

Meeting Minutes
State College Borough Council
Work Session
October 8, 2007

The State College Borough Council met in a work session on Monday, October 8, 2007, in the State College Municipal Building Room 304, 243 South Allen Street, State College, PA. Ms. Dauler called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Bill Welch, Mayor
Catherine G. Dauler, President of Council
Thomas E. Daubert
Ronald L. Filippelli
Elizabeth A. Goreham
Donald M. Hahn
Craig R. Humphrey
Jeffrey R. Kern

Also present: Carl R. Hess, Planning Director; Sheila Lubold, Recording Secretary; Mark Whitfield, Public Works Director; Herman Slaybaugh, Zoning Officer; Lu Hoover, Planner; Anne Messner, Planning Technician; members of the media; and other interested observers.

Public hour. There were no comments from the public.

Projects Report. Mr. Whitfield stated Council was provided a list of projects currently in progress and anticipated projects. Council was given the opportunity to ask questions about the projects.

Mr. Welch questioned if there were any projects in arrears. Mr. Whitfield answered some projects are delayed but none beyond the normal terms.

Ms. Goreham questioned the mix of street signs in the Historic Districts. Mr. Whitfield explained the signs are replaced in cycles and as a street is due to be replaced they are being changed to the new style of street signs. The new signs will have the neighborhood name along with the street name.

Mr. Filippelli questioned what problem was occurring with the police radios. Mr. Whitfield stated the radios were draining the car batteries but the problem has been discovered and is being resolved.

Mr. Daubert mentioned the open agenda was not listed on this agenda and asked that it be included on the next agenda.

Welch Pool Renewal Concept Options. Ron Woodhead, Director of Centre Region Parks & Recreation; Todd Roth, CRPR Aquatics Supervisor; and Donna Conway, the Borough's representative to the Centre Region Parks & Recreation Board/Centre Region Recreation Authority (CRRA) attended the meeting to answer questions and receive comments on the plan for the Welch Community Swimming Pool renewal. A presentation was made at the COG meeting of September 24, 2007. Council was provided with a copy of the presentation for informational purposes.

Mr. Daubert questioned why some options do not allow for larger grassy areas and larger sitting areas. He was also curious why some designs allow for more shade trees. Mr. Roth explained the areas surrounding the pools are not necessarily as finished as they may appear to be in the sketches provided. Once a basic design is selected, it can be determined how much and where to place shrubs and grassy areas. Shade trees were added to the designs because these are popular areas with the current pool.

Mr. Daubert also questioned the pros and cons of the designs with two separate pools versus just one pool. He questioned if more staff would be needed if an option with two pools were chosen. Mr. Roth explained the number of life guards needed is determined by the square footage of the pool not the number of pools. He also stated one advantage to having a single pool is only one pump system will be needed to operate the pool. A downside to one pool would be the possibility of water contamination that would require the closing of the entire pool. If there would be two pools it is possible one could remain open. Studies have also shown that attendance is higher when there is more than one pool at the same location.

Council also questioned what the depths of the pools would be. Mr. Roth stated those decisions can be made once an option is chosen. The depth of the water, where the pool(s) will slope, and the placement of diving boards, slides, and greenery will be shown in the final design once a budget is determined. Mr. Daubert liked the ideas shown in option 3 and thought it best to offer adults options while they are not swimming.

Mr. Filippelli questioned the need for a competition pool. Mr. Roth explained there are several groups in the State College community that compete and would benefit by having a larger pool

nearby to compete in. He also stated the municipalities need to decide if they want to be responsible for providing the facilities.

Ms. Goreham stated she liked the idea of a snack bar rather than a vending area. Mr. Roth stated the consultants do not recommend having a snack bar for the size of pool being considered because it is likely the snack bar will lose money.

Ms. Goreham also questioned the use of solar energy rather than electricity. Mr. Roth explained this has not yet been discussed because they have not reached this level of the design process. When it is discussed the cost for the solar energy option will be weighed against the length of time needed to benefit from the energy savings.

In reference to the projected attendance for each option Mr. Roth explained the size of the pool(s) and the recreation offered is considered. The attendance for hosting swimming competitions was also considered where appropriate.

Ms. Dauler reminded Council of the initial study that was done in 2002 and the survey results that stated shaded areas and sitting areas were important to the community.

