

TOWN OF McCANDLESS
MINUTES – ZONING COMMITTEE MEETING
MAY 9, 2016 TOWN HALL

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Committee Chairman McKim with the following in attendance: Committee Members Zachary, Aufman, Mertz, Powers, Walkauskas and LeDonne; Town Manager Cordek, Assistant Manager Ebner, Zoning Officer Betty, John Bojarski, Communications Assistant, Marie Haller, Administrative Assistant and citizens as the sign-in sheet.

REVIEW SUBDIVISION APPLICATION
ZACHARY PLAN OF LOTS

The Committee reviewed the subdivision application for a lot line revision located at 9980 and 9990 Grubbs Road. Zoning Officer Betty illustrated the proposed revision and reported the plan of lots was a three lot subdivision from the 1970's or 80's. This proposal divides three lots into two, which has an access easement that has been reviewed with no problems identified. Zoning Officer Betty has recommended the applicant check with MTSA to be certain the private sanitary line is within the easement. Town engineers have reviewed the plan and indicated no problems. It was also suggested that a maintenance agreement for the road be implemented. Zoning Officer Betty noted changes made to the plan include the addition of signature blocks which were added to meet county requirements. The Planning Commission has recommended approval of this plan.

REVIEW SITE PLAN APPLICATION
SLOVAK SAVINGS BANK (SSB)

The Committee reviewed the site plan application for the Slovak Savings Bank (SSB) proposed to be located at 8700 Perry Highway, adjacent to the intersection of Perry Highway and Prescott Drive. The Affolder Insurance Company is currently the sole business at this location. George Haberman of Civil Environmental Consultants, Inc. and Bret Ligo of Ligo Architects were in attendance to provide an overview of the plans. Details pertaining to the design, lighting, and landscaping were reviewed. A meeting was held with PennDOT to review two entrances and the Route 19 intersection. The applicant and PennDOT have agreed to redesign the intersection, making it a "T" intersection with the entrance on Casa Grande being eliminated. There will be a drive-thru with space for drivers to loop around.

Councilman Aufman asked questions regarding the stormwater management. Zoning Officer Betty discussed the installation of a raingarden and reviewed details pertaining to stormwater management, confirming the volume control and quality of water meets or exceeds requirements.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTIFICATION
LIQUOR LICENSE TRANSFER
EMILIANO'S McCANDLESS, LLC

The Committee was notified a public hearing is scheduled for Council's Regular Business Meeting of May 23, 2016 on the request of Emiliano's McCandless, LLC for transfer of Liquor License R-12012 from Ulloa, Inc., 8660 McKnight Road, Ross Township, PA 15237 to its restaurant facilities to be located 9070 St. Simon, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15237.

DICUSSION – PLANNING & ZONING COMMENTS TO THE PRESS

The Committee discussed recent comments to the press that addressed Town Zoning and Planning. Committee Chairman McKim reported this discussion pertains to an article published in the Tribune Review on April 24, 2016. Committee members discussed their concerns with specific quotes or statements reported pertaining to the proposed Environmental Quality Board (EQB). The article quoted Council Member Zachary and attributed to her that the EQB may be involved in negotiations with developers, particularly to address sidewalks in developments, signage in commercial projects and with construction material utilized pertaining to stormwater management.

Council President Aufman reported the Town adopted an ordinance in 1975 to require sidewalks in developments, with Woodhaven plan being the last plan approved without sidewalks. He clarified that some areas have limited right-of-ways which may preclude them from this requirement, however he confirmed the Town has complied with this ordinance.

Councilman McKim reviewed wording in the article pertaining to negotiations with developers and the McCandless Crossing development. The articles suggested the EQB may have changed the project to include more crosswalks, more mature trees and shrubs. The Committee discussed detailed procedures that are in place for developments and clarified the Town has a Planning Committee which included seven qualified members that make recommendations to council on applications from land developers; a Zoning Hearing Board, a quasi-judicial body of three qualified individuals who hold hearings prescribed by the Town and Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code for variances from the zoning ordinance, special exceptions, appeals from actions of the zoning officer, challenges to the validity of the zoning ordinance or map. Customarily, at least one member is an attorney and one an engineer.

Zoning Officer Betty discussed the Town's zoning ordinance and reported the Town consulted with experienced landscape architects who advised developers be required to plant less mature trees vs. mature trees because overall studies indicate less mature trees provide a better impact and higher overall success rate. He confirmed the landscaping at the McCandless Crossing development was reviewed by a landscape architect and the current density of trees along Cumberland Road may actually become an issue in the future because there are so many planted.

Zoning Officer Betty addressed comments pertaining to the number of crosswalks installed along Cumberland Road. He remarked there was feedback received from area residents opposing crosswalks during the planning phase of the McCandless Crossing development. He also reported engineers are currently reviewing the feasibility of adding another on Cumberland Road to address residents request for additional crosswalks.

Councilman Mertz asked why there were no sidewalks and/or adequate sidewalks in McCandless Crossing along Cumberland Road. Zoning Officer Betty reported there were unforeseen restrictions imposed by Buckeye Pipeline regarding sidewalks along Cumberland Road and he discussed negotiations that occurred between Town, developer and Buckeye Pipeline for the sidewalks now installed.

Councilman McKim stressed the importance of becoming informed before talking to the press. Councilwoman Zachary shared that her purpose in speaking with a reporter was to address things the EQB could do and to provide a different perspective. She discussed her support of talking with the press to gain public interest and stated all of the items mentioned in the article do not apply here in McCandless. She stated there was misinformation included in the article pertaining to the number of years she has lived in McCandless.

Councilwoman Powers stated she supports the establishment of an environmental group in McCandless, but at no time has Council discussed the proposed EQB board would act in the manner as described in the article. She expressed concern with the public perception and understanding of the purpose of the EQB.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

John Adamczak, 9967 Grubbs Road, stated it was good to know about the sidewalk ordinance, he thinks this information should be shared with the public.

Mark Donatelli, 9753 Griffith Road, shared that sidewalks were developed originally because women were tired of getting mud on their dresses and it was believed to improve the appearance of a town.

Councilman Aufman discussed the Town's proactive approach, as an example he discussed Town Council's initiative to implement Stormwater Management (SWM) prior the enactment of stormwater ordinances. He shared that the Town's SWM began in the mid to late 1970's when the Town installed detention ponds to protect residents, with the Oaks being the first plan to include a detention facility. He discussed the Town's proactive approach to stormwater and involvement with the Three Rivers Wet Weather group. Town Manager Cordek confirmed the Town has 62 stormwater public facilities and a similar number of private facilities.

Councilman LeDonne discussed his concern with that the article stating the EQB would negotiate with developers, which would circumvent Town Council's authority. He mentioned the EQB would not be needed if this would be its intended purpose as there is already a Planning Commission and Zoning Hearing Board in place to address such matters. Councilwoman Powers clarified anyone may comment or provide input pertaining to decisions made by Council including developers, committees or citizens. She clarified there is a distinct difference between providing input and being involved in negotiations.

Georgiana Likar, 10150 Grubbs Road, refuted that Councilwoman Zachary was not quoted in the section pertaining to the developers and suggested this was a statement made by the reporter.

Councilman McKim reviewed a letter just received on May 9, 2016 from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection regarding photos submitted by the Citizens of McCandless Group and then forwarded by the Town for consideration. He stated the letter will be posted on the website.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Marie A. Haller, Administrative Assistant

TMC/mah