

BOROUGH OF CARLISLE PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes – April 22, 2021

Members in Attendance: C. Muniz, J. Werner, D. Maher, M. Dux, R. Pinnell, and J. Kreiger

Borough Officials in Attendance: M. Skelly, L. Hefflefinger

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chair Muniz.

Items Reviewed by the Planning Commission:

1. The Commission unanimously approved the Minutes of the March 25, 2021.
2. There were no public comments / questions.
3. **Comprehensive Plan or Zoning Items:**
 - A. Sub-committee formation for purposes of conducting research on C-1 Zone uses. C. Muniz asked for volunteers for this sub-committee to assist in possible land-use/policy projects. These projects could include, but are not limited to, updating the C-1 zoning district by expanding/modernizing permitted and by-right uses; updating the C-4 corridor along E. High Street; food truck/specials events process.
 - B. Review of Zoning Ordinance (Map) Amendment, submitted by 3T Investors, LP. The proposed rezoning is for the former Grace United Methodist Church, 45 S. West St., from R4 – Town Center Residential to C1 – Central Business District. The background information package was ***circulated on 4/14 (attached)***, and the ***Council public hearing is scheduled for 6/10/21***. The key elements of this proposal include:
 - Site is 1.12 ac., includes church, offices, gym, classrooms, and converted SFD and Semi homes; Currently vacant; Off-street parking is available;
 - Site is located within HARB district, and part of structures date circa 1890s, 1920s.
 - Mixed-use redevelopment anticipated; C1 Zone offers a variety of commercial uses; Applicant is also interested in apartments, *which requires a further Special Exception review and approval by the ZHB.*

Hubert Gilroy, Esq., representing the applicant (3T Investors) gave a brief presentation. Mr. Gilroy explained that 3T Investors are looking to purchase the United Methodist Church on the corner of S. West and W. Pomfret Streets. The rezoning of this property would allow a mixed-use development of this property.

Ken Tuckey of 3T Investors, referred to his many years in the community and the projects he completed. One most popular here in Carlisle is the Centenary Building at the corner of S. Pitt and W. High Street.

Mr. Tuckey stated that during the development of this property, the exterior historical significance of the building would not change.

D. Maher asked if the preschool currently located at this site would continue. Mr. Tuckey said for the time being. At this time, he is exploring many options for this building and there is nothing set in stone at this point.

J. Werner asked why a traffic study is not being required and expressed concern about parking.

H. Gilroy explained the traffic study requirement is triggered during a land development plan for certain uses. A traffic study also generates roadway changes that would not happen for this particular project. H. Gilroy further explained that when the developer has a plan for this building, it would come back to the Planning Commission and parking requirements, etc. would be addressed at that time.

Conclusion: The Planning Commission, upon motion by R. Pinnell and second by D. Maher, unanimously recommended approval of this request.

4. Land Development/Subdivision Applications:

A. No pending applications.

B. Borough Council will hold a public hearing on May 13, 2021 for a SALDO amendment. The public notice and draft ordinance was provided to the Planning Commission members, last month. Comments received so far include a possible exemption for public outreach for Minor LD and Subdivisions Plans due to the nature / scale of these type of applications, as well as not burdening developers;

M. Dux expressed the following concerns with the proposed outreach meetings:

- Who would attend these meetings on behalf of the Borough and Planning Commission?
- If / who would take minutes?
- Would there be a requirement as to where the meetings must be held (ideally in Borough)?
- Is there a timeline when meetings must be held (days before formal submission)?

Skelly explained that the intent of the draft amendment is to offer an informal – informational purposes only meeting, so that residents should be aware that these meetings are information only. While more robust requirements could have been included, that was not the intent at this time. Council may consider providing more vigorous provisions at their public hearing.

J. Kreiger is concerned that such requirements may put too much of a burden on the developer and discourage them from a project. Members collectively shared their ideas how this best could be handled, but no definite recommendation was reached on best approach.

C. Muniz suggested an alternative: that a mailing be sent out to the affected neighborhood/community informing them of the proposal, and also inviting them to the

Planning Commission meeting when it will be presented, and provide the date and time when to attend. In so doing, this may address the concerns discussed by Planning Commission members while still accomplishing the goal of transparency and communication with the public; as well, activities fit within current borough bureaucracy and process, thereby offering a public space and one in which the meeting, discussion and questions/answers are recorded for posterity.

Conclusion: The Planning Commission, upon motion by C. Muniz and second by R. Pinnell, supports the SALDO amendment, and the concept of the public outreach requirement, however; more discussion is required regarding:

- Requirements of the meeting – Commission / staff attendance, minute taking requirements, meeting location.
- Require a mailing, by the developer, to be sent to all residents of the neighborhood informing them of the Planning Commission public meeting, including the date, time and that members of the public would have a Q&A session after the developer presentation and Planning Commission discussion.
- Definition of “neighborhood” would need to be defined. For example, should it be 200 ft. surrounding the proposed development?

5. **Comprehensive Plan or Zoning Items - Continuation**

A. ZHB application #2021-2 for Dickinson College RE Special Exception / Use Variance for 155 W. High St. (apartment on street level floor) in C1 Zone, has been withdrawn.

B. “Town & Gown” – This is the item that was raised by R. Pinnell, following last month’s ZHB application #2021-2 discussion. Members may determine relevancy in light of application withdrawal.

Christian Muniz would like to see a map indicating all Dickinson College owned properties in the Borough.

R. Pinnell suggests the Commission and Borough staff continue talks with Dickinson College in regards to the college’s plans for expansion and how to regulate the expansion into the downtown.

C. Muniz offered the Planning Commission to continue communication with Rebecca Yearick of CDEC regarding this topic.

D. Maher suggested the Planning Commission continue working on cleaning up ambiguous language/definitions in the ordinance. For example – the definition of “street level” properties.

6. **Other PC or Related Business/Climate Action Plan:**

The Planning Commission wished Mike Skelly the very best in his departure from the Borough. They thanked him for all his hard work and knowledge. He will be missed.

6. **Adjournment:** 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Skelly
Planning/Zoning/Codes Manager

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