

City of Greensburg
PLANNING COMMISSION Meeting

Monday, September 30, 2019 7:00 PM

- I. **Call to Order by Dave Kahley, Chairman**
- II. **Roll Call---taken by Amy Calisti, Administrative Assistant**

PRESENT:

DAVE KAHLEY, CHAIRMAN
BRIAN LAWRENCE, VICE CHAIRMAN
LISA METROSKY
ANITA SIMPSON
RICK CUTIA
JOHN MUNSCH

ABSENT:

KAREN HUTCHINSON, SECRETARY
ROBERT RECKLEIN
RYAN VESELY

ALSO PRESENT: LOU DEROSE, SOLICITOR
JEFF RAYKES, PLANNING DIRECTOR

III. Approval of August 26, 2019 PC meeting minutes

Board member Lisa Metrosky made a **motion to approve** the August 26, 2019 meeting minutes. Vice Chairman Brian Lawrence **seconded the motion**. No discussion. **Unanimously all voted in favor.**

IV. Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

V. New Business – Site Plan/Land Development

- a. **Subdivision of 629 Oak Hill Lane (tax map #10-02-06-0-015) owned by George A Jr. & Beverly Hritz, and 645 Oak Hill Lane (tax map #10-02-06-0-014) owned by James & Diane Lauffer to add a side lot addition to 629 Oak Hill Lane. Properties are zoned R-1 Single Family Residence District.**

Professional Land Surveyor Dennis Rosatti was asked to present a 12 foot side lot addition subdivision on Oak Hill Lane from James and Diane Lauffer to George and Beverly Hritz. Mr. and Mrs. Hritz currently have a 5 foot side yard from their house and the property line, and with this addition they would have 17 feet to the new lot line. There are no public utilities that would need to be improved. The lot areas shown on the plan to board members is what the final lot areas would be.

Solicitor Lou DeRose mentioned that there was no real reason to oppose the subdivision; however, he wanted board members and Mr. Rosatti to be aware that someone could challenge the side yard definition of this transaction. Some may look at the addition as a portion of the rear yard of Mr. and Mrs. Hritz's property, since the City's Zoning ordinance does not define what a front, side and rear yard is for many objecting criteria. Mr. DeRose stated that even though the house at 629 Oak Hill Lane faces south and not west, unlike every other house on the block does, that the section in question is traditionally the side yard of the property. Dennis commented that he would change the plans to reflect the fact that the subdivision section in question has always been treated as a side yard and it will continue to be used as a side yard, and that both property owners believe it to be a side yard. Board members agreed to the need for the addendum.

No further questions or discussion from members of the board or audience. Board member Rick Cutia **moved** to recommend approval of the subdivision with the stipulation that the section of the property being divided is known as a side yard. Board member Anita Simpson **seconded** the motion. **All voted unanimously to recommend approval.**

VI. New Business – Historic and Architectural Review Items

- a. Property Address: 159 East Otterman Street Gateway District
Property Owner: John Harris
Applicant: Katelynn Jones and Blue Sky Sign Co. – Bob Gonze
Project: Signage for *Cattfeinated Cat Café*

Bob Gonze of *Blue Sky Sign Company* presented to board members proposed signage for a new business that will be located at 159 East Otterman Street. The business would be utilizing an existing one sided billboard sign located in the front parking lot of the property and replacing the current banner from a previous business with a 6' by 12' black and white banner with the logo of the new business. The one sided sign is contrary to most signage in Greensburg where signage is

typically two sides, because the back of the steel structure sign does not have the face to attach a sign.

In addition to the billboard sign, Mr. Gonze was presenting window and door signage, which would consist of white cut vinyl decals covering less than 30% of the window space. Each window would contain a 50” by 84” decal, and the door would contain a 14” by 22” cut white vinyl decal with the hours, as well as a 14” by 27” decal with paw prints. The signs will not be illuminated

Planning Director Jeff Raykes commented that his initial review of the sign based on the ordinance allows for the both types of signs and the sizes presented. The only question that was raised was in regards to the sign being double sided to allow for pedestrian traffic to view the business’ location since Otterman Street is one way for vehicular traffic. Mr. Gonze stated that changes to the sign structure would have to be approved by the property owner and not the business owner.

Vice-chairman Brian Lawrence commented about how long the billboard sign would be, and Chairman Dave Kahley mentioned that the ordinance allow for a business to have one primary sign and is allowed since the sign isn’t being altered in size or location. Also, decal signage is not problematic and highly expected in building of this style and age.

Dr. Raykes mentioned that this sign is not located in the urban core, which the City’s sign regulations are detailed on sign in the urban core where there are big buildings with different uses on different floors. The issue with the property is that it’s more suburban architecture, meaning the parking lot is in the front and the building in the back of the lot so in order to make the business work there has to be a larger sign so it’s not missed by vehicular traffic. In the urban core, residents are walking more allowing for smaller signs.

No further questions or discussion from members of the board or audience. Vice chairman Brian Lawrence **moved** to recommend approval of the signage as presented. Board member Anita Simpson **seconded** the motion. **All voted unanimously to recommend approval.**

VII. Other Business

Jeff Raykes discussed some upcoming issues and/or events that would involve the Planning Commission. First, Jeff discussed the two educational opportunities that occurred in the beginning of September with Denny Puko and Bill Callahan. He thanks the board members who were able to make it to the presentations, and mentioned that some members of Council and previous members of the Historic and Architectural Review Board (HARB) attended as well. Dr. Raykes has been in touch with Mr. Callahan for further information to help Planning Commission members with their role with Historic and Architectural Review items. Dave Kahley mentioned that board members seem to agree that the zoning ordinances and sign requirements need to be revised, and Brian Lawrence noted that it’s important that the Planning Commission is just that, a future oriented organization, other than just a review board.

