

BOROUGH OF CONSHOHOCKEN BOROUGH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING
WEDNESDAY, May 6th, 2015

PUBLIC MEETING

PRESENT: Robert Frost, Mayor
Paul McConnell, Council President
James Griffin, Council Vice-President
Anita Barton, Council Member
Matthew Ryan, Council Member
Robert Stokley, Council Member
Edward Phipps, Council Member

ALSO PRESENT: Richard J. Manfredi, Borough Manager
Hally Ammons, Assistant to the Borough Manager
Stephanie Cecco, Director of Recreation Services and Parks
Dan Simmons, Manager of Programs and Operations at the Fellowship House
Harvey Buek, Public Works Superintendent
Chris Stetler, Community Development and Zoning Officer
Angela Orr, Accountant
Michael Savona, Borough Solicitor
Paul Hughes, Borough Engineer

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Public Meeting of the Conshohocken Borough Council duly advertised, was held at Conshohocken Borough Hall, 8th Avenue & Fayette Street, Conshohocken, PA. Mr. McConnell, Council President, called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.

2. COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. McConnell announced that there was an executive session prior to the meeting regarding real estate and personnel matters.

3. PRESENTATIONS

a) Hearing regarding a waiver of off-street parking for 319 Forrest Street.

Mr. McConnell invited Ms. Stetler to explain the cause for the hearing. Ms. Stetler shared that the property was previously used as a warehouse for medical supplies but a change in tenants occurred which created the need for a new waiver of off-street parking. The new tenant is a business called "Exceptional Events" that specializes in party planning. Ms. Stetler introduced Tom Gravenese, a realtor and the agent for the property, and allowed him to comment. Mr. Gravenese added that the business employs two to three individuals that work part-time during the week and that the owner is a woman named Stacey Kesselman. Mr. McConnell allowed for public comment and a resident that lives at 318 Fayette Street shared that the people who work for the business often move party supplies in and out of the business at midnight and cause a lot of noise. In response to the concern, Mr. McConnell asked Mr. Savona if it is legal to set a condition for the waiver request limiting the hours for delivery. Mr. Savona replied that it is legal to do so; the waiver could include a statement with conditions such as "subject to the applicant making deliveries only between certain hours." Ms. Stetler also offered to share information on the Borough's noise ordinance with

the business owner, Ms. Kesselman, to help alleviate the issue. Mr. Stokley asked if Mr. Gravenese would speak with his tenants as well; Mr. Gravenese consented.

b) Washington Fire Company, regarding fire services.

Mr. McConnell introduced the next presenter, Mr. Allen Mandelbaum, general counsel to the Washington Fire Company. Mr. Mandelbaum stated that the fire company and the Borough have had a symbiotic relationship that spans the 123-year legacy of the fire company and that, although he is aware of rumors circulating that the company may disband, they are not true. Mr. Mandelbaum shared that it is a normal practice for the company to assess operations and partake in strategic planning for the upcoming year. Through this planning, the company has concluded that there are four possible plans for their future; they include a merger between their company and No. 2, co-tenancy, relocation, or maintaining the present state-of-affairs.

Mr. Mandelbaum elaborated on a unique opportunity for relocation in the future. He also asked if the Borough Council would be interested in assisting with the possible relocation of Washington Fire Company by sharing their resources to help develop a site plan and allowing the company to utilize the Borough Engineer to assess feasibility and perform a cost analysis. Mr. McConnell commented that Council should explore this request further before making any financial commitments. In response, Mr. Savona clarified that he had spoken with Mr. Mandelbaum about their future plans and that what the company is truly asking for is reassurance that Council will commit to assist them in a joint venture once they perform their due diligence on their needs. Mr. Stokley concluded that the next steps should be that Mr. Manfredi and Mr. Savona meet with Mr. Mandelbaum to continue the discussion and both agreed to do so.

c) Proposal for Leland Manor; Paul Vernon, Managing Principal of KSK Architects Planners Inc.

Mr. McConnell introduced Mr. Paul Vernon of KSK. Mr. Vernon shared that, because the construction of a new Borough Hall is already underway, the future of the present Borough Hall needs to be addressed. He mentioned that the Borough asked his group, KSK, to perform a conditions assessment to put a proposal together on the building's immediate needs and to gather proposals for possibly converting the building to an executive bed and breakfast. Mr. Vernon introduced Mr. Philip Scott, Principal/Senior Architect at KSK, to share the work that KSK believes needs to be done to preserve the building. Mr. Scott commented that necessary repairs include addressing plumbing and gutter drainage issues, sealing windows, roof repairs, controlling a pigeon infestation, and exterior painting.

Mr. Scott also shared that the building is eligible for the national historic register and a nomination could still be made to add it; there are strict conditions on preservation methods that must be adhered to if it is added and that there will also be some additional costs. Ms. Barton commented that Mr. Leland's other property on Hector Street is already on the register. Mr. McConnell asked how much it costs to be added to the register and Mr. Scott replied that it is approximately \$15,000.00. Mr. Savona commented that, before they consider the register any further, they should fully explore all possible uses for the building.

