

Meeting Minutes
State College Borough Council
Work Session
Friday, March 31, 2006

The State College Borough Council met in a work session on Friday, March 31, 2006, in the State College Municipal Building's Council Chambers, 243 South Allen Street, State College, PA. Ms. Dauler called the meeting to order at 12:07 p.m.

Present: 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: Thomas J. Fountaine, II, Borough Manager; Thomas S. Kurtz, Assistant Borough Manager; Carl Hess, Planning Director; Herman Slaybaugh, Zoning Officer; Michele Nicolas, Director of Human Resources; Mark A. Whitfield, Director of Public Works; Amy J. Story, Borough Engineer; Sheila Lubold, Recording Secretary; members of the media; and other interested observers.

Public Hour. Boris Veltman and Brittany Reutzel, Tener Hall, University Park, submitted a special activity request for The Invisible Children Organization and requested that Council add this to the April 3 agenda for approval. Mr. Fountaine stated he would see how far along in the process the application was and give them an answer later in the afternoon.

ABC Orientation Agenda. Earlier in the year Council suggested an orientation session for members of authorities, boards and commissions (ABCs) to review policies and procedures for interaction the committees have with Council and staff. An orientation meeting is scheduled for April 8 starting at 8:30 a.m. and Council members are asked to attend the meeting to introduce themselves.

Council asked how many members of the ABCs would be attending the orientation. Mr. Fountaine was unsure of the response received to date. Ms. Dauler stated she had attended many of the ABC meetings and members seemed in favor of having the orientation.

Ron Madrid from the Planning Commission was asked if there were any particular areas that the ABC members would like to see covered. Mr. Madrid felt it would be helpful to cover the expectations Council has for the committees. This would help to ensure that everyone is thinking along the same lines and Council would receive what they are expecting from each committee.

Ms. Goreham commented that she appreciated the chance to have interaction with the ABC's and feels this meeting is a positive thing. She also questioned if people who are interested in serving on a commission are able to attend or is it only for people who have been appointed. Mr. Fountaine stated someone who has an interest in serving on an ABC's board would be able to attend.

Mr. Fountaine explained there will be a proposed schedule for each ABC to meet with Council in an effort to keep Council and the committees up to date on the status of current and ongoing projects. It is understood that the schedule will need to be flexible so when issues arise they can be addressed.

Zoning Ordinance Amendment to Change Review Process for Porch Enclosure. Council discussed a proposed zoning amendment and scheduled a public hearing with possible enactment for April 3.

The proposed amendment addresses the review process for porch enclosures and the submission standards for said projects. The amendment proposes that plan review for porch enclosures on historic buildings be moved from the Design Review Board to the Historic Resources Commission.

The amendment would also require land development plans to show an overhead view with a 200 foot buffer. This change would bring the requirements for the submission of plans in line with the current review practice.

Council questioned the type of maps that would need to be submitted with the proposed plans. Mr. Slaybaugh stated the maps could be hand drawn or the real estate maps at the Borough offices would be available for use as well. Council questioned if smaller scaled projects would be required to go through such a process and would the cost be added to these projects. Mr. Slaybaugh agreed there are additional steps to the process and that could mean additional costs to the homeowners.

Zoning Ordinance Amendment to Make Technical Corrections in the Zoning Code. Council discussed a proposed zoning amendment and scheduled a public hearing with possible enactment for April 3. The proposed amendments were characterized as “housekeeping” amendments to eliminate inconsistencies within the ordinance and have the ordinance conform with the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

Mr. Slaybaugh reviewed some of the changes that would be made giving examples of how the old language would be replaced with more accurate up to date language. The changes will pertain more to what is currently being done by Borough staff and the changes were done not to change the meaning of the ordinance but to add clarification.

Mr. Madrid was asked about the Planning Commission’s review of the amendments. He stated there were many questions but no major issues to any of the proposed changes. He also added that some of the timelines could be difficult for private citizens to follow.

Ms. Goreham stated her concern about the time limits and asked what would happen if the time lapsed. Mr. Hess explained there is a process in place to extend the time limit on a project if that becomes an issue.

Mr. Daubert questioned if the ordinance properly addressed who has the authority to issue certificates of occupancy. Mr. Slaybaugh stated an occupancy certificate can be issued only after the planning office signs off on a project.

Zoning Ordinance to Limit Scale in Residential Zones. Council discussed a proposed zoning amendment with possible enactment for April 3. The amendment would reduce the permitted building height and establish minimum open space requirements in several zoning districts.

During a previously held public hearing no one spoke for or against the amendment and Mr. Madrid said the Planning Commission supported the ordinance.

Council stated many of their questions had been answered at the last meeting and they had no further comments or questions on this amendment.

Review Items on Council’s April 3, 2006, meeting. Mr. Fontaine reminded Council the third public hearing scheduled for April 3 is a presentation for public hearing only. Mr. Fontaine recommends Council conduct the public hearing, watch the presentation on the amendments, accept public comment, and then Council should ask for clarification if need be but the discussion time for this issue will be at the next work session after Council has time to think about the issue presented. Mr. Fontaine also reminded Council that any change made to the ordinance after the hearing must again be reviewed by the planning agencies.

Council next spoke about the Highlands Traffic Mitigation Plan. The project was not completed last fall because contractors were not interested in the project. However, preliminary proposals indicate the project will be over \$25,000 and the Transportation Commission suggests Council should authorize the project for competitive bidding.

Council expressed their concern about limiting the amount of time citizens are able to speak during meetings especially in light of the upcoming meeting on Monday when zoning issues concerning the

State College Area School District expansion project will be discussed. The Mayor will emphasize the hearing is regarding zoning issues and not the project itself.

Council expressed some concerns about the Arts Festival's impact on Borough events during the festival, and also questioned the amount of vendor parking.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia S. Hanscom
Assistant Borough Secretary