

MINUTES

ALTOONA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

TUESDAY November 1, 2016

MEMBERS PRESENT

Bob Gutshall, Chairperson
Dave Albright
James Dixon
Sam Frye
Randy Isenberg
Jennifer Mikolajczyk

MEMBERS ABSENT

Barbara Wiens Tuers

PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STAFF PRESENT

Lee Slusser, Director Community Development
Nick Ardizzone, Property and Program Coordinator
Mary Johnson – CDBG Manager
Bette Fischer – Clerical Associate

GUESTS PRESENT

Dan Beyer – EADS Group - UOC-Blair Ortho
Bruce Davies – UOC-Blair Ortho
Joseph Oricko – Wendy's and Jack & George's
Steven Gardner – Lawruk Realty - Wendy's
Theresa White – Jack & George's
Mark Criste – City of Altoona
Donna Royer, Guest
Bill Kibler, Altoona Mirror

The Altoona City Planning Commission held its monthly meeting on November 1, 2016 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 September 6, 2016.**
The meeting minutes September 6, 2016 were approved as read by a motion made by Jennifer Mikolajczyk and seconded by James Dixon. Motion carried unanimously.
2. **Public Comment Period**
None at this time

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ITEMS

3. Blair Orthopedics and University Orthopedics Parking Lot Expansion

Mr. Slusser opened the presentation for the UOC Blair Orthopedics Parking Lot Expansion. He then introduced Dan Beyer of the EADS Group who further explained the project. Mr. Beyer told the Commission the expansion will allow for an additional 28 parking spaces for a total of 147 spaces with 3 ADA at the side and 3 ADA spaces in the rear of the building. Mr. Beyer stated that the plans include an underground storm water facility, landscaping between lot and Fairway Drive along with a sidewalk. During the construction the trees and existing parking lot will need to be demolished. Mr. Criste talked about the infiltration for the storm water facility and stated that additional infiltration may need to be added during construction if the ground doesn't perk. Mr. Slusser also stated that they are seeking two (2) waivers. The first one being a waiver from 640-203B(3) so that the parking may be one foot too close to the something, likely the street. And the second waiver from 640-203C(3)(a) so that the parking stalls may only be 18 feet long instead of the required 19 feet. Mr. Isenberg raised a question regarding the Fire Inspector's review comment that the Main Entrance should be changed from 25 feet to 26 feet to accommodate the Ladder Truck. Mr. Beyer agreed to make that change. Mr. Slusser recommended conditional approval based on Stephanie Shoenfelt's satisfaction of the storm water review. A motion was made by Randy Isenberg to grant approval of the two (2) waivers and is a conditional approval pending Ms. Shoenfelt's approval of the storm water issues. Motion was seconded by James Dixon. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Wendy's

Mr. Slusser presented the next review to consider for approval of a Land Development application to expand the parking and add sidewalks and landscaping to the Wendy's restaurant which is currently under renovation at 301 East Plank Road and 108-116 Byron Avenue. Mr. Slusser introduced Mr. Joe Oricko, Architect who presented the proposed plan. The expansion will allow for 44 parking spaces with a 10ft radius, islands and sidewalks. Mr. Criste posed a question on the dumpster drain which shows that the drain will go directly into the sewer system. He stated that the Altoona Authority will not allow that. Mr. Oricko stated that a change has been made and the dumpster will sit on a cement pad and will drain into a holding tank to collect waste discharge and water from cleaning for water quality purposes. Mr. Oricko also stated that the lighting will be 15ft. Mr. Slusser then presented the five (5) waivers that are being requested,

1. Waiver from 640-203A(3) to have more than one bidirectional access driveway for 150ft of frontage to minimize parking lot aisles.
2. Waiver from 640-203A(6) to have a radius less than 10ft at the alley.
3. Waiver from 640-203B(3) so that the parking may be less than five feet from the property line.
4. Waiver from 640-203C(3)(a) so that the parking stalls may only be 18ft long instead of the required 19 ft.
5. Waiver from 640-204A(4) which requires a tree lawn.

A motion was made by Dave Albright to conditionally approve the plans based on Blair County Planning Commission comments and changing the dumpster drain so that it flows into the storm sewer... not the sanitary sewer. The motion was seconded by Sam Frye. Motion passed unanimously.

5. **Jack & George's**

Mr. Slusser presented the Commission with an application for land development to build a new parking lot at 406 24th Street for Jack and George's. Mr. Oricko, Architect for Jack and George's presented the proposed parking lot plan He stated that the area next to the alley will have a bio retention area that will absorb the runoff the runoff is controlled by cuts in the curbing. A short discussion ensued Mr. Criste thanked Mr. Oricko for using the bio retention system stating that this is the best thing to do in this area. Mr. Slusser again presented a list of waivers that are being requested.

1. Waiver from 640-205B requiring buffer yards.
2. Waiver from 640-203A(2) so that they may have access less than 100ft from an intersection.
3. Waiver from 640-203A(3) to have more than one bidirectional access driveway for 150ft of frontage to minimize parking lot aisles.
4. Waiver from 640-203B(3) to put six inches to close to a property line.
5. Waiver from 640-204A(4) which requires a tree lawn.
6. Waiver from 640-205C(4) to plant shrubs four feet on center instead of three feet. Mr. Oricko stated the reasoning behind this is 3 feet on center tend to grow close together to form a hedge. By planting 4 feet on center is gives the plant more room to grow and fill out. He anticipates that people will cut through these areas and will ruin plants at 3 feet, by planting 4 feet apart the plants will thrive.
7. Waiver from 640-205E(1) to not provide landscaped islands on the end of the rows to save parking spaces.
8. Waiver from 640-205E(3)(a) so that the parking lot islands may be less than six feet wide.
9. Waiver from 640-205E(6)(a) to use 24 feet tall light standards.

