mr. Manfredi introduced Ms. Jennifer Wunder of Fox Rothschild who was present on behalf of Keystone Property Group to request a second extension of the Firehouse Approval Period included in the original Agreement of Sale and Development Agreement between the Borough, Keystone Property Group and the Redevelopment Authority of Montgomery County. Ms. Wunder asked that the extension time period be increased from six months to twelve months so that it would expire on June 30, 2017. Mr. Savona shared that the Redevelopment Authority received the same request and has approved it through June 30, 2017 subject to the Borough's approval; it would be before Council for vote at the next meeting. Council asked clarifying questions of Mr. Savona, Mr. Manfredi, and Ms. Wunder, and the presentation concluded.

b.) Discuss Borough Hall Signage Package: Jake Fruncillo, Leasing Director, Keystone Property Group.

Mr. Manfredi shared that Borough Hall building project plans were submitted to the Borough in 2014 that included a signage package that had not been approved by Council to date. He added that Mr. Jake Fruncillo, the leasing director for the property, has spoken with prospective tenants about the signage that they could erect if they executed a lease for space in the Borough Hall and that Mr. Fruncillo was present tonight to share an update and to gather information on what signage options Council would be comfortable with allowing tenants to apply to the building. Mr. Fruncillo then shared the signage options and, following his presentation and Council discussion, Mr. Manfredi suggested that Mr. Fruncillo disregard the previous signage option drawings from 2014 and instead ask prospective tenants to

provide their own signage packages for Council to evaluate their requests on a case-by-case basis. Council agreed with Mr. Manfredi's suggestion. With no further questions, Mr. Griffin introduced the next agenda item.

c.) Consider awarding bid for Borough Hall landscaping package: Bergmann Associates.

Mr. Manfredi explained that the Borough had received bids for landscaping the Borough Hall building at the previous meeting but a number of Council still had questions on what the package included. Ms. Pattie Guttenplan of Bergmann Associates was present that evening to explain the details of the package so that Council could make a determination on whether or not to award the bid at the next meeting. Ms. Guttenplan explained in detail bid specifications such as the types of plants that would be included, how much maintenance would be involved, and the durability of the ceramic planters that were selected. Following her presentation, Council thanked her for her time before moving on to the next matter.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a.) Discuss awarding a bid for Fayette Street pedestrian crosswalk Rapid Flashing Beacons at the June 15 voting meeting.

Mr. Drew Sirianni of Pennoni Associates was present to explain the bids that were before Council for award at the previous meeting regarding the installation of rapid flashing beacons on Fayette Street at the intersections of 4th and 7th Avenues. Mr. Sirianni answered questions that Council asked at the previous meeting, such as if it would be possible to install traffic signals at both intersections instead of the beacons and shared that the Borough does not meet the PennDOT conditions to be eligible and the cost is much greater than the beacon installation. He also shared study data about the beacons and other information related to the bid and then asked if Council had any questions. Ms. Leonard inquired to Mr. Savona how the beacons would affect the Borough's liability. Mr. Savona replied that, once the beacons are installed, the Borough would have to maintain the responsibility and ownership for them but the Borough does have some immunity in the event that a pedestrian were injured and sued.

A resident, Mr. Robert Crisp of West 3rd Avenue, gave public comment and asked if elevated speed bumps with LEDs could be installed as a different option from the beacons. Mr. Manfredi replied that the Borough's traffic engineer had shared that option but it was eliminated due to warranty and maintenance concerns. Mr. Manfredi also explained the other options for Council consideration related to pedestrian crossing safety including the creation of a program for individuals to cross only at signalized intersections.

Ms. Sokolowski asked if there was any data on the amount of traffic that is speeding on Fayette Street available and, in response, Sergeant Michael Conner of the Borough's Police Department shared study results from the months of March and April that showed that average speed of drivers going down Fayette, which has a speed limit of 25 MPH, is 27.7 MPH and the 85th percentile of speeders was recorded as traveling at 34.7 MPH. Following Sergeant Conner's presentation, Mr. Dennis Beaver, gave comment that the speed limit is 35 MPH coming across 12th Avenue and many drivers do not realize the sudden change to Conshohocken's 25 MPH limit on the same street. Mr. Manfredi then introduced the next agenda item.

b.) Determine next steps for Leeland Mansion:

I. Discuss disposition and options for Leeland Mansion including: considering selecting a realtor.

Mr. Manfredi introduced Ms. Flanagan to share her thoughts on Leeland Mansion. Ms. Flanagan shared that she believes Leeland is a beautiful building but citizens would be better served if Council allows a private company to purchase it, renovate and operate a business from it. In response, Ms. Barton commented that the Borough already owns Leeland and that is a huge part of the community with so much history. She explained that the Borough should maintain it for residents.

