

MINUTES  
ALTOONA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
Tuesday, October 1, 2019

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Dave Albright, Vice Chair  
Michael Haire, Vice Secretary  
Jennifer Mikolajczk, Secretary  
James Dixon  
Richard Haines

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Randy Isenberg, Chair  
Chuck Myers

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STAFF PRESENT**

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

**GUESTS PRESENT**

Randall Kring, Keller Engineers – Investment Savings Bank  
Bill Kibler – Altoona Mirror

The Altoona City Planning Commission held its monthly meeting on October 1, 2019 in the Public Meeting Room, City Hall 1301 12th Street, Altoona. Dave Albright, Vice Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

**ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

1. **Approval of meeting minutes of August 6, 2019.**  
The minutes of the August 6, 2019 were read. A motion was made by Jennifer Mikolajczk for approval. Motion was seconded by James Dixon. Motion carried unanimously.
2. **Public Comment Period**  
No Public Comment at this time.

**SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ITEMS**

3. **Investment Savings Bank** – Mr. Slusser introduced a land development application to build a new 5,869 sqft. bank and office building with 28 parking spaces, landscaping, and sidewalks at 900 South Sixteenth Street in Pleasant Valley. The Hertz car rental building on site is to be demolished. Mr. Slusser

introduced Mr. Randall Kring of Keller Engineers who presented the plan to the commission. A question was asked regarding signage and lighting. Mr. Slusser said that there is a sign on the corner that is grandfathered in and that perhaps the bank could change the name on it. Mr. Kring then said that the lighting that is existing on the property is the only lighting that is going to be used. A motion was made by Richard Haines to approve Resolution No. 10-01-19-PAC19-0007. approving the Investment Savings Bank, New Office Building. Motion was seconded by Michael Haire. Motion passed unanimously.

**RESOLUTION NO. 10-01-19-PAC19-0007**  
**A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE INVESTMENT SAVINGS BANK, NEW OFFICE BUILDING LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN, PROJECT #3100-3**

WHEREAS an application for a land development project has been filed with the Altoona City Planning Commission (hereinafter "ACPC") by Investment Savings Bank (hereinafter referred to as the "DEVELOPER"); and

WHEREAS, the DEVELOPER desires to demolish the existing building and construct a new building at 900 South 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Altoona, Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, staff has reviewed the LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN, incorporated herein by this reference and filed with the ACPC by the Developer, and has found it to be in compliance excepting waiver requests, as a FINAL LAND DEVELOPMENT with all applicable provisions of the City of Altoona's zoning, subdivision/land development, and storm water ordinances subject to the conditions of this resolution; and

WHEREAS, the ACPC has determined that this LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN constitutes a FINAL LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN in full compliance with the City of Altoona's zoning, subdivision/land development, and storm water ordinances subject to the conditions of this resolution; and

WHEREAS, the ACPC has the power to APPROVE modifications to the City of Altoona's subdivision and land development requirements, and the Developer has requested the following waivers that are hereby approved by the ACPC:

1. §640-64: The applicant is requesting a waiver to Section 640-64 regarding sidewalk extending to property edges. Sidewalk along South 16<sup>th</sup> Street is terminated near the guiderail and cross culvert. Sidewalk along Adams Avenue extends to property line. Staff does not object to this waiver.

2. §640-63.C.(3)(c): Applicant is requesting a waiver to curbing requirement along driveway along South 16<sup>th</sup> Street side and toward basin to allow sheet flow to detention basin. Staff supports this waiver.
3. §620-12.B.(4)(d)[6]: Applicant is requesting a waiver of this section. Our plan is to leave the existing detention basin undisturbed. The embankments are mowed lawn area and are very stable. Staff does not object to this waiver.
4. §620-12.B.(4)(d)[8]: Applicant is requesting a waiver to the requirement to a 20-foot wide easement, due to the small size of the basin. Staff supports this waiver.
5. §640-63.A.(2): Applicant is requesting a waiver to this section regarding access driveway distance to an intersection. Due to site constrains, this requirement can't be met. Staff does not object to this waiver.
6. §640-64.A.(1): Applicant is requesting a waiver to this section due to site limitations. Staff does not object to this waiver.
7. §640-64.A.(4): Applicant is requesting a waiver to this section due to site constraints and the need for a retaining wall, the grass strip cannot be provided between the curb and walk along South 16<sup>th</sup> Street. Staff does not object to this waiver.
8. §640-65.A.(1): Applicant is requesting a waiver to this section due to site constraints and width of grass strip; the street trees need to be planted behind the walk. Staff does not object to this waiver.
9. §640-65.A.(2): All land development proposals shall include street trees to be planted between the sidewalk and the curb. A waiver is being requested to allow for clustering of street trees due to site constraints. Staff does not object to this waiver.
10. §640-65.B.(1): The Applicant is requesting a waiver of the buffer (along South 16<sup>th</sup> Street) in this one minor area, due to the requirement for sidewalks and the topographical features. Staff does not object to this waiver.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning Commission of the City of Altoona, Blair County, Pennsylvania, that the application and plans, as filed by the DEVELOPER, are hereby approved subject to the following conditions:

