

MINUTES  
ALTOONA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
Tuesday, May 1, 2018

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Bob Gutshall, Chairperson  
Dave Albright  
Michael Haire  
Randy Isenberg  
Jennifer Mikolajczk  
Charles Meyers

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

James Dixon

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STAFF PRESENT**

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

**PUBLIC WORKS STAFF PRESENT**

Mark Criste, Chief Inspector

**GUESTS PRESENT**

David Marhinean, Rutter's # 83  
John Hunter Orr, Columbia Park Resident  
Donna Royer, Zoning Hearing Board Member  
Bill Kibler, Altoona Mirror

The Altoona City Planning Commission held its monthly meeting on May 1, 2018 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 March 6, 2018.**  
The meeting minutes of March 6, 2018 were approved by a motion made by Jennifer Mikolajczk. Motion seconded by Michael Haire. Motion carried unanimously.
- 2. Public Comment Period**  
None at this time

## SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ITEMS

3. Rutter's Store #83 – The Commission reviewed and considered for approval a land development application from M&G Realty to build Rutter's Store #83 on the site of the former King's Restaurant at 3000 Sixth Avenue. A 6,868 sqft. building is proposed with five fueling stations and 38 parking spaces. Staff's combined review from Keller Engineers, two traffic impact study reviews from our transportation engineer (Trans Associates), the designer's responses, the Blair County Planning Commission review, and the recommended resolution for approval, including recommended waivers were reviewed. Mr. Slusser told the Commission that this plan is unique in that it triggered a Transportation Study which was done in order to determine what kind of an impact this would have on the surrounding neighborhood. He then turned the meeting over to Mr. Marhinean, a representative from Rutter's to explain the proposed plan. Rutter's has requested the following waivers:
1. 640-63.A(2): Access driveways serving parking facilities of more than 25 spaces shall not be located closer than 100 feet to an intersection. Developer is requesting a waiver to this section indicating that the existing condition allows this and PennDOT will be reviewing the access points.
  2. 640-64.A(1): Sidewalks shall be provided along the entire length of the property. On a corner lot, the sidewalk shall be extended along the second street as well. Developer has requested a waiver to stop the sidewalk as shown indicated to stop the sidewalk at crosswalks and not encourage crossing at non designated areas further towards the point of the property.
  3. 640-65.E(6a): Units shall not be higher than 15 feet above finished grade. Developer is asking for a waiver from this section to allow a 20' height on the fixtures within the canopy.

Mr. John Orr of 3001 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue introduced himself as a representative of the Columbia Park residents. One of the main concerns is cars leaving the Rutter's site, cutting across two lanes on traffic on 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and heading down 30<sup>th</sup> Street where there are many children. A discussion ensued regarding the entrances and exits off of 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The exit onto 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue has been angled in such a way that it should discourage cars from trying to go down 30<sup>th</sup> Street. Mr. Orr thanked the Commission for letting him speak and welcomed Rutter's to the neighborhood.

A motion to approve Resolution No. 05-01-18-PAC18-01004 with the conditions of this resolution was made by Randy Isenberg. Motion was seconded by Dave Albright. Motion passed unanimously.

4. **Staff Level Reviews** – Staff has been working on the following subdivision/land development applications since the March 6, 2018 regular meeting.
1. Enterprise Rental – Subdivision/Land Development – 412-15 Aldrich Avenue Subdivision – Recorded
  2. Altoona Area High School – Land Development – 1330 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue – Developers Agreement out for signature
  3. Alto Markets Parking Lot Improvements – Land Development – 5929-33 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue – Recorded
  4. The Journey Center – Land Development – 120 Byron Avenue – Recorded
  5. Our Lady of Lourdes – Land Development – 2711 W. Chestnut Avenue – Approved – Awaiting Recording
  6. Lonesky – Subdivision/Land Development – 1213 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue - Recorded
  7. Martin Oil – Land Development – 301 E. Walton Avenue – Final Approval
  8. Ryan J. Albright – Land Development – 2203 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue – Recorded
  9. Vince’s Auto Sales – Land Development – 2200 Pleasant Valley Blvd. – On Hold
  10. Dazzling Realty, Inc. – Land Development – 2309 Broadway – Under Review
  11. Carnegie – Land Development – 5930 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue – Under Review
  12. The Mill – Land Development – 2400 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue – Under Review
  13. Bruce Koller – Subdivision – 4221 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue – Final Approval
  14. Alan R & Lori A Bigelow – Subdivision – 500 E Caroline Avenue – Final Approval
  15. Justin S. Haney – Subdivision – 811 9<sup>th</sup> Street – Recorded
  16. Brannock & Shaw Properties – Subdivision – 2224 N Branch Avenue – Final Approval
  17. Charles & Luanne Beers – Subdivision - 629 N 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue – Final Approval
  18. Golden Hearts Homes, LLC – Subdivision – 1942 Walton Avenue – Under Review
  19. Lynn Warehousing III, LLC – Subdivision – 4601 Cortland Avenue – Under Review

## URBAN REDEVELOPMENT

### 5. Spot Blight Declaration –

#### **1408 17th Avenue**

Owner: Jane S. Huntsman  
% Renee Beech (Owners Daughter)  
519 3rd Avenue  
Altoona, PA 16602