Mr. Vernon then presented the two additional proposals that related to converting the building into a bed and breakfast, one came from PKF Consulting USA and the other came from Urban Partners. He commented that both proposals were very similar and, based on pricing, he would consider using PKF Consulting USA if the Borough is interested in hiring a group to perform a feasibility study.

Mr. McConnell determined that three questions that Council needs to address in relation to the presentation are (1) whether or not they would like to allow KSK to “button-up” the building, (2) whether or not to add the building to the historic register, and (3) should they move forward with a market analysis and feasibility study. Mr. Manfredi replied that a vote to act on the KSK proposal to “button-up” the existing Borough Hall would be added to the next meeting’s consent agenda. The question whether or not to perform a feasibility study would be addressed at the June work session and, adding the building to the register, would be discussed at a later time. Mr. Vernon offered to gather additional proposals for other futures uses of the building besides the bed and breakfast and Council agreed that other uses should be considered; Mr. McConnell requested that this item be on the next business agenda if the proposals are put together in time.

4. COUNCIL BUSINESS

Mr. McConnell asked Mr. Manfredi to read and explain the items that would be voted upon as part of the next consent agenda. Mr. Manfredi explained that, in addition to the four that were listed on this agenda, he would add voting to “button-up” the LeeLand Mansion.

Consent Agenda

- a) **Consider approval and adoption of January – March Borough Council Meeting Minutes.**
- b) **Consider Gambone Digiacomio’s request for a Business Privilege Tax refund for tax years ended December 31, 2011 through December 31, 2014.**

Mr. Savona commented that he would recommend denial.

- c) **Consider David Keller of the Conshy Rib House’s request for a refund of his 2010 Business Privilege Tax penalty and interest.**

Mr. Savona commented that this request was due to an omission on the taxpayer’s part, so he will recommend denial.

- d) **Consider granting approval for the Police Department to donate their 1983 GMC Rescue Truck to the Terry Farrell Foundation.**

New Business

- a) **Consider granting a waiver of off-street parking for 6 East First Avenue.**

Ms. Stetler commented that a hearing for this waiver had already occurred and that there are no outstanding issues with the request.

- b) **Consider height bonus request for the LD-2015-01 project at 400 West Elm Street.**

Mr. McConnell invited Ms. Stetler to explain the request. Ms. Stetler shared that the project is in SP3 zoning district where commercial use, such as the office building proposed in LD-2015-01, is permitted. She added that the total height of the proposed office building is 110 feet, which is 25 feet more than allowed in the district; the request is for Council to approve the additional 25 feet in exchange for a public amenity as allowed in the zoning ordinance. The project’s applicant, Bohler Engineering, proposes the amenity would be a comfort station in close proximity to the trail. Mr. McConnell asked who would maintain the comfort

station if it were permitted and Mr. Savona commented that the county has already expressed interest in maintaining it and that he recommends granting them permission to do so.

Ms. Stetler introduced Mr. Bob Dwyer of Bohler Engineering who presented plans that illustrated the appearance of the proposed comfort station amenity. Mr. Dwyer explained that the station would be approximately 25' x 18' in size, have two sinks, two toilets, bike racks and a water fountain amongst other features; he then invited Council to share their recommendations. Mr. Manfredi suggested adding a camera outside of the facility that would feed directly to the police station. Ms. Stetler suggested adding benches to accommodate trail users. Mr. McConnell suggested adding point of interest signage nearby and also making the bathroom stalls large enough to fit a bicycle inside so that bikers without locks accessible can bring their bikes inside. Mr. Savona explained that the only item that Council would need to vote upon at the next meeting is if they will grant the height bonus in exchange for the comfort station amenity.

c) Continue discussion of council goals.

Mr. McConnell explained this Council needs to vote on the 2016 budget by December 31, 2015; to assist the Borough Manager with budget planning, Mr. McConnell explained that all present council members submitted a list of their goals, read through the lists last month, and also asked clarifying questions of the other members. He added that, this meeting, they will begin to evaluate the goals and Mr. Manfredi was asked to lead the evaluation discussion.

Mr. Manfredi stated that he will develop objectives from the Council goals that will assist with the budget and become reflected in it or they may help in the creation of new policies in the future. Mr. Manfredi explained that the goals were not yet ranked and that a few were similar. He offered to create a chart of all goals so that the Council could rank the goals and submit the evaluations to him directly for him to compile and share the results.

5. MANAGER MATTERS:

Mr. Manfredi commented that there were six items that he would address in his matters. He invited Ms. Hally Ammons, Assistant to the Borough Manager, to begin with a report on communications and public affairs. Ms. Ammons shared that the Borough selected a company to re-vamp the website; right now she is working with Mr. Manfredi to assess existing site content and create a site map. She anticipates launching the new site in October. Ms. Ammons commented that the Borough is also maintaining a presence on social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. The Borough has plans to launch an e-newsletter and print newsletter in October with costs covered by the advertisements. Ms. Ammons also detailed the constituent service process and plans for a web-based work order system. Lastly, Ms. Ammons shared a proposal for an internship program that she, Ms. Cecco, and Mr. Dan Simmons drafted.