Ms. Dauler also expressed concerns about the aquatic elements and the maintenance issues that may be involved with them. Mr. Roth stated this was discussed at a public meeting and the consultants have worked with different products and understand which products have the longest usability.

Mr. Humphrey questioned if any of the options provided would still meet the needs of the community in 2040. Mr. Roth expressed his own opinion that something like option 3 would best serve the community for the next 10 to 15 years. If the community continues to grow it could become necessary to add a third pool to the area, he added.

Donna Conway, the Borough's representative to the Centre Region Parks & Recreation Board/Centre Region Recreation Authority (CRRA), spoke regarding Council's decision and asked Council to focus on the needs of a growing community and what will best serve the community in the coming years.

Mr. Roth reminded Council, COG would appreciate receiving any feedback by November 7, 2007.

Report from CDBG Citizens Advisory Committee. Mr. Whitfield stated Theresa Lafer, Vice-Chair of the CDBG Citizens' Advisory Committee, attended the meeting to report on the Committee's work through the year.

Ms. Lafer stated the funding sources continue to shrink but the needs continue to increase. The Committee tries to meet all the housing needs without leaving big holes. The Committee's biggest challenge was defining the housing needs and then deciding where the funds should go. It was discovered there is a great need for emergency housing for teens or people who have lost their housing due to unemployment or injury.

Ms. Lafer reported there is also a need to teach people how to manage their money and homes and also deal with lending institutions. Generally people want to stay in their homes as long as they are able to maintain them. This is especially true for the older population she noted.

Ms. Lafer stated people also need to be educated on their rights when dealing with landlords and also the rights for victims of domestic violence.

Mr. Humphrey stated he felt housing in State College is doubling in cost about every 10 years and was concerned what effect this type of increase will have on the Land Trust. Ms. Lafer stated the Committee is working to increase support and is marketing more for Housing Transitions. The goal is to make people aware of their options when selling a home in hopes they will consider using their agency when selling a home.

Ms. Goreham questioned why Centre Volunteers in Medicine did not receive support. Ms. Lafer stated that agency is strictly medical and the Committee is focusing more on agencies that are directly related to housing.

Mr. Daubert questioned if an agency does not use the full amount of support available to them, can that money be redirected. Ms. Lafer stated it could and in the near future a request will be made to Council to do that.

Report from Historic Resources Commission. Rick Bryant, Chair of the Historic Resources Commission (HRC), presented a review of the Commission's work over the last year. Council was provided a copy of the 2008 work program and heard budget requests to be included in the 2008 Operating Budget.

Mr. Bryant reviewed the routine activities of the Commission and also explained the Commission is working to survey Borough properties to determine if an expansion of the National Register is warranted.

Mr. Bryant explained the Commission will survey post-war properties by using permit records and photographic documentation. To be considered, a building must be at least 50 years old and add to the historical integrity or architectural qualities that make the historic district significant. Mr. Bryant explained they will be looking at properties that fall in the following categories:

- Traditional Homes
- Mid-Century Modern Homes
- Catalog Homes
- United State Steel Homes
- Commercial Properties
- Churches and Public Buildings

The HRC has included a budget request for an intern to do on-site photography, research building records and complete other field work.

Mr. Humphrey questioned if the Commission planned to do a guide book. Mr. Bryant stated they are not currently working on a guide but plan to do something in the future.

Mr. Daubert questioned if members of the HRC could help citizens through the application process when their properties is not in the designated historical district but still qualifies to be added to the national registry. Mr. Bryant stated he understands the process is time consuming but felt himself and other members would be willing to help.

Mr. Hahn questioned if there are plans to hold neighborhood house tours. Mr. Bryant stated currently there is not a tour scheduled. He explained it is difficult to find people who will participate in showing their homes but the Commission continues to work with the neighborhood associations and the IFC.

Mr. Kern felt it is important to have the IFC be part of the community and questioned if efforts are being made to work with the IFC. Mr. Bryant stated given the current turmoil in the student affairs office the subject has not been approached this semester but stated he would keep Council informed of any needs there may be in this area.

