

## MINUTES

### ALTOONA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

Tuesday, June 1, 2021

#### MEMBERS PRESENT

Randy Isenberg, Chair  
Dave Albright, Vice-Chair  
James Dixon, Vice-Secretary  
Larry Bilotto  
Dick Haines

#### MEMBERS ABSENT

Michael Haire, Secretary  
Charles Myers

#### GUESTS PRESENT

Adam Long - Keller Engineers for Curry Realty  
William Kibler - Altoona Mirror

#### STAFF PRESENT

Omar Strohm - City Manager  
Rebecca Brown - Codes & Inspections Director  
Sabrina Appel-McMillen - GIS/Land Use Coordinator  
Rob Crossman - Public Works Division Chief  
Jane Gill - Public Works Office Engineer  
Kim Carrieri - Administrative Assistant

The Altoona City Planning Commission held its monthly meeting on June 1, 2021 in the City Hall 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room, 1301 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Altoona. Randy Isenberg, Chair called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

Members of the Commission introduced themselves. Randy introduced Omar Strohm and congratulated him on his new appointment as City Manager and stated that they look forward to working with him and staff in the future. Randy also asked Rebecca if she is receiving all of the information by all agencies etc. Rebecca stated that she is receiving everything. He also stated that Sabrina is new and some members may not have met her at last month's meeting. Sabrina introduced herself as the new GIS/Land Use Coordinator for the City.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

1. Approval of meeting minutes of May 6, 2021.

The minutes were previously distributed for review. Dick Haines asked for some editorial changes. He was not listed as a present member and should be added and Randy Isenberg presided and called the meeting to order, not Dave Albright which was listed. Kim Apologized for the error as she uses the previous month's minutes and updates them and she missed making those 2 changes. She will make the needed changes. A motion was

made by Dick Haines to approve the corrected minutes and was seconded by Larry Bilotto. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Public Comment Period. - None.

## **SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS**

3. **Curry Realty – 1501 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue - Land Development Plan for New Parking Lot**

*Curry Realty would like to construct a new parking lot at 1501 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue in the City. The land was the site of a vacant, dilapidated church building which consumed almost all of the lot. Some pavement, and slate sidewalks made up the rest of the lot. The lot is bounded by public sidewalks on both sides, and street trees exist on both sides of the parcel. The Church has just recently been torn down.*

Adam Long from Keller Engineers, representing Curry Realty, explained that Curry Realty is currently renovating the Vipond building on 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue and purchased the Church property at 1501 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue for additional parking. The building is currently demolished and they are cleaning up the rubble on the site. They are constructing a 23-space parking lot. If you notice some of the dimensions on the site plan are larger than normal as their employees drive large pickup trucks and need extra room. The spaces are 22' long and the aisle is 30' wide. The site is currently 100% impervious now and adding the green space in for landscaping and additional green space they are reducing impervious and the stormwater rate and volume are being reduced therefore detention is not needed. They are handling the stormwater by 2 curb cuts at the south end of the parking lot and they will flow into the 2 landscaped islands and they are using river stone around all of the landscaping. The hedge landscaping will be provided along both sides of the parking to obstruct headlights and trees and shrubs that are required in each island. They are also providing a bench at the bus stop sign along 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue and a small bike rack based off the number of parking spaces. There will be one ADA parking stall with a piece of sidewalk that takes them up to the public sidewalk.

They have received comments from the EADS Group and went over those comments with Nate from Public Works last week. They will get the proper signatures, they added a stop sign at the exit to the alley, they added a PennDOT traffic control diagram to the plans, they are going to replace the curb ramp because of current compliance. They received E&S approval. They are diffusing the drainage by running through the islands to the curb cuts and run into the alley. They are relocating a street light that falls in the driveway and are meeting with Nate and Kevin as there is another street light outside the APD parking lot that keeps getting hit so they are going to cut off the base and the City is going to provide a light pole and they will reinstall it further down so there will be two light poles flanking the entrance. They are not providing lighting in the parking lot as there are street lights on two sides of the lot. The ordinance requires them to show all of the property owners around the property and across the intersections so he has to obtain that information.

Dave Albright asked about the handicapped parking spot and vans discharging on the passenger side. Also, the location of the handicapped spot in the upper lot. Adam explained that the grade is flatter in that area and the grade slopes downward towards the back of the lot. The only requirement for the aisle to be on the right side of a handicapped spot is if it is angled parking. If it is straight parking it can be on either side on the rights side is if the handicapped spot is angled. Adam explained that they are not requiring any waivers and asked if they could issue conditional approval or does he have to resubmit for the next meeting.

Randy explained that in the past they have given approvals pending additional requirements.

Rob Crossman stated that the Public Works Department wanted to add a few requirements. They inspected the site late last week and the demo contractor did some damage to the sidewalks and one street tree was gone and one was damaged. The City is requesting that the sidewalks be replaced and 2 new street trees planted. Also, the ADA ramp looks like it is gauged up in spots and needs repaired. DPW is fine with not putting a crosswalk over the concrete driveway. Adam explained that they are installing a concrete driveway apron which the City requires when there are sidewalks. A crosswalk will not last on the concrete. Rob stated that the City is fine with the driveway not being located 50' from an intersection which will not be an issue because the road is one-way. Adam explained that the ordinance section is vague because typically intersections are measured to the center line so they are actually 64' from the driveway to the center line which would comply.

Randy requested a motion to approve the plans pending the contact and list of neighboring properties, addressing the comment letter from EADS and additional Public Works requests of sidewalk replacement, 2 tree replacements and handicapped ramp repair. Jim Dixon made the motion and Dave Albright seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Staff Level Reviews – None.

## **URBAN REDEVELOPMENT**

5. Spot Blight Declaration – None. Rebecca explained that they may have 2 for next months meeting.

## **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

6. Staff Reports – None.
7. GAEDC Report – Randy Isenberg was unable to attend the meeting so has no report.
8. Blair County Planning Commission Report – Jim Dixon stated that they looked at the Curry Parking Lot, the former downtown drug building site, the Garvey Manor expansion and Fort Roberdeau improvements. They are also looking at some administrative staffing.

9. Commissioner Forum – None.

10. Discussion Items - Randy stated that he and Omar Strohm had an opportunity to talk and Omar explained that staffing will evolve as time goes by. Randy explained that the Commissions goal is to start reviewing the Comprehensive Plan as soon as the staffing situation is resolved. Once the staffing is resolved, the Commission will start taking time at each monthly meeting to review the plan. The last plan was produced in 2013 so it has been 8 years and the review needs to start soon.

11. Additional Public Comment

12. Questions from the Media

Bill Kibler from the Altoona Mirror asked about the time capsules that are supposed to be buried in the church property that is being demolished if anyone found them. Adam Long said he had not heard anything about it. Bill explained that someone stated that something was buried under the sidewalk in 1960 or 1961. It was discussed that the current sidewalks are still there so maybe during replacement they may find something.

13. Adjournment – Randy asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion to adjourn was made by Dave Albright and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:23 PM