Property is vacant and in substandard condition. Property was submitted to the Blighted Property Demo Program on March 27, 2018. Front porch roof is collapsing along with the foundation falling apart and crumbling. The owner has been residing with her daughter since April of 2017. The property is infested with rodents and is literally falling down. The owner's daughter contacted me and asked if we would take her mother's house because she is financially unable to make any repairs. Owner has submitted financial information and she is income eligible for the City to assist. 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 Chuck Meyers. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **1920 15th Avenue**

Owner: Travis and Janet Myers  
35055 Primrose Lane  
Webster, FL 33597-9147

Property is vacant and in substandard condition. Property was submitted to the Blighted Property Program on March 7, 2018. This is a fire damaged property to be sold at the Judicial sale on June 20, 2018. Property is in terrible condition with the porch floor rotted, stone foundation cracking, roof materials rotting and falling off, and windows missing. Owners were at the scene of the fire and spoke with Code Enforcement Officer. Owners did not have fire insurance and all attempts of future contact by mail were returned. Owner's did meet code enforcement a week after the fire and were never seen again. Owner's walked away. Under the 2009 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 Randy Isenberg. Motion was seconded by Michael Haire. Motion passed.

**917 7th Avenue**

Owner: Judie Link  
917 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Altoona, PA 16602

Property is vacant and in substandard condition. Property was submitted to the Blighted Property Demo Program on April 20, 2018. According to Codes, owner is deceased and there hasn't been any other contact with family members. Property was fire damaged last fall and demo crew secured the structure. Owner was a hoarder and house contains junk, food, clothing, etc. Roof has holes, windows are broken and missing, interior is burnt and unsanitary. All utilities are off and taxes are owed since 2016. Under the 2009 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 Dave Albright. Motion was seconded by Jennifer Mikolajczk. Motion passed.

**2303 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue**

Owner: Richard and Christina Eberhart (Previously owned by Helen Carmona)  
2305 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue  
Altoona, PA 16602

Property was previously submitted to the ACPC on October 3, 2017. Mr. & Mrs. Eberhart, were not the owner's but were at the meeting because of the interest they had in purchasing the property. The Eberhart's purchased the property November 15, 2017, but the deed wasn't recorded until April 4, 2018. The new owners did not submit a remedial work schedule, but they did get a permit and that permit is good until June 28, 2018. Code Officer Rob Dennis stated that they obtained a permit for the removal of the front porch and flue and will be replacing some windows and a door in the near future.

*October's Meeting: Property was submitted to the Blighted Property demo Program on September 22, 2017. Brick exterior is deteriorating (loose mortar and bricks). Foundation Stone and brick missing and/or falling out. Roof is in poor condition (holes and boxing is rotted). Windows, missing and/or broken. 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 owners can be located we will establish financial inability to demolish on their own. Neighbors Mr. & Mrs. Eberhart object to the demolition of this house stating that they are in the process of purchasing this house. They have been taking care of the property for several years and have been paying the taxes, etc. Codes is requesting that ownership be determined within the next 30 days. Motion was made by Dave Albright to table this at the present time. James Dixon seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.*

6. **Housing Conditions Study** – Next the Commission reviewed and considered for adoption by resolution a Housing Conditions Study completed by staff over the past year. The study is a survey of housing and infrastructure conditions on 9,300 parcels in the low and moderate income Census block groups of the City. Within the surveyed areas, the occupancy, structural conditions, structure use, property/site conditions, sidewalk conditions, street conditions, curb conditions, and street accessibility of every parcel is noted. This data is then mapped and used to delineate “deteriorating” or deteriorated” areas within which the City’s Safe Housing/Healthy Living Program may operate. The data is also used to delineate “primarily residential” areas within which the City’s Neighborhood Bicycle Patrol Program may operate. Mr. Slusser told the Commission that this is a HUD Requirement and that it is a very good program and exercise to go through. It has already been used by the Blighted Task Force of which the survey wasn’t intended for. Our consultants recommended that this survey be brought before the Altoona City Planning Commission and adopted by Resolution. The Data will then be put into a file and kept for the HUD Audit that will be happening approximately a month from now. The Resolution has been drawn up and it points out that the Altoona City Planning Commission is the advisory body to Altoona City Council on planning and land use matters and shows that the Commission is doing what is intended to do. Randy Isenberg suggested that the Housing Conditions Survey be continued into the other areas of the city. Motion was made by Chuck Meyers to adopt the Housing Conditions Study by Resolution in order that the City can continue to fund its *Safe Housing/Healthy Living Program* and its *Neighborhood Bicycle Patrol Program* by using its CDBC entitlement funds. The motion was seconded by Michael Haire. Motion passed unanimously.

#### INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

7. **Planning Reports**
- a. Grantsmanship activities – CDBG, Public Hearing was held, Funding for Bike Patrol will be less than the 15% due to funding a Youth Empowerment Program for \$7,500.
  - b. Shade Tree Commission – Still working on a Plan to present
  - c. Zoning Hearing Board – Getting ready for next meeting. There is a request for Beef Jerky manufacturing in the old Kerr’s Florist building 7<sup>th</sup> Ave and 18<sup>th</sup> St.
  - d. GAEDC –No report
  - e. Blair County Planning Commission – No report
8. **Commissioners Forum** – No report
9. **Questions from the Media and Public**
10. **Adjournment** – Motion to adjourn at 4:35 p.m.

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Jennifer Mikolajczk, Secretary