Mr. Manfredi then invited Ms. Cecco to introduce and share the background and accomplishments of the newly hired Mr. Dan Simmons, Manager of Programs and Operations at the Fellowship House. After his warm introduction, Mr. Simmons explained some of the items he was working on which included assisting in the development of policies and procedures for the Fellowship House, addressing point of sale needs, assessing childcare, helping implement the new work order system, working on a custodial cleaning agreement, and helping to expand leisure offerings. Mr. McConnell asked Mr. Simmons what he envisioned for the Fellowship House in the

next five years. Mr. Simmons replied that he would like to see it busier, to host more special events and to “create organized chaos at the center.” He also hopes to make it an information desk of sorts for the entire Borough and mentioned that a fall activity guide should be available by mid-summer.

Mr. Manfredi commented that, thanks to Ms. Orr and other finance department members, he hopes to provide regular Treasurer’s Reports to Council again starting in June. He introduced Ms. Angela Orr, Borough Accountant, to provide an update on Financial Software. Ms. Orr explained the top three programs that were considered: Edmunds, which would cost \$50,000.00, Springbrook at \$120,000.00, and Munis at \$150,000.00. Ms. Orr explained that Edmunds is recommended because it is sufficient for our needs and the lowest price. She added that Doylestown and Caln Township both endorse it. Mr. Ryan inquired as to whether it would allow for ecommerce and Mr. Savona replied that it would. Mr. Ryan also asked how long it would take to integrate; Ms. Orr explained that it would take about 90 days in conjunction with the old software. Mr. McConnell asked Ms. Orr what the maintenance costs would be and Ms. Orr explained that it would be \$12,000.00/year with Edmunds to start. Mr. McConnell added that, before the Borough purchases the software, the Borough should conduct defect testing, performance testing, and data load testing.

The fourth item that Mr. Manfredi addressed is the need to select additional streets for the 2015 Paving Program and he asked Mr. Hughes to elaborate. Mr. Stokley requested additional time to re-evaluate which roads need to be paved. Mr. Savona suggested that council submit their suggestions to Mr. Hughes before the next meeting and that they vote formally at that time; Mr. Hughes agreed that would be sufficient.

The fifth item that Mr. Manfredi brought before Council was the need for repairs to Hector Street and he asked Mr. Buek, to explain. Mr. Buek shared that curb repairs are needed to the peninsulas and the islands with trees in them because the tree roots are growing and causing cracks to develop. He added that the trees that are there causing the damage at present need to be cut down but that it may be possible to make minor repairs to save the curbs. Ms. Stetler commented that she had reached out to the Borough Arborist from Bartlett to assess every tree along Hector Street from Apple to Ash and provided a history, at Mr. Savona’s request, of how trees were added to Hector Street. Mr. McConnell commented that greenery should be on the street, but it does not necessarily have to be trees and suggested sending a mailing to Hector Street residents explaining the repair plans as soon as possible. Mr. Manfredi asked for an indication from Council that they are okay with the Borough removing the trees and beginning the repairs to Hector Street and they consented.

The last item Mr. Manfredi addressed related to Borough Hall updates. He explained that Mr. Greg Kane of Keystone Property Group was there to present on the topic. Mr. Manfredi commented that there were numerous meetings on the access controls and, at one of the meetings, Mr. Mark Tagliaferri of Siemens made suggestions. Mr. Tagliaferri provided an executive summary of his comments at Mr. Manfredi’s request and explained that the current labor pricing is most likely better than what the Borough would get to install the access controls after the fact. Mr. Stokley and Mr. Griffin agreed with Mr. Tagliaferri’s assessment. Mr. Manfredi asked if Council would authorize moving forward on access controls and, if so, the Borough would proceed as discussed without a vote and Council consented. Chief Orlor then explained that the needs of the Police Department related to locker space have been met and Mr. Stokley requested that they be voted on for approval at the next Council meeting.

Mr. Kane shared that Keystone Property Group will begin soliciting three bids for the telephone system and data needs. Mr. Manfredi commented that the media system that is scheduled for the council chamber at the new Borough Hall would integrate with Comcast and Verizon to feed out.

Mr. Manfredi read through a list of outstanding change orders provided by Mr. Kane and asked Mr. Kane to explain the items. Mr. Kane also provided an update on the generator at Mr. Manfredi's request.

Mr. Manfredi asked for an updated price on the dais in the council chamber and Mr. Kane explained that he did not have the figure that evening.

6. LEGAL MATTERS:

There were no legal matters shared.

7. COUNCIL MEMBER AND MAYOR MATTERS:

There were no council member or Mayor matters shared.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There were no comments from the public.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:04 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Richard J. Manfredi, Secretary