

City of Greensburg  
**PLANNING COMMISSION Meeting**

Monday, October 28, 2019 7:00 PM

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- 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  
KAREN HUTCHINSON, SECRETARY – Arrived 7:04pm  
LISA METROSKY  
ANITA SIMPSON  
RICK CUTIA  
JOHN MUNSCH

**ABSENT:**

RYAN VESELY

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

**III. Approval of September 30, 2019 PC meeting minutes**

Vice chairman Brian Lawrence made a **motion to approve** the September 30, 2019 meeting minutes. Board member Lisa Metrosky **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. 238 West Otterman Street (Tax Map #10-02-15-0-268) --Conditional Use application for the current unfinished 5,000 square foot warehouse/storage structure with a basement to be converted and used as a new religious institution. The property is zoned C-2 Central Business District.

Steven Canfield, Lead Pastor of *The Reclamation Church*, was present at the meeting to discuss the church's need for a meeting space. The church meets at the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg and has a sales agreement in place with the current owners, Raymond and Gloria Jaskolski, and wanted to get Planning Commission's (PC) approval prior to purchasing the property. The ultimate goal of the church would be to create a community center at 238 West Otterman Street in roughly 3-5 years and branch out to a different location for the church services within the City. The church would gather on Sundays and occasionally in the evenings. Throughout the week, only a handful of individuals with the church would be at the location during the day, which would not cause parking problems since there is enough parking in the rear of the structure. During the evenings and weekends, members would be able to park in the City's parking lot located behind the property. The church is a non-profit and would request exemption from property and school taxes.

Board members raised the question of whether there are specific standards that have to be followed in order for a conditional use to be granted. The applicants have turned in a completed application with all necessary information regarding parking, operating hours and site plan, and board members are to use good judgement to determine if the use would be a good fit for the area.

Vice chairman Brian Lawrence questioned what the previous development plans were for the structure in question. The building used to house a candy company and originally a car dealership. Planning Director Jeff Raykes was asked to look into the development plans.

As the church moves forward with the development, signage and façade changes would be brought back to the PC. Board member Anita Simpson asked if the conditional use would stay with the property if the church would decide to sell, or if the conditional use is only for the church. If the church would sell the property, the property would lose the conditional use status and the new buyer(s) would revert back to any of the uses within a C-2 zoning district.

No further questions or discussion from members of the board or audience. Vice chairman Brian Lawrence **moved** to recommend approval of the conditional use for *The Reclamation Church* to use the structure at 238 West Otterman Street as a church, which is a permitted use. Board member Lisa Metrosky **seconded** the motion. **All voted unanimously to recommend approval.**

## VI. New Business – Historic and Architectural Review Items

- a. Property Address: 206 North Main Street Gateway District  
Property Owner: Westmoreland Museum of Art  
Applicant: Cindy Stine  
Project: Signage for the *Law Offices of Stine & Associates, P.C.*

Cindy Stine has recently relocated her law office from the Coulter Building at 231 South Main Street to 206 North Main Street. The structure is a red brick two-story building owned by the Westmoreland Museum of American Art. The previous tenant had a projecting sign on the front of the building along North Main Street that had a metal arm and Cindy was proposing to reuse with a new projecting sign for her law office. The aluminum composite projecting sign would be 36 inches by 24 inches and would contain Ms. Stine's and the law firm's names. Cindy pointed out that the other two (2) first floor tenants each have a standalone sign in the yard, and would like to incorporate a 72 inch tall four (4) inch white square post, with a 36 inch by 24 inch wide sign to match the proposed projecting sign. The standalone sign would be roughly the same size as the other two (2) signs in the yard, but the overall shape would be slightly different. Neither sign would be illuminated.

No further questions or discussion from members of the board or audience. Board member Rick Cutia **moved** to recommend approval of the signage as presented. Secretary Karen Hutchinson **seconded** the motion. **All voted unanimously to recommend approval.**

## VII. Other Business

- a. 1040 Towne Square Drive – Gander Outdoors/Camping World Development

Mike Ritchie of Costich Engineering representing his client Gander Outdoors/Camping World informed PC members that many of the current stores are being converted to or added on for RV sales. A proposal for a seven (7) service bay structure with additional parking area next to the Gander Outdoors on Towne Square Drive that would sell RVs and perform minor equipment installs. There are two existing curb cuts on the property that would be utilized and maintained, and the existing storm water pond for several lots on Towne Square Drive including the proposed development parcel. Minor expansions would be required for the storm water pond, which will be discussed with Gibson-Thomas Engineering. Mr. Ritchie is aware of the prior approvals from outside agencies that are required prior to a formal application. Emergency personnel would also have access to the rear of the property through a gated extension of roadway near Thornton Avenue.