In regards to revising the ordinances and specifications, Jeff has been in correspondence with Denny Puko, who has generated a proposal for planning services to conduct a review of regulatory

and process barriers to good development. The proposal is broken up in different tasks, including review codes and processes, research best practices, work sessions and a final report. Optional tasks include implementing corrections and orienting work sessions. Jeff was asking for a motion from Planning Commission members to recommend approval of the proposal presented to submit to City Council; however, board members were hesitant to make an action on the proposal. Jeff mentioned that an RFP could be drafted for other proposal, but the unlikelihood of finding another professional with the price that Mr. Puko has offered and the time it would take for the process would not be beneficial. Dr. Raykes suggested a two-tiered system, which means there would first be collaboration to identify 10 to 15 setbacks that prevent residents from investing in properties. Mr. Kahley interjected and stated that he believes Planning Commission's role to say the idea of the project and proposal is a good idea, but to motion to enter into an agreement should be left to Jeff and City Council. Jeff's idea was that Planning Commission would forward a recommendation to Council for approval.

Prior to a motion, Brian Lawrence asked Bob Gonze, owner of *Blue Sky Sign Company*, to discuss the types of issues he's faced with as a business owner and representative of businesses when presenting signage. Mr. Gonze noted that he works closely with the Planning and Development Department to produce many signs for businesses in the City of Greensburg, and the lack of consistency of enforcement of current signs and ordinances becomes problematic for his customers. The last thing that Bob wants to do is come to a meeting and present a sign that doesn't stand a chance of getting approved, so Mr. Gonze attends as many meetings as possible to listen and try and understand what the board is looking for and what his customers can and cannot have in Greensburg. Bob agrees that the ordinances are confusing and the lack of the enforcement is confusing.

Chairman Dave Kahley **moved** to make a motion that the Planning Commission was presented a proposal by Denny Puko to begin the review and examination of the current zoning ordinance and that this is in spirit with the board's meetings with Council, and the board would recommend moving forward with Mr. Puko's proposal or any other that Jeff and Council deem appropriate. Vice chairman Brian Lawrence **seconded** the motion. **All voted unanimously to recommend approval.**

Next, Jeff presented information pertaining to an upcoming Curative Amendment hearing in regards to Emmarcin, Inc. and the property at 449 College Avenue. The property owner would like to turn the property into student housing; however, with the current zoning ordinance and 500 foot buffer the property is within 500 feet of another property. The owner is arguing that the student home zoning ordinance is arbitrary and capricious, and has been turned down by Zoning Hearing Board and has also tried to sue the City. The idea of studentification was thrown out and discussed among board members, as well as Seton Hill's policy for students living on and off campus. A public hearing will be scheduled in front of City Council in October. In the meantime, board members agree that the student housing ordinance could be looked at when the Comprehensive Plan is updated as well.

An update of 238 West Otterman Street was given, which was discussed preliminarily during the August 2019 meeting. The owners of the Church that would like to buy the structure but need to obtain a Conditional Use from the board, are waiting on a survey and approval from the Greater

Greensburg Sewage Authority. The additional information should be obtained in time for the regularly scheduled October Planning Commission meeting.

Jeff mentioned that the owner(s) of a karate studio that are interested in the property at 645 Mt. Pleasant Street, which is zoned C-1 Neighborhood Shopping District and does not specify karate or fitness centers as a permitted use. After discussions with the board last month agreeing the applicant(s) should go through Zoning Hearing Board for a variance, information from other planners in the area stating that the issue is a “text edit” situation with the code, it was determined that the applicant(s) would need to wait roughly 90 days for approval. A simpler and faster solution would be to consider the business as a membership club, which is a permitted use, however, the idea of a membership club is not neatly defined and allows for transparency and possible challenges by other property and business owners. The consensus was to have the “text edit” done to the code to specifically state a more permanent permitted use.

Redstone Highlands would like to develop a vacant parcel of land along Old Salem Road into an extended long-term parking lot for employees and/or mobile residents that could be shuttled to the facility. The parcel is located at 1 Garden Center Drive and zoned R-3 Planned Residential Development. Within the code, the permitted uses allow for a parcel to be developed into a parking lot and the owners will gather approvals and submit the application and plans within the next month or two. Planning Commission members agreed that it would be necessary for the entrance/exit to the parking lot to exist off of Garden Center Drive as far as possible away from Old Salem Road. A traffic study will also be turned in with the application. Jeff will pass the comments along to the applicant prior to submittal.

An individual contacted the Planning Department in regards to purchasing 509 College Avenue and changing the zoning to allow for a business. The property is zoned R-1 Single Family Residence District, which has an option for Home Occupancies; however, the proposed business is not a permitted business within the City’s code, and with a Home Occupancy only 25% of the property may be used for the business. Dr. Raykes will continue to discuss options for this location and the business with the applicant.

Jeff discussed the upcoming Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) application for 2020. The CDBG program is designed to help low to moderate income individuals in the community, but there are other types of investments that the funds could be used for, i.e. administrative costs, street and sidewalk repairs, demolition, etc. The problem in the past has been what the funds are allowed to be used for based on federal criteria. The money does not have to be spent on infrastructure and can be used on programs to aid struggling families. Dr. Raykes will be working closely with Brian Lawrence and Westmoreland County for the 2020 application to determine which areas fit the City’s needs best.

On a final note, board member Robert Recklein submitted his resignation to the board. This leaves a vacancy that will be filled by former Historic and Architectural Review Board member, Architect Lee Calisti. Lee’s appointment will be voted on at the October 2019 City Council meeting.

VIII. Adjournment

Board member Anita Simpson **moved** to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned 8:25 pm.