

City of Greensburg
PLANNING COMMISSION Meeting

Monday, February 24, 2019 6:30 PM

I. Call to Order by Dave Kahley, Chairman

II. Roll Call---taken by Amy Bayura, Administrative Assistant

PRESENT:

BRIAN LAWRENCE, VICE CHAIRMAN

KAREN HUTCHINSON, SECRETARY

RYAN VESELY

JOHN MUNSCH

RICK CUTIA

LISA METROSKY

ABSENT: DAVE KAHLEY, CHAIRMAN

ANITA SIMPSON

ZACH KANSLER, SOLICITOR

ALSO PRESENT: JEFF RAYKES, PLANNING DIRECTOR

III. Approval of January 27, 2019 PC meeting minutes

Secretary Karen Hutchinson made a **motion to approve** the January 27, 2019 meeting minutes. Board member John Munsch **seconded the motion**. No discussion. **Unanimously all voted in favor.**

IV. Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

V. New Business - Subdivision

There was no new business in regards to subdivisions to discuss.

VI. New Business – Site Plan / Land Development

- A. Site Plan/Land Development of 10 Union Avenue (Tax Map #10-02-15-0-291) owned by the Westmoreland County Transit Authority for a parking lot with four (4) 8.5' by 36' spaces. Property is zoned C-2 Central Business District.

Jeff Parobek of Brandon Rumbaugh Solutions, LLC presented the development proposal of a four (4) space parking lot in the location where a small building was demolished near the Westmoreland County Transit Authority. Jeff Raykes noted that minor parking lots are permitted as an accessory use in C-2 districts, and are listed in the Accessory Uses section and as such are a use by right. The spaces would be used for Transit Authority employees. The project has received all approvals from Gibson-Thomas Engineering, the Westmoreland County Conservation District, Greater Greensburg Sewage Authority, and the Westmoreland County Planning Department. The storm water runoff will drain into the alley and should not create problems for the neighboring properties.

No further questions or discussion from members of the board or audience. Board member Ryan Vesely **moved** to recommend approval of the site plan/land development as presented. Board member Lisa Metrosky **seconded** the motion. **All voted unanimously to recommend approval.**

- B. Site Plan/Land Development of 211 Harvey Avenue (Tax Map #10-02-12-0-138) owned by George Wallak, etal. C/O Sheetz, Inc. to add a 365 square foot addition to the building, and approximately 109 square foot addition of impervious cover to the parking lot.

Grant Shaffer, a property manager with Sheetz, Inc., presented the development proposal for a small addition to the existing building and expansion of the existing parking lot. Plans were shown to the board members showing the location of the addition and parking lot. The addition to the structure, which will be come off the front of the building toward the gasoline pumps, will be used for an indoor seating area. The A.D.A. parking stalls will be shifted slightly to meet A.D.A. requirements, and the ramp will be moved to the left to fit the grade of the lot. The main entrance will remain in the same area, but will shift sideways slightly.

The parking spaces that will be adjusted will be turned roughly 90 degrees and will add two parking spaces to the three that already exist near the store sign. These spaces will be used as employee parking.

Dr. Raykes noted that the proposed project is a continuation of an existing, approved commercial use, and according to the standards outline in §265-65 of the Zoning Ordinance, the proposed parking lot exceeds the minimum parking area requirements. However, with regard to §265-83 which outlines requirements for parking lots that are adjacent to public streets, the site plan fails to include a continuous landscape area between the parking area and property line. At least one tree will be lost due to the change of the parking lot, so board members felt that some sort of landscaping should be put back to compensate. Board members agreed that Mr. Shaffer should work with Jeff to determine landscaping ideas to add a small tree and/or bushes since the property acts as a gateway into the City. The type of landscaping that will be considered will need to be

lower in height and vision clearance for the turning lanes on Route 119 will need to be factored into the decision.

The project has received all approvals from Gibson-Thomas Engineering, the Westmoreland County Conservation District, Greater Greensburg Sewage Authority, and the Westmoreland County Planning Department.

