

**Meeting Minutes
State College Borough Planning Commission
November 17, 2016**

The State College Borough Planning Commission (PC) met on Thursday, November 17, 2016 in the State College Municipal Building, 243 South Allen Street, State College, PA. Chairman Roeckel called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members Present

Michael Roeckel, Chairman; Anita Genger, Vice-Chairman; Zoe Boniface, Charles Dumas, Scott Dutt and Richard Kalin

Others Present

Ed LeClear, Planning Director; Anne Messner, Planner/Zoning Officer; John Wilson, Zoning Officer; Jenna Wargo, Planner; Denise Rhoads, Staff Assistant; Tony Fruchtl, PennTerra Engineering and other interested parties

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made to approve the November 2, 2016 minutes as submitted by Mr. Kalin and was seconded by Mr. Dutt. The vote was unanimously in favor.

Chair Report

Chairman Roeckel had nothing to report.

Public Hour

No one was in the audience who wished to discuss items not on the agenda.

Land Development Plan

Final Plan, Hamilton Square Shopping Center, CP3 Zoning District, University Park Plaza Corporation, PennTerra Engineering, Inc. Engineer.

Mr. Fruchtl's presentation included:

- This plan proposes to demolish the existing structure that was formerly the PA Department of Health building and expand the parking lot for the Hamilton Square Shopping Center.
- 19 parking stalls have been added and current stalls are being re-stripped.

Ms. Messner stated this plan meets the ordinance requirements. She also noted the Design Review Board (DRB) met and stated they liked the plan material and liked the plan overall.

A motion was made by Mr. Dutt to approve this final plan and was seconded by Mr. Dumas. The vote was unanimously in favor.

Community Planning

Updates on the Neighborhood Plan and the Downtown Master Plan

- Staff noted the Neighborhood Plan was completed and adopted by Council in 2014.
- We are in the middle of an update for the procurement for consultant.
- It was noted plans to restart the approach to Tusseyview Park is underway. The Public Works department has been spearheading this and Ms. Wargo will start working on some of the crowdfunding.
- Staff noted Highpoint Park walking path was completed this year and the Holmes-Foster Master Plan was completed as well. Moving forward we are looking to make sure there is some canopy in this area.
- Staff stated the student home licensing program is still underway and the goal is to identify and license all properties in the borough that are being used as student homes. Mr. LeClear noted staff found large numbers of homes being used as student homes that are not registered. We currently have approximately 400 registered student homes and approximately 100 that are not.
- Staff also discussed intermittent rental or short term rentals. They noted they are trying to identify those homes being used in this capacity.
- Mr. LeClear gave a brief overview of the Homestead Investment Program (HIP) stating it is backed by the Redevelopment Authority (RDA). Council backed a five-million-dollar account for this program. He also noted the borough bought four houses and sold three. He discussed the covenant and stated the program has been costly. Mr. LeClear is scheduled to defend the budget to Council this coming Monday night.
- Mr. LeClear gave a brief overview of the Property Maintenance Code (PMC) explaining it is a regulation that handles how a property is brought up to code. This item is still in discussion within Council. We are still in the process of setting up email contacts to inform when a violation occurs.

Planning Commission's comments included:

- Chairman Roeckel asked what the consensus was on the regulation for fencing in of backyards. Mr. LeClear stated staff did not recommend the change in the PMC.
- Chairman Roeckel stated the protocols for the HIP should not be changed. Mr. LeClear stated there has been discussion on just prohibiting rentals to students.
- Mr. Kalin stated he is on the Real Estate Advisory Committee (REAC) and is still supportive of the goals just not the covenant. It is proving to be too costly for this program.
- Mr. Dumas asked where the Martin Luther King (MLK) plaza would show up. Mr. L stated it would be within the Downtown Master Plan (DMP).
- Ms. Boniface gave a general comment to students in the audience. She stated the students might be wondering why the borough cares about where students live. She noted one concern is bringing in revenue to the borough.

Mr. LeClear next discussed the DMP:

- He discussed three areas:

- West End – noted in 2017 this area will get a lot more attention. He stated the zoning rewrite needs to occur first.
- Traditional Downtown – focused on a mix of uses and non-undergraduate student housing and they are trying to get employers and office space in downtown.
- Collegiate District - most is student housing and high rise apartments with commercial on first floor,

Mr. LeClear next discussed the Allen Street Civic District which would include the Post Office, Sidney Friedman Parklet, First National Bank (FNB) drive through, the former Verizon building, Jeramar Plaza, Allen Street lot, current Verizon building and the Borough Municipal building. Mr. LeClear stated there are some challenges to the site including a lot of limestone directly underneath. We are ready to do a Request for Quotations (RFQ) and are doing some pre-marketing to find developers who might be interested in this site.

Mr. LeClear discussed one specific project called Atherton East. He stated staff met with a design team last week. This project is looking at putting a hotel on the corner of Atherton Street and College Avenue. He noted they are starting to see a divergence to undergraduate students in this area. Mr. LeClear asked, for the work plan for 2017, if they need to look at the zoning for this area.

Planning Commissions' comments included:

- Mr. Kalin recused himself because he has ties to this property.
- Mr. Dutt asked when the CID was implemented. Ms. Messner stated in 2005. Mr. Dutt stated we need to be careful regarding wanting to change the zoning in this area.

Mr. LeClear stated staff just wanted to bring this up to see what the Commissioners' thoughts were. Mr. LeClear asked Mr. Dumas to give a brief update on the MLK Plaza which included:

- He stated the architect looked at the area for approximately six months, bids went out and a committee was established. Mr. LeClear stated construction will be underway soon. Mr. LeClear noted there is a display in the Planning Office on the second floor.
- Mr. Dumas commended the borough for doing something that will represent the diversity of this community.

Public Comments

- Mark Huncik of 505 East McCormick Avenue wanted to discuss things that weren't covered such as the Canyon Pizza building. Mr. LeClear stated it is not in the plan.
- Mr. Huncik also wanted to discuss Inclusionary Housing (IH) and how we need to foster an affordability aspect. He stated he is not opposed to student housing so long as IH housing is included.
- He also noted the plant across from this property is still burning fossil fuels and want to lower their stacks. Mr. Huncik cautioned about building something so close to this plant.

Official Reports and Correspondence

Land Development Plans: Ms. Messner reported PC will be seeing plans for 243 South Pugh Street and 254 East Beaver Avenue.

Staff Updates: Ms. Messner reported the Design Review Board (DRB) and the Historic Resources Commission (HRC) met last week for a meet and greet since they will be merging in January 2017. HRC met this week and approved 2 house plaques and discussed the State of Preservation report.

Mr. LeClear will be presenting budgets for the Planning department and the RDA on November 21, 2016.

Upcoming Meetings include:

Wednesday, December 7, 2016 12 p.m.

Thursday, December 22, 2016 at 7 p.m.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, Vice-Chairman Genger made a motion to adjourn this meeting at 8:12 p.m.

The Planning Commission convened to a Work Session.

Respectfully submitted by:
Denise L. Rhoads, Staff Assistant