

MINUTES
ALTOONA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
TUESDAY September 5, 2017

MEMBERS PRESENT

Bob Gutshall, Chairperson
Dave Albright
James Dixon
Charles Meyers
Jennifer Mikolajczyk

MEMBERS ABSENT

Sam Frye

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STAFF PRESENT

Lee Slusser, Director Community Development
Nick Ardizzone, Property and Program Coordinator
Mary Johnson – CDBG Manager

GUESTS PRESENT

Eric Banks, Stiffler McGraw – UPMC Parking Lot #29
Bill Kibler, Altoona Mirror

The Altoona City Planning Commission held its monthly meeting on September 5, 2017 at 3:00 P.M. in the Public Meeting Room, City Hall 1301 12th Street, Altoona. Bob Gutshall, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

1. Approval of meeting minutes of June 6, 2017.

The meeting minutes of June 6, 2017 were approved as read by a motion made by Jennifer Mikolajczyk. Motion was seconded by Dave Albright. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Public Comment Period

None at this time

3. SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ITEMS

UPMC Altoona Parking Lot #29 – The Commission first reviewed and considered for approval a land development application from UPMC Altoona to build a 41 space parking lot across 10th Street from their existing parking -- both behind and across the alley from the rear of the Building II Athletic Club. UPMC Altoona received a special exception from the City Zoning Hearing Board to build this parking lot on July 12th.

The Planning Commission will have to decide on one contested issue. Mr. Slusser noted that UPMC is seeking several waivers so that they do not have to build curbed, landscaped islands at six locations in the interior of the parking lot. UPMC has consistently sought this waiver in its parking lot projects, citing snow removal as a concern. The Planning Commission has consistently denied these waiver requests, however. Both within UPMC (most recently, a Kevin Evans request for Lot #28 on May 1, 2012, and a Greg Geishauser request for Lot #28A on June 3, 2014) and elsewhere (most recently, a request for the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament parking lot on March 7, 2017) the Planning Commission has confirmed that required parking lot islands must be built. However, the Commission has offered some flexibility in how the islands are built, and they have waived this requirement where a detailed turning movement analysis, approved by our consulting engineer, demonstrates that vehicles cannot maneuver around the island (e.g., Bob Evans, Dollar General, and Sheetz #187R). Unless such an analysis can be presented here, however, staff recommends that this request for waivers be denied and the islands be built out of fairness to other developers. This would be consistent with the neighboring UPMC parking lots, which, to our knowledge, functioned last winter. More importantly, though, this would significantly soften the environmental, noise, and visual impacts of a large parking lot on the surrounding neighborhood. Mr. Banks explained that this a parking lot that is situated across from Building II Rec Center. It will contain 42 parking spaces for hospital employees. They are proposing an underground storm water management facility as the ground is pretty constrained. A permit has been granted by the Altoona Water Authority to discharge into their system. ENS is ready from the Conservation District. UPMC is also finalizing the last of the properties that they are purchasing. Planting and lighting are in the plan that will help to buffer the parking lot from the residential property next to the area. Planting of a little landscaped berm that will also help to shield. The lighting fixtures are 20 ft. A slope of 2:1 on the alley side will be planted with a special type of grass that will adhere and eliminate erosion. The hospital has requested not to plant shrubs for security reasons. They will however, plant trees. A motion to approve the land development conditioned on UPMC gaining ownership of all parcels involved and on adding curbed landscaped islands with trees but not necessarily shrubs, was made by Jim Dixon. Seconded by Jennifer Mikolajczk. Motion passed unanimously.