No further questions or discussion from members of the board or audience. Secretary Karen Hutchinson **moved** to recommend approval of the site plan/land development as presented, contingent upon Mr. Shaffer working with Dr. Raykes to approve the landscaping and to keep the vision clearance factor in mind. Board member Lisa Metrosky **seconded** the motion. **All voted unanimously to recommend approval.**

VII. New Business – Historic and Architectural Review Items

- A. Address: 640 North Main Street
Property Owner: Barry & Marian DeBone
Applicant: Blue Sky Sign Co.
Project: Signage for “Pit Take BBQ”

Allie Hickman of Blue Sky Sign Co. presented several potential signs for Pit Take BBQ. The main wall sign will be a four (4) foot by four (4) foot routed cut ¼’ Dibond aluminum sign, cut into the logo for the business. An existing spot light will be used to shine on the wall sign. Vinyl window graphics, including a continuous red stripe around the windows of the building with business information, including hours of operation, phone number, etc. A larger vinyl window decal will be used with the Pit Take BBQ logo on the window facing North Main Street.

A larger eight (8) foot by eight (8) foot existing billboard sign that would be covered with a new banner advertising a customer favorite food item and attached to the plywood.

Jeff Raykes questioned how large the window sign will be showing the logo on the side facing North Main Street, and Allie was unable to give a definitive answer. Dr. Raykes was unsure of the size of the window and sign and wanted to make sure that it fit within the zoning specifications.

No further questions or discussion from members of the board or audience. Board member Ryan Vesely **moved** to recommend approval of the signage as presented contingent upon Allie working with Jeff to ensure that the vinyl window graphics on the window fit within the zoning specifications. Secretary Karen Hutchinson **seconded** the motion. **All voted unanimously to recommend approval.**

VIII. New Business

A. Bylaw update

Solicitor Zach Kansler made a few changes to the Planning Commission’s bylaws that were discussed during the January meeting. Board members agreed on the changes. One of the changes

would update the meeting times to the fourth Wednesday of each month at 6pm. The time change will be publicly advertised.

Secretary Karen Hutchinson **moved** to approve the bylaws as presented. Board member Lisa Metrosky seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Aaron Kulik – Absent

Rick Cutia – Yes to approve

John Munsch – Yes to approve

Lisa Metrosky- Yes to approve

Ryan Vesely – Yes to approve

Anita Simpson- Absent

Karen Hutchinson – Yes to approve

Dave Kahley - Absent

Brian Lawrence – Yes to approve

With a majority vote to approve the bylaws as presented, the motion passes.

B. Non-Conforming Use Amendment

Lindsey Neary, a realtor for Integrity Plus Realty and also a future investor in the City of Greensburg would like to purchase a triplex on Ridgeway Street, but is unable to receive a loan due to the legal non-conforming use status and 50% portion of the code. In other words, if a legal non-conforming property is destroyed more than 50% then only a single family home would be able to be rebuilt.

Brian Lawrence commented that board members should take a look at the non-conforming use portion of the code and determine if changes should be made to allow for legal non-conforming residential properties to be rebuilt in the same manner should a disaster occur. Mr. Lawrence noted that should the code be amended, triplexes should be allowed in R-1 and R-2 zoning districts regardless of the square footage of the lot, and the non-conforming use regulations to extend to 100% loss of the property instead of 50% loss. With these changes, property owners would have an easier time gaining financing for investments and would allow flexibility in case of a disaster.

Dr. Raykes noted that per Solicitor Zach Kansler, the purpose of the 50-60% destruction rate is to allow property owners to continue with an established use, as well as to bring conformity to a specific zoning district. The procedures are designed to diminish the blighting effect that non-conforming uses.

Brian also noted that the current Comprehensive Plan for the City says housing should be diverse and affordable, and the problem that arose when the Multi-Municipal Plan was the ability to provide greater flexibility in the housing development in a range of housing types and affordability levels.

Board members agreed that there aren't a lot of buyers who will want to develop single family homes on the smaller lots where homes have been demolished and/or destroyed. Karen Hutchinson

is worried that existing properties will try to add additional units, instead of only legal non-conforming properties.

Another issue that arises is that should the procedures change, it would not only apply to every zoning district, but it would also apply to every existing non-conforming use structure. Board members felt that it would be too big of a conversation for one meeting and would need more information at future meetings to determine the best course of action. Research will be done based on other areas and municipalities.

