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David M. Albright, Chair
Lawrence Bilotto, Vice Chair
Michael Haire, Secretary
Richard Haines
Drew Brennan
Jesse Ickes
Devin Saylor

planning@altoonapa.gov

ALTOONA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

The Altoona City Planning Commission, created in March 1916, is composed of seven residents appointed by the Mayor with the approval of City Council. The Commission is responsible for developing and updating the Comprehensive Plan, reviewing proposals that affect the development of the City, and providing a public forum that encourages participation in guiding the future of the City.

Regular Meeting of Tuesday, March 5, 2024 at 3:00 PM
4th Floor City Hall Common Room

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

1. Approval of Minutes – The Commission will consider the approval of minutes from its previous meeting of February 6, 2024 which is included in the packet.
2. Welcome new Commission Member – Drew Brennan
3. Public Comment Period – All public comments will be received at this time.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT –

1. Dr. Chopra Office Expansion – 1224 7th Avenue – Chopra Pediatrics submitted a land development plan for a 3,050 SF addition to the existing office building along with the construction of a 40-car parking area located at 1221 8th Avenue. A lot consolidation plan is included to merge two adjoining parcels to create a combined lot size of 0.415-acres. A total of four (4) waivers is being requested. Your agenda packet includes the latest plans, technical review letter, developers' response letter, BCPC review letter and waiver list. A recommended resolution for approval has been included.

STAFF LEVEL REVIEWS

Staff has received the following staff level subdivision/land development applications since the February 6, 2024 regular meeting:

None at this time

SPOT BLIGHT DECLARATION

1229 4th Avenue
Altoona, PA 16602
Owner Jeffrey McClure (deceased)

Property is a vacant, residential structure in substandard condition not suitable for rehabilitation. Owner is deceased and his son doesn't want anything to do with the property. Siding is missing from the left side of the house. Windows are broken out on the front of second story and the rear of the property. The roof has bare spots and flashing and facia are missing in several locations. Electrical service to the property is on and gas and water have been turned off since 2022. There are outstanding taxes owed on the property for 2022 and 2023 totaling \$1,144.60. The City will demolish the structure and place a lien on the property for the cost of demolition. Appropriate reuse for this property is residential in nature.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

1. GAEDC Report
2. Blair County Planning Commission Report

COMMISSIONER FORUM

1. Comprehensive Plan Update

QUESTIONS FROM MEDIA AND PUBLIC

ADJOURNMENT

**MINUTES
ALTOONA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
February 6, 2024**

MEMBERS PRESENT

David Albright – Chair
Michael Haire – Secretary
Larry Bilotto – Vice Chair
Richard Haines
Devin Saylor

MEMBERS ABSENT

Jesse Ickes

GUESTS PRESENT

Bill Kibler – Altoona Mirror

STAFF PRESENT

Rebecca Brown – Director, Department of Codes and Inspections
Diana White – Director, Department of Community Development
Mary Johnson – Deputy Director, Department of Community Development
Sabrina Appel-McMillen – GIS/Land Use Coordinator
David McFarland – Blair County Planning Commission
Bette Fischer – Clerical Associate III, Department of Community Development

The Altoona City Planning Commission (ACPC) held its regular meeting on February 6, 2024, in the City Hall 4th Floor Common Room, 1301 12th Street, Altoona, PA. Chair David Albright called the meeting to order at 3:05 P.M.

NEW BUSINESS

On January 2, 2024, Mayor Matthew Pacifico reappointed Michael Haire to the Altoona City Planning Commission for a term of four years. Said term shall expire the first Monday of January 2028. Reappointment was approved by Council unanimously. There is one unfilled position. James Dixon's term expired and he has elected to refuse the appointment for another term. Mayor Pacifico is searching the talent bank applications for a replacement and will be making an appointment soon. Mr. Albright thanked Mr. Dixon in his absence for all his years that he served on the commission. A discussion ensued regarding the need to have a representative from the commission to sit on the Blair County Planning Commission as James Dixon was our representative. Mr. McFarland said that Mr. Dixon will remain on the Blair County Planning Commission until the end of the year. He reported that there are three City representatives, three from the townships, and three from the boroughs. At present there are no openings on the Blair County Planning Commission. BCPC staff members Mr. McFarland or Ms. Caron will act as our representatives and report to the ACPC until this changes.

NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Nominations were received from the floor with action by the board for the following positions:

1. Chairperson
2. Vice Chairperson
3. Secretary

Mr. Haines asked whether the present officers were willing to continue to serve. Mr. Haines then nominated David Albright as Chairperson. Mr. Haire seconded the nomination. Mr. Albright moved to retain the incumbent David Albright. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Haines nominated Larry Bilotto as Vice Chairperson. Mr. Haire seconded the nomination. Mr. Albright moved to retain the incumbent Larry Bilotto. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Haines nominated Michael Haire as Secretary. Mr. Bilotto seconded the nomination. Mr. Albright moved to retain the incumbent Michael Haire. Motion passed unanimously.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

1. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Haines to approve the minutes from the January 2, 2024, meeting. Mr. Bilotto seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

2. 2024 Meeting Dates

A calendar of 2024 meeting dates was presented. All ACPC meetings are held on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 3:00 P.M. in the 4th Floor Common Room of the Altoona City Hall. None of the dates conflicted with holidays.

3. Public Comment Period

None at this time.