II. Discuss leasing of Old Police Station at Leeland Carriage House.

Ms. Barton shared her idea that the Borough could rent out the Carriage House to subsidize Leeland. In response to Ms. Flanagan and Ms. Bartons' comments, Ms. Tutino asked Mr. Savona what types of conditions the Borough could incorporate into an agreement if the Borough were to sell or lease Leeland. Mr. Savona explained that he recommends either (1) engaging someone to find a party interested in renting Leeland without the Borough giving up title and executing a negotiated lease with the prospective tenant responsible restore Leeland in a manner that is consistent with its original architecture or (2) putting Leeland out for public sale with a RFP under a pre-determined set of conditions including façade and interior preservation easements so that tenants could not alter the exterior or interior. Council discussed Mr. Savona's suggestions and Mr. Stokley commented that Council should ask the public how they would like to address the building which prompted Ms. Sokolowski to suggest conducting a resident survey.

Mr. Griffin called for public comment and Mr. Gary DeMedio shared, as a realtor with forty-three years of experience and Chair of the Conshohocken Economic Development Corporation (CEDC), he knows there is an interest in this property and he would like to offer to volunteer his services to assist in the determination of the future of Leeland Mansion. In response, Mr. Manfredi made a suggestion to engage someone to conduct a professional resident survey on the mansion that Council could review the results of once ready and that in the interim the CEDC could take on the project as well; Council consented to both suggestions.

Mr. Griffin called for public comment and Mr. Dennis Beaver shared comments regarding a Philadelphia building with similar conditions to maintain the historical building's appearance. Mr. John Costello expressed his wish to see Leeland's façade remain as it presently appears because it is the last original mansion on Fayette.

c.) Consider wall type at A-Field

Mr. Manfredi shared that he had a meeting with Mr. Paul Hughes, Borough Engineer, and Mr. Hughes explained that the wall provider is now unsure that he can construct them on the existing concrete as was previously discussed so Mr. Manfredi offered to reach out to his contacts in the same field for their opinions. Ms. Leonard shared that the residents that she spoke with about the wall design liked the red brick and the stone options that she showed them and they also liked the idea of combining both products. Ms. Leonard also shared that residents had asked if, while the wall is being replaced, the flooding in the street would also be addressed and she asked Mr. Buek, Public Works Superintendent, for his thoughts; he replied that the flooding would be addressed in two parts through the Borough's road program this year and next year. With no further comment, Mr. Griffin asked Mr. Manfredi to introduce the next matter.

NEW BUSINESS

- a.) **Consider approval and adoption of Fair Housing Resolution 2016-09 and authorizing the advertisement of a notice detailing the Fair Housing complaint process.**

Mr. Manfredi explained that Council is required to pass a resolution annually to continue to receive Community Development Block Grant funds for Fair Housing.

MANAGER MATTERS

Mr. Manfredi explained that Mr. Paul Hughes would be hired as the Borough's Director of Engineering and Licenses and Inspections and that Council would need to reaffirm him as the Borough Engineer in this new position at the next. Mr. Manfredi also shared that there would be a presentation on this year's Fun Fest at the next meeting.

LEGAL MATTERS

There were no legal matters shared.

COUNCIL MEMBER AND MAYOR MATTERS

- a.) **Consider installing a track around the A-Field playing surface.**

Ms. Leonard shared an idea that she and Ms. Flanagan had to install a walking track for public use around the A-Field and explained that the residents that she had spoken to about it were in support of the idea. Mr. Manfredi commented regarding another related recreational project sharing that the survey work has begun to construct an ice rink at the B-Field.

- b.) **Consider appointment to upcoming vacancy on CRC Board.**

Mr. Manfredi explained that when Mr. Ryan, a previous Ward 5 Council Member, moved out of the Borough, Mr. Manfredi was appointed to serve the remainder of Mr. Ryan's term on the Conshohocken Rowing Center Board and, recently, Ms. Sokolowski has expressed interest in joining the board as well. Ms. Sokolowski shared her interest in becoming more involved with the board and inquired if the other members of Council would support her request and all were in agreement that the matter would be voted upon at the next Council meeting.

- c.) **Consider Beach Volleyball Court at Sutcliffe Park.**

Ms. Tutino reminded Council that, as part of the recent Equus land development project that they approved, Council authorized the payment of a \$100,000.00 fee in lieu of the comfort station amenity. She shared that she has been working on ideas for how to best use the funds and that she realizes that there are two strong growing demographics in the Borough, children and young adults, so she determined the funds should go towards a recreational amenity and be used to install a beach volleyball court at Sutcliffe Park. Council was supportive of this idea and researching it further.

