

Phillipsburg Urban Enterprise Zone
Minutes of Meeting - March 26, 2018

This meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm by chairperson Zwicker. In attendance were Chairman Keith Zwicker, Mayor Stephen Ellis, Helene Meissner, Carrie Scott, Gayle Rogers, Dorothy Kays, Jennifer Vogt, Kent Corcoran, Kelly Sheedy, Charee Carney, and Pat Dragotta. Also in attendance were Dan Papa, Pete D'Amelio, Dan Seyler, and Lawrence Neville (property owners on North Main).

Ms. Meissner motioned to approve the February minutes and Ms. Rogers seconded. The motion carried.

Old Business

Mr. Dragotta gave a brief history of the Union Square Lighting project which promotes safety and pedestrian traffic. The board discussed how string lighting would brighten Phillipsburg to the Easton area. They would like the project to resemble the Boathouse Row in Philadelphia. The lighting is called block lighting. Pat prefers that North Main get the lighting first and lanterns would look nice on certain buildings.

The main focus would be on Union Square and funded by the UEZ. Each building will have their own electric just for the lights, which will cost a dollar per month in electricity. The town would maintain the lights. They will go along the tops of the buildings and maybe along the windows. The Mayor said the lighting will make Phillipsburg incredibly visible from Easton. The board discussed different kinds of lighting such as uplighting, downlighting and also about timers on the lights.

The property owners voiced their concerns about the lighting project. Dan Papa said that he is all for the lights, but he is concerned about the brackets and what if the building is vacant and the electricity is turned off. Pete was concerned about the tenants paying the dollar a month for the electricity and said that he does not have a meter on his building. Pete was concerned about lighting near the tenant's bedroom windows.

The board discussed the different options they have like easements and how they worked. The UEZ and/or the property owners can rescind if they would like but would automatically renew. The first step would be to contact legal and have them send something in writing to the UEZ and we can work together. The business owners seemed to be optimistic. Dan is all for it. The mayor mentioned that the area could be in the Opportunity Zone, by the federal government and would receive federal tax breaks which will draw investors. There will be 75 opportunity zones in NJ. Phillipsburg would be the only one in Warren County.

The business owner guests left the meeting.

Pat said that the job would need to go out for bid and the board needs to consider installation costs. The board discussed prevailing wages and if the UEZ would be required to abide. They discussed the business owners possibly doing the work and be reimbursed for work performed. The board didn't feel that prevailing wage was necessary because the buildings are privately owned. Keith suggested the UEZ consider union workers.

The total budget on lighting is \$50,000. North Main is on Phase 1 with a \$20,000 budget. More quotes are required.

Helene motioned to budget \$20,000 for phase 1 and Kent seconded. The motion carried.

JGSC

Pat gave a brief update for the JGSC project. There will be a pizza parlor in the old chocolatier. Chris Cotty is interested in some buildings. Some of the vendors in the Black Rose in the Phillipsburg Mall are interested in antique shops on South Main. Helene said there has to be a critical mass. Pat said they will need to be creative with renting. The board discussed about allowing three months out of the year for free, having a weekend economy or just Saturday. Pat said they need to get the RFPs out.

The board discussed giving the new vendors an incentive program, from the free bridge to the black bridge. Kelly said that pop up shops are popular now and how we can do a theme during Sept. or during Thomas, the pumpkin train etc. Helene said to hand out flyers and advertise near the kiosk. Kent said that if we clean up the stores, that should be a huge incentive. Some businesses are more ready than others.

LEE's Services

LEE's Services decided not to take the loan from the UEZ. They need money for the curb cut.

For the Good of the Board

Carrie shared with the board that she showed the old Ahart's to a potential buyer (Dutch Mills). The Ahart's store owner will put in a new roof, and new heating and cooling units, and refuses to sell. He wants to rent his 18,000 sq ft building for \$20 a square foot, but the owner might work with the new buyer. It is in the UEZ zone, so the potential buyer can come to the next meeting to discuss options.

Carrie asked how much the board collected from the kiosks and Pat said \$10,000. The parking spots are still being discussed. The Mayor vetoed what they proposed. The board also discussed the transit lot and Helene said it was never owned by the funeral home and we need a contract. Kelly asked if something could be put in writing for parking permits.

Pat gave the board an update on the checking and savings account balances; \$60,370 in checking, and a \$9,700 invoice from JGSC. There is \$104,180 in savings.

The board discussed the Pork Roll Palooza and how there isn't anyone that is going to run the event. The Mayor mentioned how all of the parks and recreation will suffer because there isn't anyone working in that department. The Mayor recommended the UEZ run the Pork Roll Palooza and keep the profits. Helene said there isn't anyone that can pull it together.

Pat recommended the board meet next week, date to be announced, to discuss possible committees for the Pork Roll Palooza and the storefront rehabilitation.

Firth Youth Center

The Firth Youth Center is looking for donations for an air conditioning unit. The UEZ board decided they would sponsor the purchase and donate \$1000.00. Helene motioned to sponsor the purchase of the A/C unit donating \$1000.00 to the Firth Youth Center and Keith seconded. The motion carried.

Mr. Zwicker motion to adjourn and Ms. Kays seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Charee Carney
Board Secretary