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS – None

STAFF LEVEL REVEIWS

Staff has received the following staff level subdivision/land development applications since the January 2, 2024 regular meeting.

- a. Corey T. Noel 104-110 Caroline Avenue - No impact Subdivision Plan Approved

- b. John J. Castle – 413-421 E. Southey Avenue – No Impact Subdivision Plan – Under Review

SPOT BLIGHT DECLARATION

Location:

1112 6th Avenue

Owners:

Herman Bott & Mary Kuny (Bott) (deceased)

1112 6th Avenue

Altoona, PA 16602

Property is a vacant, residential structure in substandard condition not suitable for rehabilitation. Numerous broken and/or missing windows, missing siding, hole in porch, walls rotted where siding is missing. Rotted cornice-appears to be rotted in center of roof and is starting to sink. Appears to have been burglarized for the copper. Rubbish and accumulation throughout the building. Owners are deceased no record of power of attorney. Property is abandoned and squatters are entering the property. Taxes are due for 2021, 2022, and 2023 totaling \$1,536.35. Water is shut off but electric and gas are still active.

The City will demolish the structure and place a lien on the property for the cost of demolition. Appropriate reuse for this property is residential in nature.

A motion to declare this property blighted and demolish was made by Larry Bilotto. Motion was seconded by Devin Saylor. Motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

GAEDC Report – No report.

Blair County Planning Commission Report – Mr. McFarland reported that the BCPC is in the midst of updating the Hazard Mitigation Plan, so they are doing public outreach workshops and are hoping to have everything done and ready for adoption in January of 2025. They just received notification that they have been approved for a small \$30,000 grant from DEP to perform Phase 1 of a stormwater management plan which will be kicking off sometime in April and will take 18 months to complete. He noted that he expects that somewhere in 2027 or 2028 a County Wide Storm Ordinance will be in place. Blair County is one of two counties that has never had a storm ordinance analysis done (includes the entire Frankstown Branch of the Juniata River). Mr. McFarland also went on to say that the Blair County Planning Commission is looking at regionalizing the commission. His examples were, Tyrone is not Martinsburg, Logan Township is not Huston Township so the feeling is that the problems the County faces are more on county

region levels instead of municipal levels. Right now, the way the commission sits there is someone from every area except Greenfield Township/East Freedom. So, if they make the change now it shouldn't make much of a difference or mix things up too badly.

COMMISSIONER FORUM –

1. Comprehensive Plan Update

Mr. Albright reminded the board that they have all been invited to attend the Steering Committee meeting on Monday, February 26, 2024, 10:00 A.M. till 12:00 P.M. at the ABCD Board Room. Czb representatives will be in attendance to give a comprehensive summary of the final draft of the new comprehensive plan. Usually, czb would attend the ACPC meeting but time constraints will not allow this to happen at this time. This will be a much more in-depth report. There will not be any recommendations at this time. It will be an information session only. Anyone who has recommendations or comments are invited to attend the City Council workshop at 6:00 P.M. later that day. The workshop will be held in the 4th floor Common Room of the Altoona City Hall.

2. Summary Analysis of Current Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Devin Saylor presented his analysis of the accomplishments with respect to the current comprehensive plan, Positively Altoona. He went over some of the highlights and asked for feedback on anything that the Commission members may find (following page).

A Summary Analysis of Altoona's Current Comprehensive Plan Outcomes and The Emerging Comprehensive Plan

Report Drafted by Devin Saylor - Altoona City Planning Commission.

December 20th, 2023

Abstract

As of the writing of this report, the City of Altoona in collaboration with CZB, local businesses, community leaders, organization heads, and residents are working on a draft of the latest comprehensive plan. This plan will be known as “All Together Altoona.” This new comprehensive plan will act as a guiding document for the future of the city. Currently the city is under the guidance of the previous comprehensive plan, known as “Positively Altoona.” This report will utilize data collected by CZB, data from the previous plan, and a staff review provided by Dana White on the city’s accomplishments of the current plan’s objectives.

This report will seek to do the following.

- Provide summary comparisons to highlight potential trends in various aspects of city development either progression, regression, or stagnation.
- Indicate what issues continue to persist from the current plan to the emerging plan.
- Identify actions the Altoona Planning Commission could take to help address issues that are persisting from the current plan to the emerging plan.

Before continuing I would suggest you review these documents.

All Together Altoona Plan Preview:

<https://app.box.com/s/f5uu286ydszm0mrwgoel0y4y6779l914>

Positively Altoona Comprehensive Plan (Current Plan)

https://www.altoonapa.gov/getmedia/58eac9ea-e06e-42ac-9e4e-b5b647f3fc_1c/Altoona-Comp-Plan-Draft-2013- web-view-only.pdf

City of Altoona Report on Accomplishments of Positively Altoona Comprehensive Plan -
Prepared by Diana White.

Accomplishments of The Current Plan

Before getting into the trends, data, and possible solutions to persisting areas of need or opportunity let's first talk about the accomplishment of Key Objectives set in the Positively Altoona Plan.

- The city was able to get out from under Act 47 in a reasonable time frame.
- Switch to systems that allow for card payments.
- Successfully advocated for the county to conduct reassessment.
- Established the city land bank program.

Summary Analysis of the Current Plan's Progress on Goals by Category.

Collaboration

The comprehensive plan has several goals in efforts to improve cooperation, sharing of resources, and perception within the city community. These goals are as follows.