Aesthetically, a fence would be placed around the property and available RVs. The fence would most likely be a chain link fence along the west side of the site along the embankment and along Towne Square Drive a more decorative aluminum black fence.

Board members discussed the new senior center development in Hempfield Township that will share the cul-de-sac with the proposed Camping World development, and informed Mr. Ritchie to discuss the issue with Hempfield Township as well.

Chairman Dave Kahley also asked Mike to discuss with his client the need for a sidewalk at least on the side of Towne Square Drive that the building and parking lot will be located. Mr. Ritchie assured board members that it shouldn't be a problem with the construction of the sidewalk and will take all comments and thoughts back to his client before the formal application is submitted.

Vice chairman Brian Lawrence questioned what the previous development plans were for the parcels along Towne Square Drive. Planning Director Jeff Raykes was asked to look into the development plans.

b. Denny Puko – Codes Review

Denny Puko, a self-employed planner formally of the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) introduced himself to the PC and informed the board members that he will be reviewing the City's zoning and development codes. Mr. Puko asked members to help point him in directions that he should be focusing on, i.e. obstacles for good development. When Denny worked for DCED, surveys were completed by business and property owners to determine that most did not look at regulations as obstacles, but instead unpredictability and time are looked as obstacles.

Chairman Kahley pointed out that in previous discussions with Denny, it was determined that the current zoning code is roughly 45 years old, which hinders today's developments. Vice-chairman Lawrence stated that setbacks in residential districts are always a question and create building issues. Other board members commented that property owners have informed them of various unnecessary steps to obtaining a permit for a shed, porch, etc., i.e. survey, compliance bond, and setbacks. Mr. Puko and Vice-chairman Lawrence informed board members that some of the issues being discussed are beyond the zoning code and relate more to the Uniform Construction Code (UCC), which is required by the Commonwealth.

Denny has spoken with Code Enforcement and Planning and Development personnel, as well as the City Administrator for further ideas and issues that are seen and heard from the administrative and field sides.

Dave mentioned that the PC's duties are to determine what is keeping business and property owners out of town, how to better and make development easier, and how to determine what should be allowed in the City.

Board member Anita Simpson commented that a lot of the buildings within the Downtown and Historic Districts are older and when purchased are required to be brought up to code. Property owners do not want to spend money on putting in an elevator or other issues dealing with accessibility; however, accessibility is handled through the UCC process.

Board members agreed that developers should can and should come before the board for recommendations and reviews prior to making a formal application to ensure that all requirements are met and applicants do not have to go before the board multiple times. The Planning and Development staff review each project prior to placement on the agenda to ensure all requirements are met.

Denny mentioned that he was surprised that there are four (4) overlay districts, at which anytime there could be three (3) overlaying each other. Mr. Puko will be looking at the districts to see how it can be cleaned up and if there is a hierarchy to follow in regards to which district to use at any given time.

There will be a day scheduled in the upcoming weeks for a series of three (3) work sessions to take place with private sector individuals to express concerns and ideas, public and non-profit groups such as the Westmoreland County Chamber of Commerce, and then the last will be with the Planning Commission to report what was learned through the process thus far. Vice-chairman Lawrence noted that the Greensburg Community Development Corporation will be holding a development summit on November 15<sup>th</sup> that would be best to visit in conjunction with the other work sessions as members from private and public sectors looking to develop in the City are scheduled to attend.

#### c. Blight Mapping and Inventory

Victoria Baur and Jacob Bowen from the Westmoreland County Planning Department presented a process that was recently completed for the City of Monessen in regards to mapping blighted properties. The project was part of the Technical Resources and Municipal Services (TRANS) program at the county, which allows technical resources to be provided to different municipalities.

Blight mapping allows for informed decision making on how to mitigate or remove blight. Assistance from Code Enforcement personnel, the local Fire Department and Police Department allow for ideas and strategies on how to enforce and prevent blight from occurring. By using this strategy, limited resources within a municipality can be utilized to determine which areas make the most sense for demolition and enforcement. Larger cities have taken advantage of blight mapping. With a strategy, municipalities are able to apply for better funding. Jacob and Victoria showed board and audience members images, maps and graphs that correlated with different data, which can be adjusted according to the needs of the City. Properties are rated on a good, fair and poor scale based on criteria described in a parcel grading system. Each parcel would have owner, information, tax map number, address of property owner, etc., and the information would be interactive. A blight related dashboard tracks the progression over time.

The overall blight mapping process can take anywhere from 4-6 weeks to canvas the City street by street and to map out the data. A blight removal task force could be created, and a blight management plan could help with strategies. Many of the board members were interested in being a part of the future task force.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

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

Meeting adjourned 8:25 pm.