

ELIZABETHTOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MEETING
January 7, 2021
Minutes

The regular meeting of Elizabethtown Borough Council was held on Thursday, January 7, 2021. For everyone's safety, the Borough Council meeting was held with the absolute minimum number of individuals gathered in person, employing both mandatory masks and maximum physical distancing measures. In person participants included Tom Shaud, Phil Clark, J. Marc Hershey, Borough Manager Rebecca S. Denlinger, Police Chief Ed Cunningham and Mayor Mummert. The remaining members of Borough Council including J. Neil Ketchum Jr., Jeff McCloud, Bill Troutman as well as staff members Assistant Borough Manager Ann Roda and Public Works Director Jeff Kinsey joined the meeting remotely using Zoom.

President Hershey called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Administration

1. Borough Manager Denlinger provided an update to online payment options that are available for residents. She stated that beginning in January the Borough can now accept online payments through two different electronic payment systems. These systems include: the Web Inquiry Payment Portal (WIPP) which allows residents to make payments on sewer and trash utility bills; and, MuniPay which allows residents and visitors to pay for services such as pavilion rentals, rental licenses, solicitor's permits, and parking tickets. The payment options are an increase for online payment capacity for the Borough Administration and a new tool for the Police. She added that additional information is posted on the Borough's website.

Mayor Mummert asked if the online system could be used for EAWA bills as well and asked if there was something that could be done with the billing cycle as the two bills often confuse residents. Denlinger responded that the online payment options are only for Elizabethtown Borough payments. Councilmember McCloud added that he would raise the billing cycle point at the next EAWA meeting.

2. Borough Manager Denlinger introduced Adam Hall from CBH Group III LLC and John J. Calabrese, who were in attendance to discuss the Zoning Hearing Board (ZHB) application for 31 N. Spruce Street.

Mr. Hall introduced the project for 31 N. Spruce Street and stated that as the developer for the project he is working to amend the zoning application to address concerns raised by Borough Council and at the December ZHB and a continuation of the ZHB application has been requested. The application would be before ZHB again on February 4, 2021. As owners of the property CBH Group III LLC wants to work together to have a positive outcome.

Mr. Hall then reviewed with Borough Council a revised site plan indicating that impervious surfaces would be reduced, water runoff from Mechanics Alley would be addressed, the building footprint would not change and landscaping would be planted. He added that the first floor would be commercial units and the remaining floors would be residential units. Mr. Hall clarified that commercial units would be business and professional offices and would not include retail. The residential units would be furnished as extended stay executive suites with leases no less than 30 days and no more than 180 days. Each unit would be 1-3 bedrooms in size and only permit one person to rent at a time; spouses would be an exception and there would be no outdoor activities, furniture or accessories of any kind.

Councilmembers questioned the size of the residential units. The original application was eight one-bedroom units. It was suggested that the smaller in size bedroom apartments would be less dormitory style living. Mr. Hall stated that the units could be scaled back to 1-2 bedrooms in size. There were also questions on the ability to deny rentals to which Mr. Hall indicated that based on the Fair Housing Act that would not be possible but that credit and background checks are done.

Questions were asked on the elevation plans of the building. Mr. Hall showed a rendering and indicated that they would be opening up windows, bringing in natural light and providing a more residential feel to the building. And, there was discussion of the term extended stay. Mr. Hall stated that the residential units would-be short-term leases for professions that are working on projects in the area, someone that may be transitioning, such as downsizing, between homes and suggested the terminology would be revised to be more residential in focus. Timing of the project was discussed. Mr. Hall stated if the project proceeds in a positive manner it may be late summer.

President Hershey asked council members that based on the discussion of the project if there would still be objections to the project. McCloud stated the project was a positive step forward for a building that may otherwise sit vacant. Shaud and Clark echoed similar comments to McCloud. No councilmembers noted objections to the project.

Mr. Hall asked what the process would be for CBH Group III LLC to seek a waiver of the formal land development plan submission. President Hershey stated that a formal request should be submitted and it would be reviewed by the Borough Solicitor and would be an action item for Borough Council at a future meeting.

Police Department

1. Chief Cunningham stated that EPD is in the middle of the hiring process and hopes to have further updates at a future meeting. Councilmember Shaud asked if there were any updates on recent garage break ins to which Chief Cunningham responded that he hadn't been made aware of a problem but he would discuss with officers.

Borough Manager Denlinger thanked NWEMS for the beautiful crock that they dropped off as a thank you for the Borough's continued support.

President Hershey announced that following the meeting on January 21, 2021 Borough Council will hold an executive session to discuss a Police Personnel Matter.

After a motion by Clark, seconded by Shaud, the meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rebecca S. Denlinger
Borough Manager