1. *Establish a strategic planning committee*
2. *Define a unique brand for the city*
3. *Initiate a campaign to highlight the city's assets*
4. *Work to create a database of volunteers.*

A strategic planning committee has never been established although all the pieces are there. Since there is a current steering committee for the All Together Altoona plan consisting of city

officials, city staff, business owners, faith based, non-profit, and other community partners. It is possible that this sort of structure and committee could carry over into the new plan's implementation. In addition, the existence of this committee could create a central and focused initiative to define a unique city brand and highlight the city's assets. All of the pieces are there to fulfill the first 3 goals.

A volunteer base was being established as the city had hired a community engagement specialist. They did take in several applications at various events over the spring and summer however that position has since been erased. The city should still have the volunteer information on file for the community development department to do something with.

Based on data collected by CZB the perception of the city is not very high. The top 5 adjectives used to describe the current attitude toward the city were "Backwards, Hesitant, Stagnant, Bigoted, and Risk Averse." These were voted on by citizens at the open houses held by CZB.

Although these perceptions should be viewed as an obstacle initially and could make it hard for volunteers to want to get involved. These perceptions should act as a key motivator in better fostering collaboration between the city, citizens, and community partners. Considering that the top 5 aspirational attributes of the open houses were the opposite of current perception being resourceful, creative, entrepreneurial, inclusive, and determined.

Reviewing the driving factors from the Positively Altoona plan show that perception of the city, loss of population, and job trends were very important and continue into the emerging plan a point of concern. It will take a collaborative effort to create a perception of a city people want to move to but LIVE in.

Livability

The goals of the current plan that haven't been accomplished.

1. *Revitalize Logantown and Lower Fairview - Create Showcase Neighborhood*
2. *Hold neighborhood meetings - Complete simple neighborhood strategic plans*
3. *Determine best use for Keith Athletic Field*

Logantown and Lower Fairview have made progress in their development since the adoption of the Positively Altoona plan. An example would be the construction of townhouses on Lexington Avenue. However, a review of CZB's housing survey shows that Logantown and Lower Fairview still show some of the highest densities of blighted or slipping properties within the city. Although with the investments in the neighborhoods made over the years, they are faring better than Dutch Hill, Downtown Altoona, and Southern Little Italy. Hopefully the progress made in these areas continues to outpace blight. Which is a good way to segway into the plan's efforts to host neighborhood meetings.

According to the report by Diana White no such meetings have taken place. Without having meetings or talking directly to homeowners and tenants living in these areas it will be hard for the city to address the real and perceived needs of the neighborhoods these individuals live in. Failure to do so could end in potential backlash, apprehension, and just general lack of support for neighborhood initiatives. Drafting plans broken down by neighborhood in cooperation with those in those neighborhoods could exponentially increase the pace and success at which new and existing goals are accomplished. With many in CZB's open houses wanting to see an inclusive environment this should be viewed as a strategy for a more "All Together Altoona."

Transportation

The goals of the current plan that haven't been achieved.

1. *Invest in a Transportation System as a Gateway*
2. *Collaborate with Transit Providers to Increase Ridership*

Although improvements have been made to public transportation systems like extended bus routes even reaching into other municipalities. A lot of focus that was initially oriented towards public transportation systems has shifted. In the emerging plan the emphasis seems to be on improving individuals' experience with self-transportation. Making the city more walkable, creating trails, and bike lanes for smaller single person transportation.

The city is starting to see an increase of traffic in bicycles, electric scooters, and other small engine vehicles as forms of transportation. As highlighted in CZB's plan preview, many of the roadway corridors are overbuilt for the amount of traffic they actually have. CZB recommends looking at ways of repurposing space taken up by roadways to encourage walking and alternative means of transportation other than driving an automobile.

The continued efforts of the Mayor and other city staff should be looked at as a positive in the continuation of accomplishing the goals not yet achieved. As walking traffic is developed further it may create a culture that is more open to public transportation and increase ridership.

Service and Infrastructure

The goals of the current plan have not yet been achieved.

1. *Expand City Planning roles and personnel to further optimize the effectiveness of the Comprehensive Plan.*
2. *Upgrade critical infrastructure.*
3. *Develop stronger and more predictable code enforcement.*
4. *Review Planning Code and other ordinances*
5. *Maintain Blight Demo Program*

Expanding roles for the Planning Department have gone in the total opposite direction. Since the adoption of the Positively Altoona plan, the planning department of the city has been reconstructed and now in its stead is the Community Development Department. The Positively Altoona Plan put forth the idea of hiring a volunteer coordinator, who could help maximize progress on city projects and reduce salaried costs to the city. Potential to fulfill this role was had with the city community engagement specialist position, but that position has since been eliminated. Currently in the All Together Altoona plan preview there is no hint that the community development department will need to further its staffing but circling back to the idea of engaging the community could be vitally beneficial.

Much progress has been made in the never-ending service that is the maintenance of municipal infrastructure. In the report by Diana White 10 out of the 34 objectives listed underneath this goal are completed with 15 currently in various forms of progress. From the data collected by CZB and the conclusions of the plan preview one can agree that the continued development of roadways, sidewalks, and transportation are crucial to the emerging plan. So, it is fortunate that many of the projects currently in progress deal with bike path corridor development and sidewalks.

The new sidewalk survey that is near completion should also prove to be a crucial asset moving forward into the All Together Altoona plan.

