

**Town of Phillipsburg  
Planning Board Meeting  
535 Heckman Street  
Minutes for Jan 24, 2019**

Attorney Mandry called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm and led the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Those Present were: Mayor Stephen Ellis, Councilwoman Degerolamo, T. Kent Corcoran, David P. Morrisette, Jennifer McBride, Roseann Rohm, Dominick Vangeli, Darren Bodogh and James P. Stetner. Also in attendance were Stan Schrek, Planning Board Engineer, William Mandry, Planning Board Attorney; and Ms. Charee Carney, Recording Secretary.

James P Stetner was sworn in as an alternate member of the planning board.

**Reorganization of the board**

Ms. Rohm nominated T. Kent Corcoran for chairman and Mr. Vangeli seconded. Councilwoman Degerolamo asked if there is a required attendance to be on the planning board or as chairman. She was hoping that chairman would have more attendance. Attorney Mandry said there is no requirement. The motion carried, Councilwoman Degerolamo, Ms. McBride, and Mr. Bodogh voted no.

Mr. Morrisette nominated Keith Zwicker for Vice Chairman and Ms. Rohm seconded. Councilwoman Degerolamo asked if he could accept without being here. Attorney Mandry said yes and if he doesn't accept, we can reopen it. The motion carried.

Mr. Morrisette nominated Ms. Rohm as secretary and Mr. Bodogh seconded. The motion carried.

Chairman Corcoran mentioned that we are waiting for more paperwork for the board professionals and suggests we have a meeting next week to vote. Attorney Mandry said that this board does not do RFPs. Mr. Morrisette motioned to wait for the vote for the board professionals and Ms. Rohm seconded. The motion carried.

Ms. McBride motioned to accept the meeting dates with the change to the December meeting to Dec 12th and Mr. Bodogh seconded. The motion carried.

Ms. McBride motioned to accept the Express and the Star Ledger as the official newspapers and Mayor Ellis seconded. The motion carried.

Mayor Ellis motioned accept the finance committee as the Chairman, councilwoman and the secretary and Ms. McBride seconded. The motion carried.

Chairman Corcoran called the meeting to order. Those Present were: Mayor Stephen Ellis, Councilwoman Degerolamo, T. Kent Corcoran, David P. Morrisette, Jennifer McBride, Roseann

Rohm, Dominick Vangeli, Darren Bodogh and James P. Stetner. Also in attendance were Stan Schrek, Planning Board Engineer, William Mandry, Planning Board Attorney; and Ms. Charee Carney, Recording Secretary.

### **Minutes**

Ms. McBride motioned to approve the minutes from Sept 2018 and Dec 2018 and Ms. Rohm seconded. The motion carried.

### **New business**

#### **49 Riverview**

Lee Ashenfalder (contractor) and Larry Motsinger were sworn in for testimony. They are asking for relief for a 7-foot front yard setback for the sunroom they would like to build. The house sits diagonally on a corner lot. They have not had any complaints from the neighbors regarding the project. It will be built on a platform on piers and the sunroom sits on that. He does not see that the sunroom will be detrimental to the public. Mr. Schrek said that the survey was lacking, so Van Cleef was able to go to the property and does not see a problem with the plan.

Ms. McBride motioned to approve the C-2 variance and Mr. Morrisette seconded. The motion carried.

#### **137 Roseberry Subdivision**

Mr. Edleston represented the applicant for minor subdivision approval for 137 Roseberry St. Life Choices would like to operate on their own lot. Attorney Mandry announced that there are 5 parishioners of St. Phillips and St James on the board and feels that it is a conflict of interest because of a possible economic impact. He asked Attorney Edleston if there is a pressing economic need. Attorney Edleston said that it would be very expensive for the church to go to another town to be heard for their subdivision. Each parish is their own separate entity and owned by a corporation. He said that there isn't anyone holding offices so there is not a conflict.

Joan Fascinella was sworn in for testimony. She said that it would cost them a lot of money to appear in front of another board. Also, the members of the church were completely out of the loop. There would not be a benefit to the members of the church and believes there would be no conflict of interest.

