

**Meeting Minutes**  
**State College Borough Council**  
**September 18, 2006**

The State College Borough Council met in a special meeting on Monday, September 18, 2006, at 5:30 p.m., in the State College Municipal Building Room 220, 243 South Allen Street, State College, Pennsylvania. Mayor Welch called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

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

Also present: Thomas J. Fountaine, II, Borough Manager; Carl R. Hess, Director of Planning/Community Development; Thomas S. Kurtz, Assistant Borough Manager; Amy R. Miller, Recording Secretary; members of the media; and other members of the public.

**Urban Village (UV) Revitalization Plan Kick-off.** On August 21, 2006 Council awarded a contract to the consultant team Delta/EDSA to assist the Borough with the preparation of Phases I & II of the Urban Village Revitalization Plan. Karen Dickinson, Delta's Project Manager, introduced the project team. Attendees from Delta included Art Heim, Senior Associate for Economic Development and Darren Asper, Senior Vice President of Community and Economic Development. Keith Weaver, Associate Principal for Urban Design and Planning for EDSA was also present.

Ms. Dickinson said the purpose of the meeting was to review the process for completing the plan and request Council members describe their expectations. She said Delta's first priority is to understand the project by reviewing background materials and analyzing the current conditions of the neighborhood. She indicated the team has no preconceived ideas for the plan. A walk through the neighborhood showed a wide range of uses. The gateways coming into the neighborhood will also play an important part by considering other projects currently under way. A steering committee that would hold public meetings would be used to gather input and offer reactions to ideas from the stakeholders and the Delta/EDSA team. Interviews will be scheduled to gather input from various stakeholders; Council; residents; business owners, employees and investors; and Penn State. After gathering input, a number of options would be presented for possible development. In addition the University's plan for west campus would also be considered for cohesiveness of the neighborhood.

Ms. Dickinson then reviewed the projected timeline for Phases I & II and said she expected to have an executive summary complete in January; however the holidays may affect the timeline. Mr. Hess added that Phase III would not be a planning process, but rather the beginning of the implementation process.

Ms. Goreham thought a second public meeting might be necessary. Ms. Dickinson agreed and added that a good plan would be the result of good participation from the public. Ms. Goreham then asked if Penn State's land in the Urban Village would be considered in the plan. Mr. Hess answered that the property is in the designated area and would be considered regardless of who owns the land. Mr. Heim added that all elements of all plans and ideas will be considered upon which a consensus plan would be developed.

Ms. Dickinson requested Council's comments.

Mayor Welch suggested renaming the Urban Village to a more neutral name. He also said an important point to consider is that some current landowners have no mortgage and may be reluctant to invest additional funds in any new project; and he suggested a plan to motivate reinvestment be developed. Mr. Hahn said it is crucial to sell a redevelopment plan to developers in order for it to be economically viable.

Mr. Hahn said the Planning Commission discussed renaming of the UV District back in 2004. He added that in the past zoning issues were problematic in the district. John Simbeck, 601 W. College Avenue, suggested the consultants review all the zoning restrictions.

Mr. Daubert asked if the consultants could develop their own plan for the district; several years ago Penn State proposed a fine plan. Mr. Heim said the consultants could suggest ideas. Mr. Filippelli requested the team present their ideas to Council; however he is concerned with what can be done. Mr. Weaver replied that working with the stakeholders is a key factor in knowing what they desire. Mr. Weaver added that neighborhood

conservation of structures is important to stakeholders as well as mixed use development.

Rhonda Johannesen, 346 Homan Avenue, said workforce housing is not available for the working class in the downtown. Affordable housing would be a good reuse for the UV district.

Mr. Hahn said there is a lack of pedestrian interface between the Urban Village and the West Campus. Another issue of resident trepidation is that Borough Council has allowed liquor licenses transfers into the Borough as long as a restaurant is planned.

Zoë Boniface, 404 W. Patterson Street, said aesthetics can attract development and appearance is important in the development.

Jean Najjar, 938 S. Sparks Street, would like to see a grocery brought into the district.

Ms. Goreham said she would like the redevelopment plan to emphasize sustainability; sustainability may draw investor interest. She added Council would prefer no filters, as the bold truth is important in public comment, so all stakeholder input should be provided to Council without editing or screening.

Wes Clebe, 115 N. Butz Street, said it may be hard to motivate the UV landowners.

Al Drobka, 220 Brandywine Drive, believes there are already too many restaurants downtown and affordable housing is being constructed elsewhere. He feels the focus of the redevelopment plan should not be on only one residential or business sector.

Mr. Filippelli questioned the population of students in the UV district. Mayor Welch said there are about 1700 students with one or two resident families. He added that the goal is not to drive out the students. Mr. Filippelli said the Borough's goal is to increase the tax base and bring in permanent residents.

Ms. Dauler added there was a survey done by a Penn State Design class requesting student opinions of downtown development which was quite interesting and suggested the Consultants read the survey.

Mr. Heim said the Consultants will consider Council's insights.

Mr. Daubert suggested the discussion of individuals to be appointed to the Steering Committee be done in Council Executive Session. Mr. Fountaine distributed a memo recommending a possible list of organizations and stakeholders to be included on the Steering Committee. The Committee would be comprised of representatives from Borough Council, the Planning Commission, Ferguson Township Supervisors, Penn State University, Holmes Foster Neighborhood Association, commercial property owners, rental property owners, the Off-Campus Student Union and Borough staff. Ms. Dauler suggested including representatives from the three churches in the UV district. Mr. Hahn suggested more residents from the neighborhood should be included; Mayor Welch agreed.

Mr. Fountaine suggested names of possible Steering Committee members be given to Ms. Dauler in a week's time for discussion by Council in Executive Session on September 29. He added that categories of representatives could be changed as well.

Following this meeting, the consultants will prepare a project schedule, a roster of steering committee members and a roster of stakeholder interviewees for Council's consensus.

The meeting adjourned at 6:47 pm and later reconvened in a work session at 7:30 pm in the Council Chambers.

Respectfully submitted,

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Cynthia S. Hanscom  
Assistant Borough Secretary