Code enforcement has improved since 2012 and continues to make efforts.

That being said, after the adoption of the All Together Altoona codes, ordinances, and various regulations of the municipality will be reviewed, discussed, and ultimately changed. This should bode well for continued code improvement.

City has maintained its blight demolition program and shows no signs of ending it. With blight being one of the biggest issues highlighted in CZB's plan preview. It's safe to assume the continuation of the program is a must.

Economic Development

The goals of the current plan have not yet been achieved.

1. *Support, and where possible, expand incentive programs for local businesses*
2. *Diversify land uses and activities in Downtown Altoona, Downtown Juniata, Downtown Wehnwood*

The city has continued to create incentive programs for businesses all across the city, not just in the specified neighborhoods. Just last year using ARPA Funds to assist business owners with improvements on physical structures. Conclusions made in the CZB plan show that continuing to offer such programs could play a key role in further development of neighborhoods.

Diversification of land uses and activities has seen success especially in Downtown Altoona. With more businesses of variety opening giving citizens more to do. As part of the All Together Altoona plan preview, a huge focal point will be downtown Altoona. So, the continued development and even expansion of Downtown Altoona is going to be dictated by the strength of its diversity.

Urban Design and Public Realm

The goals of the current plan have not yet been achieved.

1. *Create City-wide wayfinding signage system like Pbggh and Johnstown*
2. *Focus more resources on public street tree maintenance*
3. *Provide adequate trash cans and recycling containers in high traffic pedestrian areas (downtowns and parks) as funds permit*

The city has not invested too heavily in a signage system for the city but should be revisited as the city continues to develop sidewalks and pedestrian travel through the city.

Tree maintenance has been a contentious topic over the years. Street trees in certain corridors are a detriment to the pedestrian walkways including destroying sidewalks. While other groups of trees add a lot of appeal. The city used to have a street tree commission but that commission has since been eliminated. Ordinances should look into the types of street trees suggested as to avoid damaging of municipal infrastructure moving forward and to allow for flexibility of maintenance moving forward with the All Together Altoona plan.

In many high traffic areas, there is an abundance of litter. Corridors like Chestnut Avenue, 17th Street, and even some neighborhoods lack public trash disposal locations for passing foot traffic. Moving forward with the plan presented by CZB it will be important that adequate trash disposal bins are provided to street corridors to improve the appeal of pedestrian travel. With the report put forth by Diana White indicating more can be done.

Resources

The goals of the current plan have not yet been achieved.

1. *Increase awareness of historic districts and value*
2. *Work with County and regional watershed to create an education program for stormwater best practices*

3. *Identify and promote energy conservation opportunities*

The city of Altoona is home to many historical landmarks and areas. Whether it's the Railroaders Museum, Horseshoe Curve, or The World's Oldest Gas Station. Altoona has a lot of places for people to stop and see. Many efforts are being made from groups like Explore Altoona and First Frontier to highlight these features but the city itself hasn't put together an official promotion of these landmarks or districts.

I am unclear if the education program on stormwater best practices is for citizens or the municipal government but regardless according to Diana's report no progress has been made officially and the Positively Altoona plan doesn't really show why it was the goal in the first place. That being said, energy conservation efforts, although progress has been made, do not look to be a priority in the emerging All Together Altoona plan.

Well Being

The goals of the current plan have not yet been achieved.

1. *Work with AMTRAN and others to transform public transit into a series of wellness lines targeting routes that connect in the vicinity of ARHS facilities.*
2. *Improve cleanliness of neighborhoods and streetscapes.*
3. *Create opportunities for Residents to improve their wellness*

The idea with the AMTRAN public transit series is to ensure people without means of transportation are able to get access to medical care. Although Diana's report indicates no progress has been made on this goal. It is worth pointing out many bus stops do travel to medical facilities or at least in proximity to them. In the emerging plan this goal does not seem to be a priority.

Various collective efforts to clean up neighborhoods have happened over the years and still continue to this day. In the past year organizations such as Overflow Church, Ben Blessed, and Redd Up Altoona Foundation have gone into neighborhoods and cleaned up litter. As stated in the section about providing garbage cans and public waste disposal. Clean streets will be important to the All Together Altoona plan for "better public spaces with people in mind."

Finally, the City has created opportunities for residents to get into shape with parks and recreations but hasn't gone far enough. According to CZB's data Altoona spends only \$16/per resident compared to cities of similar size that spend closer to \$95/per resident on park operational budgets. CZB's plan preview will coincide with a continued effort to strive for this goal, considering the focus on connected trail ways throughout the city to other municipalities and attractions.

Opportunity for The Planning Commission

The Altoona City Planning Commission (ACPC) has an opportunity to provide critical insight and assist the city in the accomplishment of goals set forth in the emerging comprehensive plan. In the summary report we've looked at continued trends leading into the emerging

comprehensive plan. The ACPC should look to take action, the question being, “What CAN the Planning Commission of The City help with?”

In order to establish what role, the ACPC can play in the efforts to meet the All Together Altoona’s goals, we must first remind ourselves what the commission's functionality and duties are. It is written in the City of Altoona *535-1 Commission Established* that the ACPC will function as required by the state’s municipalities planning code. The state municipalities planning code states that “The Planning Commission will fulfill duties commissioned by the governing body.” In our case that would be city council. The powers and duties from the state municipalities planning code - Section 209.1 are as follows.