Mr. Oricko stated that all sidewalks shall be constructed to provide adequate access to the physically disabled and will be constructed in accordance with ADA design to be compliant. A motion to grant approval for the waivers was made by Sam Frye and is a conditional pending Blair County Planning Commission review. Motion was seconded by Jennifer Mikolajczyk. Motion passed unanimously.

6. **Staff Level Reviews** – Nick Ardizzone reviewed that staff has worked on the following staff level subdivision/land development reviews since the Sept 6, 2016 regular meeting.
1. Popeye's – Land Development – 309-319 E. Plank Road – Final Approval
 2. Simington Plaza III – Land Development – 210 E. Plank Road – Final Approval
Pending Amended Plan
 3. Union Avenue LLC – Land Development – 1815 Union Avenue & 1738-42
Margaret Avenue – Final Approval
 4. Blair Orthopedics – Land Development – 3000 Fairway Drive – Under Review
 5. North 2nd Street Apartments – Subdivision – 501-06 N 2nd Street – Final Approval
 6. Wendy's - Land Development – 309 E. Plank Road – Under Review
 7. Vince's Used Car Lot – Land Development – 2200 Pleasant Valley Blvd – Under
Review
 8. Kirk & Mary Ann Stiffler – Subdivision – 200 Crawford Avenue – Recorded
 9. Jack & George's – Land Development – 2400 4th Avenue – Under Review
 10. Kreuz – Land Development – 1812-18 N 4th Avenue – Under Review
 11. Dollar General – Land Development – 1320 14th Avenue – Under Review
 12. Promoland – Subdivision – 1405-09 26th Street – Final Approval
 13. Crossroads Services, Inc. – Land Development – 3601 5th Avenue – Final Approval

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

7. Spot Blight Declaration

1. **1623-25 N 5th Avenue (aka 1621 N 5th Avenue)**

Owner: Mary Alice O'Conner (deceased)
1623-25 N 5th Avenue
Altoona, PA 16601

Property is vacant and in substandard condition not suitable for rehabilitation. Exterior brick has and is still falling off the property, walls are bowing outward. Foundation is in poor condition starting to cave in some areas. Windows are missing and/or boarded. Gas is on – water and electric off. Taxes are current. Contacted the Courthouse to see who's paying the taxes. Roberta and William Hillard are paying. William Hillard was added to the deed in 2010 but no other address on the tax records. 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. A motion of conditional approval to declare the property blighted for demolition was made by Randy Isenberg pending income verification. Motion was seconded by Jennifer Mikolajczyk. Motion passed unanimously.

2. **1620-26 20th Avenue (Garage Only)**

Owner: Cory S. Havlin
1626 20th Avenue
Altoona, PA 16601

Garage is in substandard condition not suitable for rehabilitation. This garage was brought to my attention by Dan Stants, City's Attorney on October 6, 2016 after a hearing with the owner. Mr. Stants stated the owner is struggling financially. The garage appears to be in good shape from the front of the property but when examined from the alley side, $\frac{3}{4}$ of the roof is gone. The interior of the garage is full of "stuff". 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. A motion to declare the property blighted was made by James Dixon. The motion was seconded by Dave Albright. Motion passed unanimously.

3. **102 E Walnut Avenue**

Owner: Lynn S. Bowers (Deceased)
102 E. Walnut Avenue
Altoona, PA 16601

Property is vacant and in substandard condition, not suitable for rehabilitation. Roof, exterior and foundation are in poor condition. Windows are broken and missing. Porch ceiling is falling down. Property was on the September 2016 Upset Sale but

did not sell. Will be going to the Judicial Sale in June 2017. All utilities are off. 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. A motion to declare the property blighted was made by Jennifer Mikolajczyk. Motion was seconded by Sam Frye. Motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

8. Planning Report

- a. Grantmanship activities (CDBG, HOME) – Lee Slusser reported that the 2015-2016 CAPER is complete. The reorganization of Chapter 535 of the *Code of the City of Altoona* has been adopted by City Council. Mr. Slusser said he is working on the next round of ordinance revisions. Nothing else unusual to report
- b. Shade Tree Commission Report –Taking requests for the Spring of 2017. Nothing particular to note there.
- c. Zoning Hearing Board Report – Donna Royer reviewed the cases on their docket for November – 897 22nd Street – 3 rental units in a house that should only have 2 units. There is also a request for an offsite garage and parking lot across street from owners home.
- d. GAEDC Report – Mr. Slusser reported GAEDC has approved a façade loan to Randy Green for a house by the hospital and the demo project at 11th Avenue and 15th Street for a parking lot. Mayor Matt Pacifico is searching for a grant to hire a Main Street Manager. He feels we are losing out on opportunities for intown events by only having a group of volunteers trying to pull things together.
- e. Blair County Commission Report – James Dixon reported that the Commission is putting together a Six (6) county wide regional plan (Southern Alleghenies) to prepare a County Comprehensive Plan.

9. Commissioner's Forum

10. Questions from the Media and Public - None

10. ADJOURN MEETING ADJOURNED AT 4:20 P.M.

Signed: Sam Frye, Secretary