

WORK SESSION MINUTES  
February 09, 2016

The Work Session of the Town Council of the Town of Phillipsburg was held on Tuesday, February 09, 2016 at 7:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers, Municipal Building, 675 Corliss Avenue.

Councilman Lynn read the required Open Public Meeting Act Statement.

ROLL CALL

Council Members: Fey, Lutz, Davis, Piazza

Council President: Tersigni

TOWN OFFICIALS PRESENT

Mayor Ellis, Clerk Kleiner,  
Attorney Moscagiuri

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Geoff Wieland, 215 Shafer Avenue, Is there anyway to take the yield sign down and add a stop sign

Councilman Lutz stated that there have been a few accidents there, when the bus stops it backs everyone up

Mayor Ellis stated that is DOT, and you would need to get State to change the sign, and I do have a liaison – Debbie Hirt, she'd be the person to talk to we can ask her to look at it

Joe Meyner, 392 So. Main Street, Apt. 1, helping seniors, if anyone has gone to my website to see the revitalization of Phillipsburg. I will be doing the entire presentation for the planning board. Years ago in AARP there was an article in Modern Maturity, zoning for seniors, R-1 Senior, R1+1 seniors to take a tenant under some circumstance, fair practices alternate way of decisions with leases and special contracts. Serve the protection of the senior and the landlord along with the tenant, as cutting the lawn, checking the pill box nightly, to avoid the he said she said.

Councilman Piazza stated I did read your plan

Councilman Davis stated it was put into our packets

Joe Meyner stated I'll present it in a number of nights

Councilman Piazza stated I have written several comments; I'll share them at the planning board

George and Lynn owners of Toms Lunch are concerned of the property next door, and believe it should be torn down-it is run down. How can it be removed we spoke of a possible addition, or more parking and it is hard for older people to park it would help the businesses.

Council President Tersigni stated I have been in that building over 1000 times; you took me up on the roof. I'd like you to be around for the discussion

George replied yes I will

Jim Guerra, 55 Jefferson St. Elizabeth, Owner of 11 ½ Union Square.

Council President Tersigni asked Jim Guerra to discuss what his plans are

Jim Guerra Coming from Easton some one hit the corner of the building and part of the building came down, I could easily demo the building. I know it is viable building, it looks horrible, not my plan for the building. I am working with two lending institutions, repointing all the bricks, beams, restore the building, it is difficult to get financing I need 60-90 days to get building back into construction

Council President Tersigni I am asking the roof to be completed I run my own company 20 years, with all the weather the structure can get damaged. If you finish the façade, windows, if not met raised or what ever this council decides, it I not fair to citizens it is the first thing you see when you come into the Town. Don't know how it stalled there was an article today dumping millions. For the record in 1930 they built the empire stated building in a years time. That's my recommendation. I don't see an historical value that's how I feel.

Councilman Piazza stated you mentioned issues that slowed your down

Jim Guerra stated I am a license architect; longer than you think, 90 days is not realistic.

Councilman Piazza, Long / stern goals and work with Phillipsburg, plan the whole row

Jim Guerra they loved the row – guys from Trenton loved it.

Councilman Piazza you need to come in and give us the updates and progress

Jim Guerra I hope to close on the construction loan

Councilman Piazza I agree with Council President Tersigni, it is a gateway and you see now. It has been vacant and we don't see any activity there we need a report every 60 days.

Council Vice President Fey stated do you have an estimated time on the loan? We need to see permits, contractor's names, and activity and see the progress

Jim Guerra I don't disagree that it is an eyesore

Councilman Piazza I am committed to getting it done

Jim Guerra the problem is how to market them and rent them fixing the building alone isn't the whole problem it is how we market it.

Councilman Piazza we talked about marketing it set something up with the PDA- Joe Little and the Main Street Initiative program

Jim Guerra I need to get people in them

Councilman Lutz we understand getting building up to par and the Union Square Hotel it looks bad on the outside

Jim Guerra your right it does

Councilman Lutz Al's liquor store there is more to do inside than the façade outside, that Main is the talk of the Town, you read articles the eye sore of Phillipsburg. Didn't you get some money from the insurance company to do the work, already?

Jim Guerra I got nothing from the car insurance

Councilman Lutz stated to us it is a complete eye sore all your other buildings you received redevelopment money

Jim Guerra yes, looks bad and needs to be fixed – it takes rents 21-27 rents low still can't find renters. Multi family is 900 it is a beautiful apartment.

Councilman Lutz have you considered selling to an outside person

Mayor Ellis stated the people in Trenton are they historical preservation or grants

Jim Guerra no there is no program now that was stimulus money-Jim Cartea money. When Obama started I put an application in to do all the buildings

Mayor Ellis asked didn't get that?

Jim Guerra the economy tanked

Mayor Ellis stated I am sure you have a drawing and engineer drawing buiding with out a roof is destine to be a problem.

