

Jim Thorpe Planning Commission
September 18, 2018

Meeting called to order: 6:30 p.m.

Members present: Lou Hall, John McGuire, Nancy Porambo, Jolene Evans, Joe Micko, Joanne Klitsch

Visitors: Jake Arner, Andrew Roberts, Mitch Hanson

Hearing of Visitors:

Jake Arner – indicated he was here in a support role – deferred to Andrew Roberts.

Andrew Roberts – He thought about a revitalization project since the late 1980's. The ballroom at Flagstaff has been vacant for 10 years. Time is now as it needs work. Engineers will be needed on the project. He needs to know that there is support for this project and that is why he is here.

He spoke with downtown businesses and they are supportive. It addresses congestion and is a way to save history and create jobs.

John indicated we talked about a hotel, gondola in the past, it was approved. The drawing is a floor too high on the drawings and (4) floors are sufficient. Sewer hook-up needs to be talked about.

Water pressure is important, if pipes burst, it would be a problem. Sewer need to be addressed because of the cost, so it needs to be addressed asap. This would be a low pressure system and should tie in around Chestnut Hill. An E1 system could work possibly. John asked how will it tie in? It will eventually run down Broadway, they need engineers to look at this.

An easement is needed from the Borough in order to cross Borough property. Ed Kula would know where to tie in. It was noted that up the street from Chestnut Hill on the left side of the road may be a good tie-in area John states he would think Andrew would need to be responsible for the pipe on West Broadway, Lentz Trail if necessary.

250 EDU's are the end goal. Joe asked, how did they come up with that number? When the hotel was in consideration, Entech (2015), using mostly the Borough book and taking into consideration the ballroom isn't a banquet hall, they discounted the numbers. They ended up at 35 EDU's, he thinks more like 60 EDU's for the property. There will be new building for bathrooms, bathrooms for ballroom, restaurant bathrooms, based on how Entech determined the EDU's. Joanne stated Ed would know what may work.

Joe, if there was a problem up above with the sewer system, would he line hold all (Jakes property)?

Soil is about 25' down. Flagstaff ballroom will be at the end of it. The biggest facility is on the end of it and it will be necessary to have a constant flow.

John asked, what will happen to Race Street when we drop off all the people on Race Street. There aren't that many cars on the Gondola and there are 4 people per car. Andrew is not concerned. He

indicated you will have to cut down 25' of trees. They have already talked about this to engineers. It's a solvable issue.

The hotel drawings from past, he felt they were too small in the wrong location. The ballroom is the central focus. The hotel is not the focus. The property is the focus.

John asked about investors? How did he address this project compared to other investors. People are asking for 21-22% return. In 20 years you get 4 x your money back., historic restoration, creating jobs, etc. The benefits are very positive.

RAP grant, 2007-2008 matching grant, 2.5 ml. \$, they may be eligible. It was in the budget, it still is. He spoke to Senator Yudichak, Bill Richards, they are both supportive. Penn State offers grant writing programs. Wilkes Institute has someone who lives here in town and he is willing to do some work. Borough will need to help sponsor some of this and will be repaid. PenVet Grant (sewers), you put in a structure to create jobs.

Andrew indicated he is under negotiation for (7) contracts for various properties in the project. Lease agreement for Highland, he is looking at now. If he doesn't agree, they have someone else's property they can give an easement.

The books are a draft, we can keep them. Andrew will contact Ed Gula and Maureen, regarding the EDU's. He needs to begin getting an easement drawn up. John suggested that the lawyers look at the easements. He plans to do the same presentation at the workshop meeting in October.

Grants, some will need sponsorship and the Borough will have to sign off on it. D&L we are donating our town. There is money to do guardrail installation and to do paving. The cost of running the pipe is shared with Andrew.

Jake needs to make adjustments to his plan because the sewer needs to go through it. If he adds sewer, he can add the density, he can cut the lots in half. He sold his first lot this week to a resident in JT. With sewer line intact, locals will be able to afford housing because it will cut the property in half.

Jake stated a typical piece of property is .4 acre, has 85' road frontage and costs \$95,000. If we get the hotel in, it will help the businesses sustain over the wintertime. Jake will update the plans and try to coordinate the project with his.

Status of Previous Tasks:

Susquehanna – waiting for County to resubmit. Parking recommendation, we suggested that parking be looked at. We are giving up revenue.

Borough Facilities Upgrade Project – in the beginning stages yet per John

Readdressing Eastern Side Leisureland – Lou took the plan and indicated it was being digitized by Gary Williams of Carboncounty.net (Emergency Management). . He will get together with Lou for concerns. We will then have a meeting and will be able to submit to Council.

Short term rentals – VRBO – Lou will get with Doc and will get project finished

Burning Ordinance – It's on Nanovic's desk. We will be adding the regulation of open burning.

Parking Ordinance revisited – Lou indicated Maureen, John and Doc had contact with NEPA. We hired Chance Management (Borough), issue remains they are doing traffic study rather than parking study. Maureen thought Jim needed to look at it and respond. Lou thought we needed to meet with residents.

Parking Ordinance revisited – (continued) – the study won't happen soon. A motion needs to be put on the floor of Council to get this project done. John will talk to Jim and ask if he would like to advertise a meeting on this topic.

Sign ordinance committee reactivated – Council asked that we start up on this again. September 25th at 6:30 p.m. meeting at the Borough building.

Borough Park Planning Review – grant application-rejected

Suggestions or comments - None

Adjournment Jolene motioned, Lou seconded, motion carried 8:05 PM