- d.) **Consider Trail to Haines Salvati Park.**

Ms. Tutino shared that she believes Haines Salvati Park is underutilized and that it may be because the access to the park is not well designed. Mr. Buek, Public Works Superintendent, shared that there is a walking path that has been worn to the park and that he and Ms. Pattie Guttenplan, Bergmann Associates, have walked the path to see if it could be improved; he added that one portion would need to be re-graded but it could be cleaned up. Mr. Buek stated that the path, which leads out to First Avenue, has private property along the way but it could be avoided. Following discussion, Ms. Tutino requested that Borough staff to review this idea further to see if this park could be made more accessible. Mr. Savona added that another land development project would address and

improve the nearby 2nd Avenue Meadow and that a connector bridge between the project and the park will be constructed.

e.) Discuss status of Sewer Authority Project

Ms. Jane Flanagan shared that she and Ms. Sokolowski have been discussing how unpleasant the stench from the Sewer Authority is becoming for nearby residents. She and Ms. Sokolowski shared that families without air conditioning and children with medical conditions are suffering greatly. Council discussed the situation and Ms. Barton shared that the Municipal Authority Board is working diligently on the odor issue. Ms. Barton added that she would contact the other Board members and attempt to move the hauling process forward as well. Mr. Savona made a recommendation that Mr. Steve Clark, Director of the Authority, be invited to the next meeting to provide a status on the odor control project for Council and the Council was in agreement. Ms. Sokolowski urged residents to contact the Sewer Authority directly each time the smell is an issue because the Authority is using that information to determine the urgency to correct the problem and to study the issue.

f.) Discuss implementing center turn lane on Fayette Street.

Mr. Manfredi introduced Mr. Drew Sirianni of Pennoni Associates once more. Mr. Sirianni discussed one solution to slow traffic on Fayette Street by implementing a road diet program which would reduce the number of through lanes by adding landscaping in the center of the road so the roadway would change from two to one lane in each direction and a dedicated center turn lane would be included; this road diet would be applied to the portion of Fayette Street from 3rd through 12th per Mr. Manfredi. He shared that, to move the project along, the Borough would have to apply for a Highway Occupancy Permit and additional studies would be required by PennDOT. Mr. Manfredi shared that Council has appropriated funds for traffic studies in the budget but Council would need to make a determination on whether or not they would like to use those funds to study this program as an alternative to awarding the bid for rapid flashing beacons.

g.) Discuss implementing speed hump at 12th and Maple.

Mr. Manfredi then introduced Mr. Sirianni's final traffic matter, which was the determination on whether or not to place a speed hump at the intersection of 12th and Maple; a resident had made the request of Council and spoken with Mr. Manfredi and Mr. Stokley on several occasions about the need for the speed hump. Mr. Manfredi explained that the Borough currently has no policy on how to determine whether or not a speed hump is warranted and that it could be granted at this location as a test since the humps are movable. Mr. Sirianni provided the costs and fielded Council's questions related to the matter. Following Council discussion, Council was unable to come to a consensus that evening and so Mr. Manfredi made a recommendation to place the matter on the next agenda for a vote and Council was in agreement.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Griffin called for public comment and Mr. Dennis Beaver shared that the funds from Ms. Tutino's ward should be used to correct the issue at the Sewer Authority or at the Community Center at the Fellowship House.

Mr. Robert Crisp commented that, rather than use Borough funds for new improvements such as the walking track at the A-field or the volleyball court, the funds should go towards improving the existing play equipment at the Borough's parks. Mr. Manfredi replied that there are funds to address the equipment at each park strategically planned for in the budget.

Mr. Buek shared that the wire lines that cross the A-Field are there to prevent geese from landing. Mr. Kevin Tierney shared that these same lines were a danger during the Winterfest event because children were tripping on them.

Ms. Rosemary Northcutt asked if there would be any outreach to community about preventing standing water in the Borough since mosquitoes can use it to breed. Mr. Manfredi replied that the county shares notices on matters such as this and that he would share any such notice on the Borough website. Ms. Northcutt also asked for an update on the Inside Out program and shared details about free admission to the Philadelphia Art Museum that would be provided to residents of the Borough in September. Mr. Manfredi replied that notice on the event would be forthcoming.

Mayor Frost shared that the 15th Annual Car Show would be coming up on Saturday, June 4th.

Ms. Leonard thanked Sergeant Conner for attending the meeting and for providing the traffic study information that evening.

Mr. Stokley shared that the Council needs to prioritize how Borough funds are spent and Mr. Manfredi replied that Council does prioritize as part of their goal-setting budget process.

Ms. Sokolowski shared that there were a lot of successful Memorial Day celebrations the prior week but these events should be advertised on the website in the future.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:01 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard J. Manfredi,
Secretary