

MINUTES
ALTOONA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
FRIDAY, December 1, 2017

MEMBERS PRESENT

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

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STAFF PRESENT

Lee Slusser, Director Community Development
Nick Ardizzone, Property and Program Coordinator
Mary Johnson – CDBG Manager
Nate Kissell – Director Department of Public Works
Mark Criste –

GUESTS PRESENT

Andy Arnold – Gwin, Dobson & Foreman – Journey Center
Kim Bennett – Journey Center
Dan Beyer – EADS – Liberty Tax Service
Ray Fletcher – Liberty Tax Service
Joe Oricko – Liberty Tax Service & Grande Palazzo
John Sepp – PennTerra Engineering – Grande Palazzo
Jeff Long – Grande Palazzo
Bill Kibler, Altoona Mirror

The Altoona City Planning Commission held its monthly meeting on December 1, 2017 at 9:00 A.M. in the Public Meeting Room, City Hall 1301 12th Street, Altoona. Bob Gutshall, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

1. Approval of meeting minutes of November 7, 2017.

The meeting minutes of November 7, 2017 were approved as read by a motion made by Dave Albright. Motion seconded by Jennifer Mikolajczyk. Motion carried unanimously.

2. **Public Comment Period**

None at this time

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ITEMS

3. **Graystone Grande Palazzo** – The Commission first reviewed and considered for approval a land development application from Jeff Long to develop the former Bon Secours Hospital at 2500 7th Avenue into the Graystone Grande Palazzo, a senior housing complex with 190 apartments, a 50 room personal care home, and 216 parking spaces (including 39 underneath the building). Lee Slusser introduced John Sepp from PennTerra Engineering who presented the plan to the commission. A discussion ensued regarding 2 way access on 27th Street and 7th Avenue. A motion was made by Jennifer Mikolajczyk to accept the plan as presented and to approve Resolution No. 12-01-17-001 to include a waiver to permit 2 way access on 27th Street closest to 7th Avenue and to be within the 50 feet of the intersection of 27th Street and 7th Avenue for The Grande Palazzo Land Development Plan. James Dixon seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
4. **Journey Center** – Secondly, the Commission reviewed a land development application from John and Kim Bennett to alter and reuse the former Family Christian Bookstore at 120 Byron Avenue in Garden Heights as an educational facility for children with autism. Lee introduced Andy Arnold from Gwin, Dobson and Foreman Engineers to present the plan. The resolution as proposed contains three waivers, a short discussion ensued and a motion was made by Randy Isenberg to accept the plan as presented and to approve Resolution No. 12-01-17-026 for the Journey Center Land Development Plan. Dave Albright seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
5. **Liberty Tax Service** – Third, the Commission reviewed for approval a land development application from Frankstown Properties, LLC, to reuse a former home at 308 Frankstown Road in Garden Heights as offices for Liberty Tax Services. The project involves demolishing a garage and adding an access ramp and a small parking field. Lee introduced Dan Beyer from EADS Engineering and Joe Oricko, Architect. Mr. Beyer presented the proposed plan. The resolution as proposed contains four waivers, a discussion ensued and a motion was made by Chuck Meyers to approve Resolution No. 12-01-17-028 for Liberty Tax Service Development Plan. Motion was seconded by Jennifer Mikolajczyk. Motion passed unanimously.

6. **Staff Level Reviews** – Staff has been working on the following subdivision/land development applications since the October 3, 2017 regular meeting.
 1. Enterprise Rental – Land Development – 412-15 Aldrich Avenue – Under Review
 2. Altoona Area High School – Land Development – 1330 6th Avenue – Under Review
 3. Alto Markets Parking Lot Improvements – Land Development – 5929-33 6th Avenue – Under Review
 4. ARC Federal Credit Union – Land Development 1919 7th Avenue – Under Review
 5. Lonesky, Michael L. & Carla M. – Subdivision/Land Development – 1213 13th Avenue – Under Review

URBAN REDEVELOPMENT

7. **Spot Blight Declaration**

506-08 5th Street
Owner: Howard Gates
624 E. Logan Avenue
Altoona, PA 16602

Property is vacant and in substandard condition, not suitable for rehabilitation. Property was submitted to the Blighted Property Demo Program on November 13, 2017. Property has been completely burned out from a house fire. All utilities are off and taxes are owed since 2014. The owner has not responded or complied with the demolition order. 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. If the owner can be located we will establish financial inability to demolish on their own. A motion was made by Randy Isenberg to determine the property blighted. Jennifer Mikolajczyk seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

8. **Planning Reports**
 - a. Grantsmanship activities - Ready to accept applications for CDBG money
 - b. Shade Tree Commission – Plan and new ordinances being written
 - c. Zoning Hearing Board – No meeting in November – No meeting in December
 - d. GAEDC – Christmas Parade, development projects coming up that cannot be discussed as of this time.

- e. Blair County Planning Commission – Still working on the County Comprehensive Plan
- 9. Commissioners Forum – No report
- 10. Questions from the Media and Public
- 11. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Jennifer Mikolajczk, Secretary