1. A letter from the Blair County Conservation District approving the plan shall be provided to the City. (Chapter 620)
2. Any necessary permits from DEP must be provided.
3. The ACPC Consulting Engineer's comments contained in the Engineer's letter to the City dated August 23, 2019 and attached hereto must be satisfied.
4. Financial security to cover the cost of all public improvements must be provided to the City prior to plan signature. (Chapter 640)
5. A developer's agreement prepared by the ACPC must be executed by the Developer.
6. All required signatures must be obtained on the plan.

7. The conditions of the plan must be accepted in writing by developer within 30 days of plan approval.
8. A copy of the RECORDED plan must be provided to the ACPC as soon as it is recorded.
9. All conditions must be met, fees paid, and the plan signed and recorded within the plan deadline.

RESOLVED by the Altoona City Planning Commission this first day of October,  
2019

ATTEST:

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Secretary

Chair

4. **Staff Level Reviews** – Staff has been working on the following subdivision/land development applications since the August 6, 2019, regular meeting.
1. 2600 Maple Avenue – Subdivision – Carl & Anitra K. Weyandt – Final Approval
  2. 121 Mosser Street – Subdivision – Eric Dively – Final Approval
  3. 2427 Maple Avenue – Subdivision – Marie M. Bettwy – Under Review

### **Urban Redevelopment**

5. **Spot Blight Declaration** – Mary Johnson presented the following properties to the blighted program.

**3034 Broad Avenue** ON HOLD (ROB DENNIS) - OWNER TRYING TO REHAB

Owner: Deia L. Moore

3034 Broad Avenue

Altoona, PA 1601

Property is vacant and in substandard condition. Property was submitted to the program on August 23, 2019 because of interior of the property is fire damaged. Wood siding in poor condition, foundation and roof are fair, windows all need replaced and the garage is loaded with debris of all types. All utilities are off. Taxes have not been paid for 2017 and 2018 \$2,326.36. Under the 2015 International Property Maintenance Code, the City will demolish the structure and place a lien on the property for the cost of demolition.

**2901 Broad Avenue**

Owner: Lawrence P. McConnell, Jr.

P.O. Box 263

Sheffield, PA 16347

Property is vacant and in substandard condition. Property was submitted to the Blighted Property Demo Program on August 1, 2019 due to owner not complying with the demolition order. Property is residential and is in very poor condition. Front porch has collapsed, bricks are falling off the building, stone and mortar are in poor condition, roof and gutters need replaced. All utilities are off. Taxes owed for 2017 and 2018 totaling \$2,542.09 Under the 2015 International Property Maintenance Code, the City will demolish the structure and place a lien on the property for the cost of demolition. A motion was made by Jennifer Mikolajczk to declare the property blighted. Motion was seconded by Richard Haines. Motion passed unanimously.

**1901-03 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue** ON HOLD (ROB DENNIS) – OWNER IS TRYING TO SELL  
Owner: Monica K. Speice  
1901 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Altoona, PA 16601

Property is vacant and in substandard condition. Property was submitted to the Blighted Property Demo Program on August 23, 2019. Property exterior is in poor condition along with the roof rotting and falling off. Windows all need replaced to meet code and the porch floors have holes. Interior condition is unknown. Property is being enveloped by trees, brush and large overgrowth. Owner is deceased. Utilities are on and taxes are current. Under the 2015 IMPC, the City will demolish the structure and place a lien on the property for the cost of demolition.

**919 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue**  
Owner: Dennis Maloskey  
350 W North Avenue  
Palmyra, PA 17078

Property is vacant and in substandard condition. Property was submitted to the Blighted Property Demo Program on August 23, 2019. Owner has failed to comply with a demo order. Exterior structure is deteriorating and sewage in yard after it rains. Foundation is brittle and missing, roof has a huge hole and the rest is in poor condition needing replaced. Property is being inhabited by pigeons causing a mess between the houses. All windows need replaced. After speaking with the next-door neighbor, who said the second floor is water damaged and is being overrun by pigeon's nesting. The first floor is still in decent shape. The owner had hired a crew and was starting to work on the property, but then stopped showing up and nothing has been done since. Water is off and gas and electric are on. Taxes are owed for 2017 \$739.98. Under the 2015 International Property Maintenance Code, the City will demolish the structure and place a lien on the property for the cost of demolition. A motion to declare the property blighted was made by Jennifer Mikolajczk. Motion was seconded by Michael Haire. Motion passed unanimously.

