

Jim Thorpe Planning Commission Meeting

January 17, 2017

Meeting called to order: 6:35 p.m.

Roll Call: Joe Micko, Lou Hall, Clem McGinley, Nancy Porambo, Jolene Evans, Dr. Clem McGinley, Joanne Klitsch, John McGuire

Visitors Present: Mark Reitz/Dee Ford/Todd Mason/Jayne Mason/Darrin Heckman

Election of Officers: Secretary, Nancy (Clem motioned, seconded John). Chair, Lou (Nancy motioned, seconded Clem). Joe, Vice-Chairman (Lou motioned, Jolene seconded)

Approval of Minutes: November minute, Joanne motioned, Clem seconded. There were no minutes in December because there was no meeting.

Hearing of Visitors:

- 1) **Mason Construction Project** – (Todd Mason/Jayne Mason). Darrin Heckman, Keystone Site and Engineering, 5,000 square foot building to be constructed behind Jim Thorpe Market. Darrin laid plans out on the table for the building. In 2003, the Market put on addition, 94 parking spaces for facility. They are proposing to add a building, 50' width, 100' length. Proposed site, littered with easement, tunnel comes through property (Ruddels?). Tunnel takes storm water to the Lehigh. Property is convenient for resident, low lying area, but is difficult to develop. They considered several options, industrial zoning district. Met with Greg Kurtz, said they are zoned for it, parking standpoint, when the 2003 plan went through, said as long as what your adding and as long as you can account for new parking, you're ok.

We need 17 spaces, we can do so and will put 20 additional spaces on the existing area that are in the back. There will be enough parking.

They felt it was important to bring the building plans to the Planning Commission so we are informed. What about a loading zone, box truck size vehicles? There's enough room for turn-around. Charlie Stewart owns the property, little over 5 acres.

Owners of Market are good with all and will work with a lease. They would like the additional sales since business has been slow due to the change in bridge location. We were also looking for another retail area for the town. This location has interest from the liquor store for relocation as well as the addition of a beer store.

The next step is to work with Todd and develop a more formal plan. Tentative plans for construction is March.

Soil testing for water management needs to be completed and there are some additional things that need to be done.

LCB wants to be in the location by the end of this year.

- 2) **Parking Ordinance** – (Mark Reitz/Dee Ford) - Dee went on website and pulled up map and found she is located in C2, commercial district, she is a proprietor of Camp on North Townhouse, a vacation rental. It would be great to say we are a free enterprise, but she needs to collect taxes and needs to get an EIN number.

JT has had an influx of rentals, all rentals did not have to go thru rules, we're all zoned.

Mark Reitz indicated rentals are located all over town, (16 along West Broadway alone).

Dee indicates she is concerned about zoning making her a C3.

Lou indicated we are not doing anything different. Mark indicates Mint Salon had to prove parking. They had 6 spots, they worked with Bott to leave their clients park there.

Lou, the purpose was to eliminate the need for zoning. Dee said it's not fair, because you didn't eliminate it as a C2.

Mark said he paid \$3,000 in fees. They had handicapped ramps installed, detectors throughout also had some pending legal issues that he had to deal with before opening.

John, this has to do with Broadway, not West Broadway. We are working on developing a system that will allow for parking permits for West Broadway.

Dee asked why she is going to be changed to C3? She pulled a map from the website. John, everything on East Side will be the same rules.

John, why on Broadway, there is nothing you can do about that on Broadway. We are trying to save \$600 and the Borough's time.

Dee, you have no handle on businesses. You have no clue about any businesses. Lou, they still need to comply with all the rules. We just eliminated the need for Zoning.

Dee indicated vacation rentals are not being addressed in town!

The Parsonage needed to be responsible for parking spaces, many who are opening up vacation rentals are not accountable. Lou, air B&B's, we will address them.

Lou, we are trying to amend as we go. Parking should not be a burden on anyone. We are just trying to eliminate the need for parking.

Dee, "I would like to petition fees to be refunded as I feel we have two sets of rules".

Dee, Ben Walbert suggested we bring the cost of zoning down to \$400.00 which she felt was fair.

Lou, if you feel you are due a refund, you can request it from the Borough and you can ask for a detail.

Dee indicates she feels disenfranchised.

Joanne said she needs a "call for action" paper filled out. Dee refused to do so as she felt she was doing the "Borough's job". Joanne indicated they don't know how you feel so you need to complete a form.

Dee, "You collect 3% and you need to find out what's going on in town."

Dee, residents are asking for relief. GPS's are directing visitors to West Broadway.

Mark, there are over 400 vacation rentals in the area.

Status of previous meeting tasks:

- 1) **Zoning** – Lou indicated if they cannot provide parking, there is no ADA requirement. Lou gave Maureen proof of this. We don't need to deal with the UCC, we are strictly parking. Maureen talked to Barry, she was told to exclude B&B's, we have proof we don't. We are changing to C3, not having to get to Zoning for exceptions. Lou would like for this to be put on the agenda for Council to talk about. Lou motioned, Clem seconded.

Zoning (continued)

John indicated West Chester had a parking permit program we might want to look at. Nancy, Joanne, Clem agreed to work on this committee and will meet after this meeting.

(Future discussion - parking West Broadway) – Do we need a parking authority? Should we begin with permit parking? John indicates we need to come up with a plan for permit parking.

- 2) **Re-addressing** – Kurt has been working with the Commission. We probably need one more meeting with Lou, Nancy and Kyle. The PO made some suggestions we need to consider. We have to resolve them, then go to PO locally, make sure they don't have any other questions. We'll meet in the next two to three weeks. It will go back to Harrisburg, then to Council to get the readdressing completed. Proposed dates for meeting: January 22, February 5, 12. Lou will call Kurt.
- 3) **Air B&B** – Lou volunteered to work on getting the preliminary information available and once he has it, he will ask for the development of a committee to move forward.

Discussion of projects:

- 1) **Nuisance Ordinance Committee** – We decided to make up a committee to look at the property maintenance code and the nuisance ordinance. We hope to incorporate some of the things like ticketing, etc., to see how we can get the project completed. John, Dr. McGinley and Jolene volunteered for the Committee. We'll put this on the agenda for next month.
- 2) **Borough Park Planning Review** – Joe indicates he tried to talk with Maureen, but every time he does, she is busy. He wants to know what the building inventory is. John, we talked about office space. The building committee consists of Greg, Tommy and Kurt. They need to talk about what to do with the buildings we have. Maintenance will probably go near water plant. The block building, will possibly be taken down. Joe, the old Bingo hall, garages, all that will be gone? John, yes. The engineering firm that did the study said it can be converted to parking. Police may go to basement of the Hall. The top half can be used for the Borough offices. The other half can be used for events. Possibly use this building as a library since the school is right here. The pavilion also needs to be replaced. Joe was asked to be sure to talk with Maureen and come up with a plan for the next meeting on how to apply for grants for the park. Also, he is also asked to come up with ideas as to what to put into the park for discussion next meeting.

Suggestions or comments:

Jolene, did we ever find out who owns the fence downtown? John, the County. John plans to have a meeting with the Mayor and Chief to address the fence, sidewalks and how people can walk safely? Sidewalks should go all the way down to the train station.

Adjournment: 8:23 p.m. Nancy motioned to adjourn, Jolene seconded.