Council President Tersigni no trusses – I estimate \$125-150,000 to get the trusses but there is nothing there

Jim Guerra the building drawings are in the building department, I am close with contractors

Mayor Ellis stated that recently he was with Mayor Panto and he has been developing and doing apartments, right across the bridge in Easton they are getting \$1600. What I would like to see is within 60 days windows, to get approved windows to NPS standards, to protect from the weather, the design of the window. That Dave Dech uses on the kiosks ventilation in the top and a hard plexi-glass

Jim Guerra I am open to suggestions I know the roof is important

Mayor Ellis stated we need to keep the children out

Council President Tersigni stated yes, secure the roof, no more weather, no more water, can you secure that in 45 -60 days

Jim Guerra stated I can have that in progress

Councilman Fey stated can't take action at a work session; we can have you in within 30 days and see where you are at. If no update we will need to be stern second work session we estimate for roof with and taken permits out, you will need to come back – stern dates

Mayor Ellis I agree windows in and improve the view, this building has significance to the Union Square

Councilman Piazza it housed confederate soldiers – The time frame should be whatever council decides on – get the drawing plans

Jim Guerra and I have a permit for the wall

Councilman Piazza roof windows, longer term goals get it back up to usable building is that possible? Time of the loan windows in roof as well.

Jim Guerra I have no objection to coming back sooner, I have to go through the bank process, it has a dirt floor so all the water is going through the ground.

Mayor Ellis grab that low hanging fruit I went to seminar on Main Street USA, do you know if you're on the National or State historic register, when I was in Mayor Pantos office people staying at fair market value.

Mayor Panto agrees to walk with me to see who's interested in who wants to expand business here soon as you get in order, he has interested entrepreneur.

Jim Guerra it is a rough section- the Bridge guard helps

Mayor Ellis the restaurants may want to furnish it

Councilman Davis so in 30 days check in documentation, good faith and expedited efforts, 90 days work started 30 days after the secured loan

Councilman Piazza stated 30-60 days something in the works

Attorney Moscagiuri stated that 286 Hudson St., still in process the owner not decided what to do but it is a hazard to the neighbors

Councilman Lutz stated he wasn't familiar with the property

Council President Tersigni stated update on that property we can ask Mayor to follow up.

Council Vice President Fey stated fire insurance, things are processing, if they are receiving funding

Councilman Piazza stated it was on hold because of the executor had to be found.

Council President Tersigni asked Attorney Moscagiuri to get a letter out to them to appear at a meeting.

Council President Tersigni stated that 475 South Main Street, Empire Holdings LLC, we had the specs. The building is infested with mold, George and Lynn I have known for 30+ years and it is not fair. The roofing system leaks since 1970, I went with Kevin Duddy it is horrible. That business has been there for 100 years we can demo it though the redevelopment line item and go to bid. It will create more open space.

Mayor Ellis I went out with the Fire Chief Hay and Kevin Duddy, there is money in the Capital account and we can go to bid.

Council Vice President Fey stated I want it down

Councilman Piazza I want it down

Councilman Davis also down

Attorney Moscagiuri please send a notice

Senior Citizens spoken about by Councilman Lutz stated that to keep them from moving out they should be getting discounts for oil, we could hire someone to go out and get grants and they'll go house to house and talk to them. Like my dad I'm not going in there to talk to them, but if someone came to his house and helped find loans and help people staying in their homes for us to help, they are too proud to ask for help and want to stay in their homes.

Council Vice President Fey stated abilities of Warren County expand on our resources.

Councilman Lutz stated President Tersigni what about that Georgine Trinkle

Council President Tersigni stated that she has gotten lots of money

Councilman Lutz stated he can with the Mayor

Councilman Piazza stated exposure to the senior citizens at the senior center

Council President Fey stated that they have speakers, banking, restructuring, the Fire Chief, fire detectors, St Lukes regarding medicines. It is another resource

Council President Tersigni stated thanks for putting that out there

Councilman Davis stated implementation for the at risk seniors who won't reach out. Maybe a group of volunteers

Council President Tersigni stated the seniors are the back bone who built our Town.

Councilman Lutz questioned if there was a Business Administrator in the budget

Mayor Ellis stated yes

Council President Tersigni also the wall on Shimer Alley needs repair

Councilman Davis stated we need a lien, anything with more teeth

Attorney stated the absentee In Rem foreclosure, decay – habitability hearing if someone buys- goes with property get paid tax sale first

Council Vice President Fey stated that charges come in foreclosure, they don't take ownership still under the property owners name and they get evicted by the bank. It is a big problem at a State level people loose credit, bank has property

Councilman Davis one ordinance vacant property list process of foreclosure we need to amend the ordinance to be more aggressive.

Council President Tersigni, you spoke to me before being sworn in thanks for supporting me with the 475 South Main Street.

Thank you,

## ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Lutz made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Davis seconded the motion. 5- 0 vote.