IX. Other Business

A. Overlay District Discussion – Denny Puko

Denny Puko attended the meeting to propose three (3) action items. The first of the action items would be to eliminate either the Downtown or Historic Overlay District. Per the code, the Downtown District is larger and the Historic Overlay District is identical to the National Registered Historic District that's been established. Should the board members choose to keep the Downtown District and remove the Historic Overlay District, the Downtown District would still cover that Historic Overlay District area. The National Registered Historic District is not regulatory. Board members agreed that the Historic Overlay District could be dropped and when a new Comprehensive Plan is done in the future, the boundaries could be changed at that time.

No further questions or discussion from members of the board or audience. Secretary Karen Hutchinson **moved** to recommend to remove the Historic Overlay District and retain the Downtown District. Board member Ryan Vesely **seconded** the motion. **All voted unanimously to recommend approval.**

The second of the action items to be presented would be to eliminate the overlap of the Gateway and Healthcare Overlay Districts. The question raised by Denny based on the overlay districts was, should the Gateway Overlay be rezoned away where it overlaps with the Health Care Overlay? These two districts are not identical, but are very similar in the design guidelines and uses permitted. Mr. Puko recommended in his study to allow the Health Care District to be the overlay that carries through and eliminate the Gateway District Overlay only in this particular area. The point of the Health Care District is to allow for additional healthcare related businesses to be within the district. Board members agreed with Denny's recommendation.

No further questions or discussion from members of the board or audience. Board member Lisa Metrosky **moved** to recommend to eliminate the Gateway Overlay in the Health Care District where it overlaps. Secretary Karen Hutchinson **seconded** the motion. **All voted unanimously to recommend approval.**

The third proposal was to fix unclear and excessive overlay regulations. First, for the Downtown Overlay, should regulations make clear that activities needing a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) must conform to the city's Design Guidelines for Building Facades and Signs? Previous applicants went through the Historic and Architectural Review Board (HARB), and felt that the guidelines were fuzzy and selective enforcement was used. Dan Goswick of Blue Sky Sign Co. felt that if the guidelines were standards then customers would never know what wasn't allowed.

Allie Hickman of Blue Sky Sign Co. stated that she understands the need for a set standard of guidelines, however, the subjectivity to each project. Brian Lawrence commented that it is difficult to apply every guideline to each project. Denny was asking the board which set of guidelines the board would like to follow; the Secretary's Standards for Rehabilitation, which are general, or the very detailed set of city guidelines. The code isn't clear on which set is applicable.

Mr. Goswick also stated that he wanted board members to know that their company isn't against having set guidelines, however, he wants to make sure that the board continues to follow those guidelines, and to make sure that their interpretation and direction is consistent.

No further questions or discussion from members of the board or audience. Board member Ryan Vesely **moved** to recommend that the Planning Commission remove the detailed set of guidelines the city has set forth and only use the Secretary's Standards. Board member Lisa Metrosky **seconded** the motion. **All voted unanimously to recommend approval.**

The second question under the third proposal was to consider thresholds along which the Planning and Development staff can issue the COA. Board members agreed that a minimum threshold should be set to allow for the staff to issue the COA in the future.

No further questions or discussion from members of the board or audience. Board member Ryan Vesely **moved** to recommend that thresholds and a minimum standard be set to allow Planning and Development staff to issue the COA instead of applicants having to appear before the Planning Commission. Secretary Karen Hutchinson **seconded** the motion. **All voted unanimously to recommend approval.**

The final question under the third proposal asks board members whether applicants should have the option to elect to apply the overlay and its design criteria or choose not to within the Gateway and Health Care Overlays, be mandated to meet overlay regulations in addition to underlying district regulations. Board members agreed that in the past applicants have come before the board that have been in both overlay districts, and Karen Hutchinson stated that she does not believe applicants should have the option to choose which design criteria they want to follow. Brian Lawrence noted that if an applicant would like to enjoy the benefits of an overlay district, then he/she would need to design to a higher standard, and the language in the code should reflect the need for a higher standard.

No further questions or discussion from members of the board or audience. Secretary Karen Hutchinson **moved** to recommend that the regulation should remove any reference to be able to elect which overlay the applicant would like to use. Board member Lisa Metrosky **seconded** the motion. **All voted unanimously to recommend approval.**

B. Reminder of Bios from Board Members

Board members were reminded to work on short bios for the website. Only two (2) have been received thus far. Bios can be emailed to the Planning and Development Department for review.

X. Adjournment

Secretary Karen Hutchinson **moved** to adjourn the meeting.

Meeting adjourned 8:26pm.