**307 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue**  
Owner: Nicole & Emzel Pearson  
1427 1<sup>st</sup> Street  
Altoona, PA 16602

Property is vacant and in substandard condition. Property was submitted to the Blighted Property Demo Program on 9/20/2019. Property is fire

damaged. Owner has failed to comply with demo order which was issued by code enforcement on 4/20/18. Code Officer had spoken with owner the day of the fire and hasn't been able to reach him since. Owners have not responded to any letters from code enforcement and warrant has been issued for the arrest for no showing to court hearing. All utilities are off and taxes are owed for 2018 \$764.42. Under the 2015 International Property Maintenance Code, the City will demolish the structure and place a lien on the property for the cost of demolition. A motion was made to declare the property blighted by James Dixon. Motion was seconded by Richard Haines. Motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Johnson also mentioned to the commission about 407 Crawford Avenue which is owned by a Lisa Galantine. This property had been brought before the commission a couple of years ago and was declared blighted and subsequently entered into the Demo Program. Ms. Galantine hired an attorney and went to court. The courts gave an order that stipulated what needed to be done. Ms. Galantine has not complied with any of the orders. Attorney Dan Stants has given the directive to move on this and demo the property.

## 6. Zoning

**Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendments** – On August 14, 2019 Altoona City Council introduced an ordinance that would, if enacted, amend the City's zoning (Chapter 800 or the *Code of the City of Altoona*). This ordinance is officially summarized as follows:

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ALTOONA AMENDING THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ALTOONA CHATER 800 ENTITLED "ZONING" TO: AMEND THE DEFINITION OF "STUDENT HOME" AT 800-6; REMOVE SECTION 800-42 ENTITLED "WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES" IN TIS ENTIRETY AND REPLACE IT WITH A NEW SECTION 800-42 ENTITLED "WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS FACILITIES"**

After opening the floor for public comment, the Altoona City Planning Commission discussed the proposed amendments. The Commission decided to support the adoption of the involved ordinance by Altoona City Council at the advertised public hearing on October 16, 2019 (6:45 PM, 1320 Washington Avenue)

Section 6092 of the *Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code* (Act of 1968, P.L. 805, No. 247 as reenacted and amended) requires that any proposed amendments

to the zoning or subdivision and land development regulations be reviewed by the City Planning Commission before they are enacted. A motion was made to support the adoption of the amendment to Chapter 800-6 and Chapter 800-42 by James Dixon. Motion was seconded by Jennifer Mikolajczk. Motion passed unanimously.

7. **List of Permitted Land Uses** – In June, the Commission began building a use table for our zoning ordinance, to replace the sometimes confusing, redundant, and contradictory lists we currently have in the district regulation of each of our eleven zones. A short discussion ensued, there were no changes or corrections, so Mr. Slusser will keep working on it and getting it to City Council.

## **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

### **8. Planning Reports**

- a. Grantsmanship activities (Consolidated Plan, our 5-year Plan of how we will be spending our CDBG funds. Parking Garage at the Transportation Center is being replaced.)
- b. Zoning Hearing Board – (October, Set back variance for 2501 Fifth Avenue, Historical monument for the original Sheetz, and 127 Lexington Avenue, sign; September, Set back variance for sign at 503 East Plank Road, Kranich's; August, 1211 Eleventh Street, Vincini Realty sign for the Pizza Shop. and cellular monopoles)
- c. Shade Tree Commission – (Solarshield, Trade Secrets, approved trimming of trees. Sacred Heart/Tomasetti, want to remove trees due to damage to sidewalks. DPW fall project)
- d. GAEDC – (Railroaders Memorial Museum façade loan approved, Curry Realty façade loan, Joos/JJ Hadley getting ready to open. Trade Secrets relocation, Zombie Town October 4-5, Christmas parade December 5)
- e. Blair County Planning Commission – No report

### **9. Commissioners Forum** – No report

### **10. Questions from the Media and Public**

### **11. Adjournment**

A motion was made by James Dixon to adjourn the meeting at 4:20 P.M. Jennifer Mikolajczk seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

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Jennifer Mikolajczk, Secretary