The planning agency shall at the request of the governing body have the power and shall be required to:

- 1. Prepare the comprehensive plan for the development of the municipality as set forth in this act, and present it for the consideration of the governing body.*
- 2. Maintain and keep on file records of its action. All records and files of the planning agency shall be in the possession of the governing body.*

The planning agency at the request of the governing body may:

- 1. Make recommendations to the governing body concerning the adoption or amendment of an official map.*
- 2. Prepare and present to the governing body of the municipality a zoning ordinance, and make recommendations to the governing body on proposed amendments to it as set forth in this act.*
- 3. Prepare, recommend and administer subdivision and land development and planned residential development regulations, as set forth in this act.*

4. *Prepare and present to the governing body of the municipality a building code and a housing code and make recommendations concerning proposed amendments thereto.*
5. *Do such other acts or make such studies as may be necessary to fulfill the duties and obligations imposed by this act.*
6. *Prepare and present to the governing body of the municipality an environmental study.*
7. *Submit to the governing body of a municipality a recommended capital improvements program.*
8. *Prepare and present to the governing body of the municipality a water survey, which shall be consistent with the State Water Plan and any applicable water resources plan adopted by a river basin commission. The water survey shall be conducted in consultation with any public water supplier in the area to be surveyed.*
9. *Promote public interest in, and understanding of, the comprehensive plan and planning.*
10. *Make recommendations to governmental, civic and private agencies and individuals as to the effectiveness of the proposals of such agencies and individuals.*
11. *Hold public hearings and meetings. Present testimony before any board.*
12. *Require from other departments and agencies of the municipality such available information as relates to the work of the planning agency.*
13. *In the performance of its functions, enter upon any land to make examinations and surveys with the consent of the owner.*
14. *Prepare and present to the governing body of the municipality a study regarding the feasibility and practicability of using renewable energy sources in specific areas within the municipality.*

15. *Review the zoning ordinance, subdivision and land development ordinance, official map, provisions for planned residential development, and such other ordinances and regulations governing the development of land no less frequently than it reviews the comprehensive plan.*

With all of these duties and roles listed here are a list of things the planning commission could take point on in furthering the goals of the All Together Altoona Plan. Some will not be mentioned for example because they are generally carried out during the comprehensive planning process, like reviewing of ordinances, zoning, codes, etc.

1. **Hold public hearings and door to door data collection by Neighborhood to help form Simple Plans by Neighborhood** - The emerging comprehensive plan is called "All Together Altoona" so it would only make sense that we find ways to make it all together. Hosting public hearings or gathering data by neighborhood could help break down the execution of the comprehensive plan into sections. With citizens direct input on their challenges as well as what they feel they need more of in their neighborhood. Perhaps giving neighborhoods, the opportunity to engage with the comprehensive plan and as stated in CZB's plan preview find and encourage neighborhood leaders. Which will in turn help the city execute on its plan.

2. **Develop a recommended list of Street Trees for future Developments** Street trees have been a concern as some inevitably end up being a detriment to infrastructure. It may be wise if the commission doesn't already have something in place to have a list of trees that are good to be recommended for certain types of developments. In addition to having a list of trees that just in general should not be planted on the street, absent a street tree committee.

3. **Review the Planning Code prior to official meetings or discussions with Council** - It may be wise for the commission to do an evaluation amongst its members first on what planning code ordinances they'd like to review and discuss with council prior to meeting with them. Not just for efficiency but so the commission can collectivize their thoughts on parts of the code.

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC AND MEDIA – None at this time.

3. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business a motion was made by Mr. Bilotto to adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded by Michael Haire. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 4:09 PM.

Approved by Michael Haire, Secretary



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February 26, 2024

3037-2

Ms. Rebecca Brown, Director
City of Altoona
Department of Codes and Inspections
1301 12th Street, Suite 103
Altoona PA, 16601

RE: DR. CHOPRA OFFICE EXPANSION REVIEW LETTER – COMMENT RESPONSE

Dear Ms. Brown:

Below are Keller Engineer's responses to your comments dated February 22, 2024 for the Dr. Chopra Office Expansion 2nd Submission:

General

1. All signature blocks are to be executed.
Response: All signature blocks will be executed upon final plan approval. Signature has been added to seal on title block.
2. No changes can be made to the approved plans during construction without the approval of the City. After construction is complete provide record or as-built drawings to the city of all approved changes made during construction. Developer has acknowledged.

Chapter 620 Stormwater Management, Erosion and Sediment Control

3. 620-12.A(1) There shall be no increase in the peak rate of stormwater runoff discharge...
 - A detail for a trench drain has been added to the plans. Please label the trench drain (including length) on the plans. Additionally provide top of grate information and inverts on the 6" pipe from the trench drain.
Response: 24 LF Trench Drain has been labeled on Sheet PC1. Top of Trench Drain and inverts are labeled on Sheet PC1.
 - The 6" outlet from the trench drain appears to be directly under two street trees. There is a concern that the 6" pipe cannot be installed as shown. Please consider an alternative layout for the drain, such as draining towards the parking lot and then providing a cleanout and bend with the pipe running parallel to the curb under the parking lot.
Response: 6" pipe has been revised to parallel the sidewalk along 8th Avenue before outfalling in raingarden to avoid tree plantings.
 - Please include the maintenance notes from the design report on the plan.
Response: Maintenance notes from design report have been added to PC2.
4. 620-12.A(3) Please provide a volume calculation in conformance with this section using either of the two methods described Under the Volume section of the design report, please remove the 1st section regarding volumes obtained using the modified rational method (191 CF and 909 CF) as that does not meet the ordinance. We have no objection to the calculations using the 2" and 1" runoff in accordance with the ordinance.