Ms. McBride motioned to hear the case and Ms. Rohm seconded. The motion carried.

Ms. Facinella described the purpose of the building that is on the subdivision. They would like it to house women that are pregnant, going to school etc. Their purpose is to give the people independence, so they do not rely on taxpayers. There has been a tremendous amount of renovations. Thousands of people came to volunteer.

Mr. Wayne Ingram, civil engineer, was sworn in for testimony and considered an expert witness. He provided a copy of a survey plat that was included in the paperwork for the board. The property has been owned by the church for quite a long time. There is a driveway on the

property, they would create an easement to have continued access to the building. There would be over an acre lot and not many changes to the lot and a parking arrangement for the church, which is adequate. Mr. Schrek said that there would need to be a temporary waiver for having the owner's consent on the plat and the access easement.

Ms. Fascinella explained the parking need for the building. The building is open and active with the daycare. The pickups and drop-offs are staggered. The employment changes with the number of children. It's between 3 and 6 people, and those people park in the back. There is one handicapped parking spot, which is more than adequate. They have approximately 25 children at the daycare. The building can have 14 rooms to house the women, which she does not think will be filled all at once and most will not have cars. There will not be any site work done and do not intend to expand the use.

Mayor Ellis motioned to accept the minor subdivision and Ms. McBride seconded. The motion carried.

Attorney Mandry told the board Garrett Vessel will be giving an informal presentation and explained to the board about informal presentations and their purpose and how there is no formal action, which has been done many times before. They are able to feel the board and ask questions.

Mr. Garrett Vassel acquired the Kaplans building in Easton and is going through development now with a 32-unit project, commercial unit and a restaurant bar on the top floor. They are considering fair housing. The riverfront is the focal point. His real estate company has been evaluating the Lehigh Valley for the past few years. He handed out a small booklet for the board to review. Mr. Vassel spoke with an executive from Marriott because he feels the area is in need of a branded hotel, particularly a private property. He referenced the Coble property and said it might be the most prime for a hotel. He thinks a railroad museum would be great in Phillipsburg and the hotel could help keep people there with the other things to do in the area. He feels there is great potential for the area. They would have to mitigate to figure out the traffic issues and maybe establish a transit hub with a rail to NYC. He spoke with Congressman Malinowski's aide and found out that this is a major focus. Mr. Vassel feels there is tremendous momentum and feels Phillipsburg would be a wonderful project and would love to be part of the conversation. The Mayor of Easton did a hotel feasibility study and suggests using this study for Phillipsburg for the riverfront redevelopment area.

The next step would be to continue this study in the Phillipsburg area specifically the riverfront redevelopment area. He feels that Easton and Phillipsburg are like one big city. He would like to give the financial support necessary. Chairman Corcoran asked if he spoke with any of the property owners about acquiring their property and Mr. Vassel said he spoke with the Cobles and would like to establish an agreement.

Mayor Ellis asked him to elaborate his ideas about green energy for the Kaplan building. He had energy challenges for the Kaplan Building. He is working with fuel cell component technology to provide the energy, heating and cooling.

Board members are concerned about the traffic in the area. Mr. Vassel agrees with the traffic challenge and feels that state funding will most likely be available with the help from Congressman Malinowski. Flooding and power are also challenging along with the railway. Councilwoman Degerolamo explained that the council is the redevelopment authority. She explained that the traffic will be needed to implement in the plan. She suggested he incorporate the Lehigh Valley in the rail plan. He explained he planned to utilize the recommendations from the RFP for the traffic plan for now and would like to listen to ideas and concerns to make the plan better.

Mr. Bodogh expressed his sadness that Mr. Bill Duffy was not reappointed to the board and he was a good guy to go to for advice and Councilwoman Degerolamo agreed.

### **Bills**

Ms. McBride motioned to approve the bills and Mr. Bodogh seconded. The motion carried.

Mr. Schrek gave a brief update on all the projects.

There was a motion to adjourn and seconded. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Charee Carney  
Land Use Technical Assistant