

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2021
7:00 P.M.

**THE MEETING WAS HELD IN-PERSON, VIA ZOOM, AND STREAMED ON
FACEBOOK LIVE**

A. GENERAL FUNCTIONS

1. Call to Order: 7:00 p.m.

2. In Attendance:

Maria Diaz-Joves	- Present
Robert Lepley	- Present
Kim LaBrake	- Present
Larry O'Donnell	- Present
Joseph Pampanin	- Present
Don Werkheiser	- Present

Also in Attendance:

Michael Corriere, Cathy Hartranft, Bryan Smith, and Kris Russo.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

A. August 10, 2021

Motion made by Maria Diaz-Joves, seconded by Don Werkheiser, to adopt the agenda as written. Motion carried 6-0.

Motion made by Kim LaBrake, seconded by Larry O'Donnell, to approve the August 10, 2021, meeting minutes as written with the correction of "file" to "final" in New Business. Motion carried 6-0.

4. Board Vacancy/Interviews

The Planning Commission interviewed Richard Weddigen and Liz Thompson to fill the unexpired term of David Kuhns ending December 31, 2024.

Motion made by Maria Diaz-Joves, seconded by Robert Lepley, to open nominations. Motion carried 6-0.

Motion made by Maria Diaz-Joves, seconded by Kim LaBrake, to nominate Liz Thompson to fill the unexpired term. Motion carried 6-0.

Motion made by Don Werkheiser, seconded by Larry O'Donnell, to close the nominations. Motion carried 6-0.

B. REVIEW & DELIBERATION

C. OLD BUSINESS- NONE

D. NEW BUSINESS

1. Façade Grant Application: 301 Front Street, Hellertown, PA, 18055, Lehigh Valley Crematory Services.

David Heintzelman was present to present his application. The application is for a 24" x 96" sign by the front door. It is not on the front of the building due to lack of space but is visible from Front Street.

The Planning Commission scored the project a 78.

Motion made by Kim LaBrake, seconded by Robert Lepley, to recommend Council approve the façade grant to 301 Front Street. Motion carried 6-0.

2. Sketch Plan Submittal and Draft Zoning Amendment: 42 Main Street, Hellertown, PA 18055. Application provided by Greystone Capital Inc. 559 Main Street, Suite 300, Bethlehem, PA. Registered Engineer for Project: Boucher and James, 559 Main Street, Suite 230, Bethlehem, PA. Applicant is proposing a 142-unit residential development and zoning amendment. Property is located within the Shopping Center Zoning District.

Lou Pektor was present to discuss the sketch plan. He looked into commercial and medical uses but they did not work out. The sketch plan is proposing a three-building apartment complex with a total of 142 units. About 80 percent of the apartments will be studios or one-bedroom. We also had a proposed zoning amendment drafted to create an overlay in the Shopping Center Zoning District to allow for a residential project.

John Tresslor- The commercial buildings and the barn will remain.

Brian Doran- The entrance will be where it is currently with the addition of a right turn lane into the north end of the property. We are proposing pulling the buildings away from 412 to use the current grade to offset the four-story buildings. There will be a large focus on landscaping including a buffer along 412, landscaped parking islands, and a large central courtyard with a connection to the rail trail. We've calculated 1.1 parking spaces per bedroom. Currently, the site is 89 percent impervious. With this development, the impervious will be reduced to 60 percent.

Mr. Pektor- The Highway Occupancy Permit is currently a low volume permit. That allows for 1,500 trips per day. This development would still fall under low volume.

Tim Edinger- We have been working with Mr. Smith on a design for the bridge to the rail trail. It would be a 50 foot, prefabricated, steel truss bridge with abutments and wooden planks. Mr. Pektor would contribute toward the bridge project.

Gabe Solms- This property is currently underutilized. This development would increase tax revenue to the Borough and add an additional rail trail access point.

Ms. LaBrake asked if there are plans for all of the units to have balconies? Mr. Solms noted that there potentially may be a few balconies but that they are focusing more on additional windows.

Concerns were raised regarding the parking being between the sidewalk and the buildings. Ms. Diaz-Joves would rather have the parking against the sidewalk than against the rail trail.

With the size of the proposed units, it was determined that the impact to the school district will be minimal.

Mr. O'Donnell inquired if there are plans for the current barn structure. The applicant wants to concentrate on making sure there is enough parking for the apartments before making plans for the barn.

To avoid setting a precedent, the Planning Commission would be more comfortable with the trail connection remaining at Tumminello Park.

Mr. Pampanin- The biggest hurdles for this project seem to be amount of parking, Dewey Fire Company comments, and traffic concerns.

If an overlay is created, the Planning Commission would like to add the architectural review to keep all overlay requirements uniform.

No action was taken.

Mr. Smith- Council awarded the Dimmick Park Swale Greening and Walnut Street Rail Trail Crossing Improvements Projects to Kobalt Construction. Work will begin in a few weeks.

There are currently 4 grant applications being reviewed.

The ADA Improvements Projects at the pool will be bid in the winter for a spring construction.

Mr. Rieger invited the Planning Commission to attend the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Public Works Facility on September 20, 2021.

E. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Maria Diaz-Joves, seconded by Don Werkheiser, to adjourn the meeting at 9:17 p.m. Motion carried 7-0.

Respectfully submitted by,

Kris Russo