Chapter 640 Subdivision of Land and Land Developments

12. 640-58.G. Provide signature of the professional engineer.

Response: Signature will be provided upon final plan approval. Signature has been added to seal on title block.

13. 640-64.A(2) All Sidewalks shall be constructed to provide adequate access to the physically disabled. Please provide ADA ramp details (blow ups with slopes and elevations) on all ramps within the Right-of-Way.

Response: ADA blow ups have been added to Sheet 3. Slopes and elevations are shown on blow ups.

14. 640-65.D(4) Foundational landscaping shall include low shrubbery at a ratio of at least one shrub for every five linear feet of wall and high shrub or tree for every 50 linear feet of wall. Developer has requested a waiver to the foundational landscaping requirement along the east and west side of the new addition. Staff has no objection to the waiver as presented.

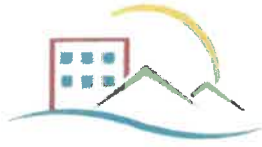
Response: Acknowledged.

Please contact me at 814-696-7430 or jjkeller@keller-engineers.com if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Sincerely,

Jared J. Keller, P.E.
Land Development Division

cc: Stephanie C. Shoenfelt, P.E. – The EADS Group, Inc. (Altoona)
file



Blair Planning

Blair County Planning Commission
Altoona Metropolitan Planning Organization
Blair County Government Advisory Committee

December 13, 2023

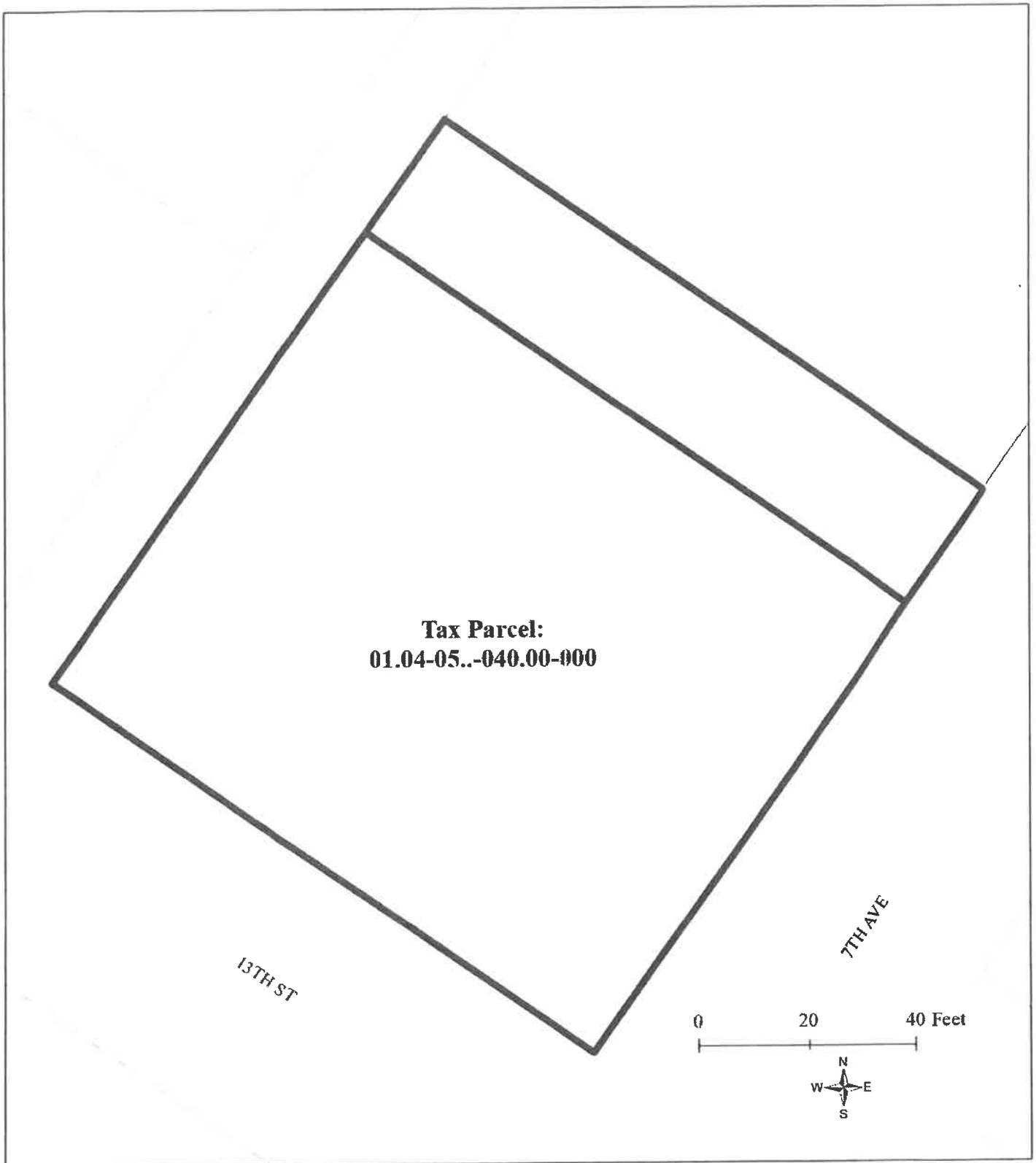
Ms. Sabrina Appel-McMillen, GIS & Land Use Coordinator
Altoona City Hall
1301 12th Street, Suite 103
Altoona, PA 16601

Dear Ms. Appel-McMillen:

The Blair County Planning Commission is in receipt of the Chopra Pediatrics Building Addition, located along 7th Avenue, for review under the provisions of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code and other relevant statutes. Our review has revealed the following.