4. **Staff Level Reviews** – Staff has been working on the following subdivision/land development applications since the June 6, 2017, regular meeting. Staff quickly reviewed these.
 1. Dollar General Land Development – 1320 14th Avenue – Final Approval - (Change Notification)
 2. Anytime Truck and Tire Land Development – 815 9th Avenue – Final Approval
 3. Green Bean Coffee House, LLC –Subdivision/Land Development – 722 6th Avenue – Final Approval

4. Kranich's – Land Development – 505 E. Plank Road – Under Review
5. Hess & Hughes – Subdivision – 805 E. Logan Avenue – Final Approval
6. Altoona Area High School – Land Development – 1330 6th Avenue – Under Review
7. Lipple – Subdivision – 1317 Polk Avenue – Final Approval
8. Pallo – Subdivision – 1407-09 Ivyside Drive – Final Approval
9. Burgandy Bros. Development – Subdivision – 215 Lowell Avenue – Under Review
10. McCloskey Park Place Apartments – Subdivision/Land Development – 115 Park Place – Under Review
11. Graystone The Grande Palazzo – Subdivision – 2500 7th Avenue – Final Approval
12. Vince's Used Car Lot – Land Development – 2200 Pleasant Valley Blvd – Under Review
13. Enterprise Rental – Land Development – 412-16 Aldrich Avenue – Under Review
14. Seasoltz – Subdivision – 1230 Polk Avenue – Under Review

URBAN REDEVELOPMENT

5. **Spot Blight Declaration**
 1109-11 17th Avenue
 Owner: Ida Lansanah
 2234 N. 5th Street
 Harrisburg, PA 17110

Property is vacant and in substandard condition not suitable for rehabilitation. Property was submitted to the Blighted Property Demo Program on June 19, 2017. The owner Ms. Lansanah, inherited the property from a relative (Bertha Mae Anthony) her mother, who passed away 3/6/2015. Owner has not complied with the demolition notice from Code Enforcement issued March 16, 2017. Property is in poor condition, windows broken, porch floor rotted, no railing, basement door rotted and cave in, porch foundation falling in. Roof is in fair condition and interior condition is unknown. Electric and water are off. Taxes outstanding for 2015, \$514.01 and 2016, \$516.22. The City will demolish the structure under the 2009 International Property Maintenance Code and place a lien on the property for the cost of demolition, once the owner has established financial inability to pay for demolition on her own. Property is on the Upset Tax Sale scheduled for 9/27/2017 at 9:00 A.M. A motion was made to declare the property blighted by Jennifer Mikolajczyk. Motion was seconded by Dave Albright. Motion passed unanimously.

ZONING

6. Keystone Custom Homes and Development – At this point, the Commission reviewed the introduced draft of the ordinance that would, if adopted, rezone parcel number 0114-24-71, addressed as 102 South Beckman Drive, so that the

entire parcel is zoned Multiple-Household Residential. Currently, the lower, eastern half of this parcel is zoned Suburban Residential and the higher, western half is already zoned Multiple Household Residential. Keystone Custom Homes and Development seeks this rezoning so that it can build two new single-story duplexes in the lower, eastern half of the parcel. The introduced ordinance would also rezone parcel number 0114-24-74, addressed as 106 South Beckman Drive, from Suburban Residential to Multiple Household Residential even though this parcel has already been developed. The Planning Commission reviewed the concept of this rezoning on June 6, 2017. Mr. Slusser told the Commission that City Manager, Marla Marcinko has requested that they review the ordinance itself and make recommendations to Altoona City Council. Council introduced this ordinance on July 12, 2017, and will vote on it on September 13, 2017 that the Commission review the ordinance itself and make recommendations to Altoona City Council. A motion for approval of the ordinance was made by Jim Dixon. Seconded by Jennifer Mikolajczyk. Motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

7. Planning Reports
 - a. Grantsmanship activities (CDBG and HOME) In process of preparing the CAPER.
 - b. Shade Tree Commission – now has two licensed Arborists on board. As complaints or questions come up they will do the investigating and report to the commission their recommendation.
 - c. Zoning Hearing Board – Has a student home that has been operating illegally and now wants to become legal. The Central PA Landlords Association is upset, why reward them for operating illegally. The Altoona Area High School is coming in for a Zoning change as the new proposed building will be built in a single residential zone.
 - d. GAEDC – No report
 - e. Blair County Planning Commission – Still working on the Blair County Comprehensive Plan
8. Commissioners Forum – No report
9. Questions from the Media and Public
10. Adjournment – A motion to adjourn was made by Charles Meyers. Seconded by Jennifer Mikolajczyk at 4:15 P.M.