Ms. Dauler stated she felt the inventory of houses is important and questioned if the requested \$3,000 for an intern was enough money to have this time consuming job completed. Mr. Bryant stated since they are just now starting the registry he was not certain how much time and money would be needed to complete the registry. Mr. Hess added the inventory of properties is the starting point and once this is complete it will be decided if the Commission will proceed to the next step and if the Commission will work on the registry.

Ms. Goreham wished to express her appreciation for the work the HRC has done.

Report from Planning Commission. Mr. Whitfield stated Ron Madrid, Chair of the Planning Commission, was in attendance to report on the activities of the Planning Commission over the last quarter. Mr. Madrid included as part of his report the Commission's recommendation on the proposal to rezone four properties in the 200 block of East Beaver.

Mr. Madrid reported the Planning Commission has recently reviewed the plans for the following properties:

- Building addition for Faccia Luna Restaurant at 1229 S. Allen Street
- Parking lot expansion for Albright-Bethune United Methodist Church at 306 W. Beaver Avenue
- Property easement for Jeramar Plaza at 230 S. Allen Street
- Conversion of storage space for the Ceramic Arts Building owned by Penn State

Mr. Madrid stated the Commission continues to receive neighborhood planning updates from Borough staff.

Mr. Madrid reported the zoning request for the 200 block of East Beaver Avenue has taken up a great deal of time and the Commission received a lot of input from citizens. The Commission did vote to recommend Council deny the rezoning request and Mr. Madrid noted the vote was not unanimous.

Mr. Kern questioned if there was discussion on what would be a good use for the property. Mr. Madrid stated it was agreed the area should be redeveloped but the Commission could not come to an agreement on how the property should be rezoned at this time.

Mr. Hahn thanked the Planning Commission for their hard work on this matter and for making a tough decision. He suggested the matter be revisited again in a few months.

Report on the West End Revitalization Plan. Mr. Whitfield stated Karen Dickenson from Delta Development was in attendance to update Council on the status of the West End Revitalization Plan.

Ms. Dickenson explained the current phase, Phase 3, included several tasks and she and Troy Truax with EDSA, Inc. provided Council with a hand-out stating the current status of each task.

Mr. Truax stated he has focused on recommendations for design standards and new zoning language that would allow for design standards pursuant to Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND). Mr. Truax stated he felt it would be best to go forward with one document and EDSA will incorporate the changes into one document. He also stated EDSA is working to see how the existing codes can support the historic structures.

Council spoke about the zoning and development standards and Mr. Kern expressed his concerns about incorporating the design standards now and later discovering the action taken was out of step. Mr. Truax explained the design standards would be a guidance document for citizens to know what is expected during the proposal process and would allow for a system that flows. The design manual would reinforce the expectations of the master plan and visual context would help to reinstate those ideas. Ms. Goreham requested that Council also be able to review the draft when the Planning Commission receives their copy.

Mr. Kern questioned how efforts are going to coordinate with Penn State and the changes they are making. Mr. Truax stated they have been keeping in contact with Penn State on their plans.

Mr. Hahn questioned what capital projects were planned for the West End. Ms. Dickenson stated Delta is in the process of drafting a list for Borough staff's review. When the list is completed it will be presented to Council. Mr. Daubert requested Council receive the list before the end of the year.

Ms. Dickenson stated a draft report for the West End Urban Redevelopment Law Implementation has been prepared. The report will be formatted to meet the Borough's requirements and will be received by Borough staff by October 31, 2007.

Ms. Dickenson reported Delta met with Borough staff to discuss developers in the West End and they are in the process of scheduling meetings to meet with the key stakeholders and has a meeting scheduled with Penn State as well.

Ms. Dickenson also reported EDSA is conducting the field work on the West End Branding, Logo Design, and Wayfinding and has a tentative public meeting scheduled for November 14, 2007. Council was invited to attend the meeting.

Ms. Goreham asked what was the role of Council in the redevelopment process. Mr. Hess explained the Planning Commission has the authority to define the redevelopment area. The Redevelopment Authority is involved with the proposed projects and coming up with financing. Council has final approval for each specific project and can provide comment on the defined redevelopment area.

Mr. Kern questioned if the paperwork was completed to request grant monies to complete the work. Mr. Hess stated the grant has been submitted but they are still waiting on a response from the state.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Cynthia S. Hanscom
Assistant Borough Secretary