- This proposal is for the construction of a 3050 SF addition to the existing Chopra Pediatrics facility for the purpose of creating new physician office space. Additional site improvements include new parking facilities, landscaping, and stormwater management facilities.
- Included with this development plan is a proposal to merge the three (3) adjacent parcels that make up the grass lot behind Chopra Pediatrics, also owned by RK II, LLC, for the purpose of creating one contiguous 0.415 acre parcel that serve as the site of the proposed parking expansion for the office.
- Existing parking at the site consists of 24 vehicle parking spaces, including 3 ADA accessible spaces; however, the proposed building addition would eliminate twelve (12) of those standard spaces. The newly proposed rear parking lot consists of 40 standard vehicle parking spaces, which would create a net parking gain of 28 spaces for the entire site. The inclusion of bicycle parking with this development is appreciated for its alignment with our current initiatives in Active Mobility.
- Access to the building using the existing 24-foot-wide bidirectional driveway to the original parking lot remains the same; however, the elimination of what appears to be a small, paved apron for vehicles to turn around could present a potential problem for vehicle circulation at the site.
- The proposed parking facility is accessible from the alley that runs between the office building and the existing lot through two, 24-foot-wide, bidirectional parking aisles or from a 24-foot-wide bidirectional driveway along 8th Avenue. In order to better provide for pedestrian safety when connecting to the site, we recommend, if feasible, including painted striping for crosswalks in the alley.

-continued-



 Tax Parcels

* Beaver Dam Branch of the Juniata River Watershed

Chopra Pediatrics Addition



420 Allegheny Street
Hollidaysburg, PA 16648
Phone: 814.696.7430
Fax: 814.696.0150

www.keller-engineers.com

**WAIVER REQUESTS
ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS – CHOPRA PEDIATRICS
CITY OF ALTOONA, BLAIR COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA
PROJECT NO. 3037-2 FEBRUARY 2024**

Section 620-12.B(4)(d)[8] – Request to eliminate the access road and easement to the basin.

Justification: This requirement is a remnant of old, large basin requirements and is not applicable for shallow rain gardens with ponding 2' or less.

Section 620-12.B(4)(d)[9] – Request to allow a flat-bottom basin bottom.

Justification: This requirement is a remnant of old, large basin requirements and is not applicable for shallow rain gardens with ponding 2' or less.

Section 620-12.B(4)(d)[17] – Request to eliminate 1' of freeboard requirement.

Justification: This requirement is a remnant of old, large basin requirements and is not applicable for shallow rain gardens with ponding 2' or less.

Section 640.65.D.4– Request to allow an alternate foundation landscaping arrangement.

Justification: It is not possible to install the foundation landscaping as required by ordinance on the east and west facades. A sidewalk is needed along the west façade for egress from the new addition. The west façade is very close to the property line, and there are very large shrubs along the western neighbor's property line. The landscaping along the building will likely not get sun and will not be seen because of the neighbor's shrubs. There are existing shrubs along the southern property line that serve the function as the shrubs required in the ordinance; we are requesting to use those shrubs as foundation landscaping.

RESOLUTION 03-05-24-PAC23-15
A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE DR CHOPRA OFFICE EXPANSION
LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

WHEREAS an application for a land development project has been filed with the Altoona City Planning Commission (hereinafter "ACPC") by RK II, LLC. (hereinafter referred to as the "DEVELOPER"); and

WHEREAS, the DEVELOPER desires to construct a 3,050 SF addition to the existing Chopra Pediatrics office at 1224 7th Avenue and a 40-vehicle parking lot at 1221 8th Avenue, 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, 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. §620-12.B(4)(d)[8]: Facility shall be located to facilitate maintenance, considering the frequency and type of equipment that will be required. All detention ponds shall be provided with a suitable access road with a minimum width of 12-feet located within a twenty-foot minimum easement.
The applicant is requesting a waiver to this section.
2. §620-12.B(4)(d)[9]: Bottoms of detention basins should be graded with sufficient slope to provide positive surface drainage. A subdrainage system may be required, depending on the location of the pond bottom relative to groundwater levels.
The applicant is requesting a waiver to this section to allow a flat-bottom basin bottom.
3. §620-12.B(4)(d)[17]: Any stormwater management facility required or regulated by this chapter shall be designed to provide an emergency spillway to handle flow up to and including the one-hundred-year post-development conditions. The height of embankment must be set as to provide a minimum one foot of freeboard above the maximum pool elevation computed when the facility function for the one-hundred-year post-development inflow.
The applicant is requesting a waiver to this section to eliminate one foot of freeboard.
4. §640-65.D(4): Foundational landscaping shall include low shrubbery at a ratio of at least one shrub for every five linear feet of wall and high shrub or tree for every 50 linear feet of wall.

The applicant is requesting a waiver to this section.

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. The conditions of the plan must be accepted in writing by developer within 30 days of plan approval.
2. All required signatures must be obtained on the plan.
3. Financial security to cover the cost of all public improvements must be provided to the City.
4. A developer's agreement prepared by the ACPC must be executed by the Developer.
5. Stormwater Maintenance agreement signed by the owner shall be provided to the City.
6. All necessary permits from DEP and/or PennDOT must be provided.
7. A copy of the RECORDED plan must be provided to the ACPC as soon as it is recorded.
8. All conditions must be met, fees paid, and the plan signed and recorded within the plan deadline.

RESOLVED by the Altoona City Planning Commission on March 5, 2024:

David B. Albright, Chairman

1229 4th Avenue

Owner: Jeffrey McClure (deceased)

1229 4th Avenue

Altoona, PA 16601

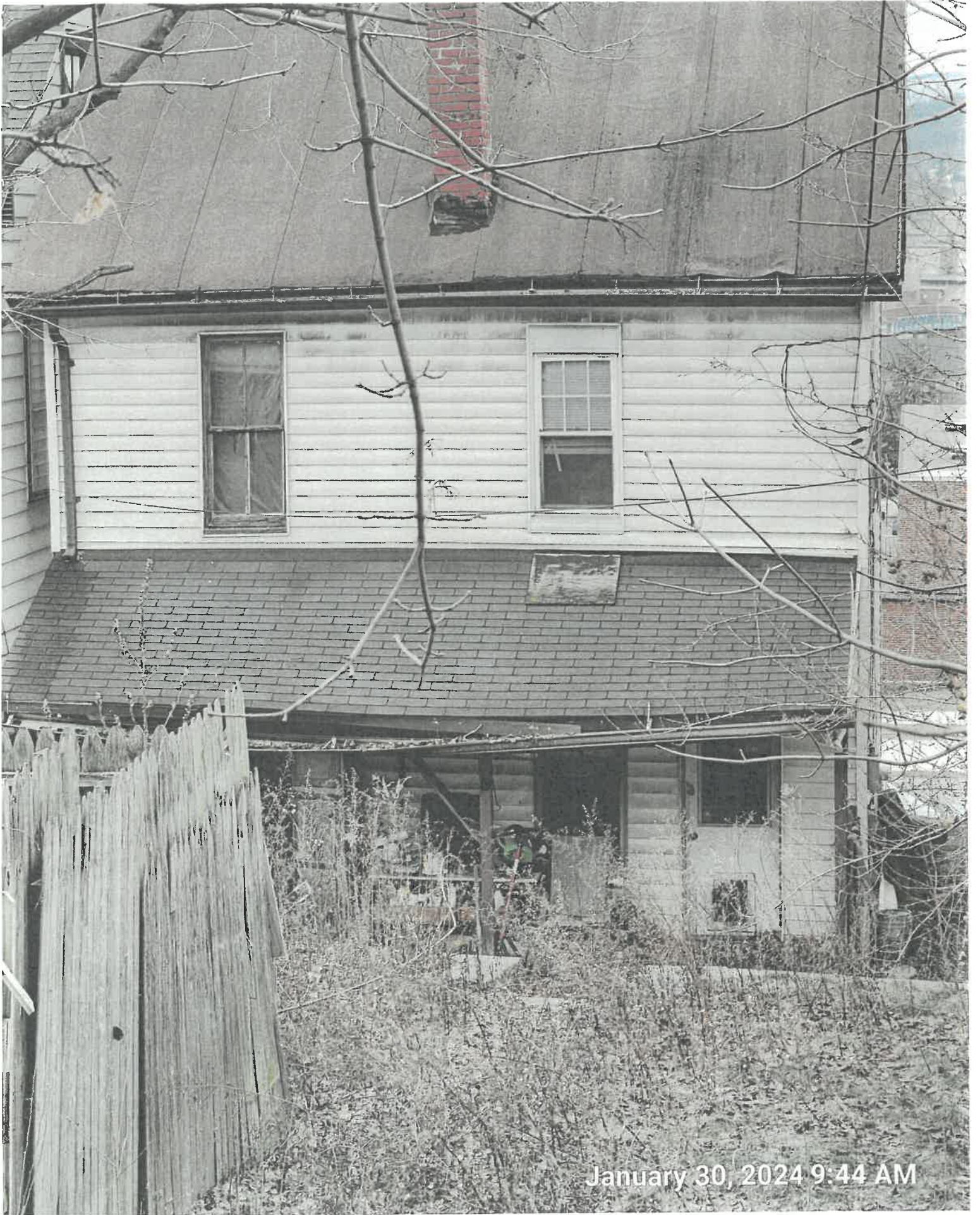
Property is a vacant, residential structure in substandard condition not suitable for rehabilitation. Owner is deceased and his son doesn't want anything to do with the property. Siding is missing from the left side of the house. Windows are broken out on the front of second story and the rear of the property. The roof has bare spots and flashing and fascia are missing in several locations. Electrical service to the property is on and gas and water have been turned off since 2022. There are outstanding taxes owed on the property for 2022 and 2023 totaling \$1,144.60. The City will demolish the structure and place a lien on the property for the cost of demolition. Appropriate reuse for this property is residential in nature.



January 30, 2024 9:42 AM



January 30, 2024 9:44 AM



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January 30, 2024 9:42 AM