

**Meeting Minutes
State College Borough
Planning Commission
January 18, 2018**

The State College Borough's Planning Commission met on Thursday, January 18, 2018, in the Municipal Building, 243 South Allen Street, State College, PA. Vice-Chairman Genger called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Members Present

Anita Genger, Vice-Chairman; Zoe Boniface, Charles Dumas, Scott Dutt, Jon Eich; and Richard Kalin

Members Absent

Michael Roeckel

Others Present

Anne Messner, Planner/Zoning Officer; Jenna Wargo, Planner; John Wilson, Zoning Officer; Judy Altieri, Office Manager; and other interested parties and students

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Dutt motioned to approve the December 21, 2017 meeting minutes as amended. Mr. Dumas seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Election of Officers

After a brief discussion, Mr. Dutt motioned to nominate Ms. Boniface for the Chairman position. Mr. Eich seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Ms. Boniface motioned to nominate Ms. Genger for the Vice-Chairman position; Mr. Dutt seconded the motion, which was also unanimously approved.

Chair Report

Ms. Boniface announced several Borough Council, Redevelopment Authority, and Planning Commission (PC) members would be participating in a Borough sponsored training program on January 19 and 20, 2018.

Public Hour - Hearing of Citizens

James Graef, 1360 Linn Street, made several comments related to downtown parking requirements/issues. He stated although autonomous vehicles were coming, he had a

response to something said at a Borough Council meeting that we should still create as much parking as possible to keep up with the demands. He stated the only way to truly regulate where people park in through pricing. But, by providing multiple parking options, it encouraged residents and other downtown customers to drive their cars versus using other options like carpooling, bikes, buses, etc. He suggested removing underground parking facilities (new construction) to reduce the costs of the new developments, helping to ease the cost of affordable housing options. He asked the PC to keep his comments in mind as they continued to review development plans and during the zoning rewrite project.

Mr. Eich noted he had lived in a building downtown that had less than one parking space for each unit. He indicated his condominium association frequently had to deal with parking issues as a result. He mentioned the lack of parking spilled over onto neighboring properties where back yards had been completely converted to parking areas. The inclusion of parking in mixed use buildings downtown was appropriate even though autonomous vehicles were on the horizon. Autonomous vehicles would create new uses for those parking spaces including maintenance of the fleet and parking when not in use. He stated State College was ahead of the curve in providing an appropriate amount of parking. He added parking was always a hot topic when the PC was reviewing land development plans.

Ms. Messner added the PC did not have any jurisdiction over private parking costs in the Borough and the Borough's Parking Department dictated the pricing structure for Borough metered parking and the miscellaneous garages and parking lots.

Land Development Plans

312, 322, 324, 332, and 338 West College Avenue and 109 and 113 South Atherton Street Final Plan, Commercial Incentive District with Signature Development Project, Collegiate Development Group, Developer, Cube 3, Architect, Penn Terra, Engineering

Mr. Kalin stated he had a conflict of interest and recused himself from the discussion.

Brian O'Connor, Cube 3 Studio, presented an updated land development plan for the proposed development, which would consolidate seven parcels and build a mixed-use building. The building would include underground parking, two floors of non-residential use and ten floors of multi-family housing. He noted the overall metrics had not changed and the building would contain 243 units, 30 of which were inclusionary housing, ground floor retail space of 20,000 square feet, second floor commercial space (possible office space) of 15,000 square feet, and three floors of underground parking (429 parking spaces). The second floor also contained space for some residential amenities, which had yet to be determined. He noted the mid-block cut through would allow for some deliveries and access to the retail space.

He noted drive-in access to the parking area had been changed to West College Avenue, which should help to alleviate traffic congestion. He also indicated the building

had been pulled back from the corner, along with the elimination of the angled corner, which made the façade more compliant with current zoning requirements and helped to create some green space. He noted the top two floors (on the College Avenue side), would now step back, as well as the top three floors (along Atherton Street). They believed those small changes helped to diminish the scale and overall size of the building, making it comparable to the Metropolitan. He continued, describing the plan for exterior materials, which consisted of concrete cast panels in several colors, some areas would be framed by metal fins, and the bottom two floors would consist of large windows and integrated canopies. He noted the materials and definitions (step backs and metal frames and fins) would help to create some texture on the building's façade.

There was some discussion among members of the Commission regarding the aging concrete panels and possible color changes over time. Mr. O'Connor indicated they were still working on finalizing the color tones, but noted the dyed concrete panels were very durable and UV resistant. Members of the development team passed around several samples for the PC to review.

Mr. Dutt asked if there were any plans for balconies or living space on the stepped back areas. Mr. Dumas asked about roof top green space. Mr. O'Connor indicated there was not, and the residents would have outdoor areas in the planned community and amenity spaces.

Ms. Genger asked about deliveries, also noting there did not appear to be a front entrance from Atherton Street. Mr. O'Connor noted the day-to-day deliveries would come in through the mid-block cut through off Calder Way. He noted they had not yet had many discussions about the appropriate signage for other deliveries, etc.

Ms. Genger expressed concern about traffic congestion in the area during student move-in. Brandt Stiles, Collegiate Development Group, noted there would be short-term parking available in the mid-block area and generally, campus move-in day was somewhat chaotic. He stated they would consider assigning move-in times slots to help break it up over several days. He added the building would be fully furnished, which should help with the congestion and backup.

Mr. Dumas confirmed water usage and sewer capacity for the project had been reviewed.

Ms. Genger asked about designated handicap parking for residents. Mr. O'Connor noted they had not developed a strategy for those spaces.

Mr. Eich suggested prohibiting service vehicles from stopping/standing on either College Avenue or Atherton Street while making deliveries or picking up passengers.

Mr. Eich asked about planned bicycle parking spaces. Justin Pelland, Cube 3 Studio, noted they currently planned for about 50 spaces, but may consider increasing that amount.

Mr. Eich expressed concern regarding pedestrian flows across College Avenue from this property to access the CATA bus stop. Ms. Messner reminded the PC that CATA also reviewed land development plans and indicated the bus stop could be a challenge during the construction period. Perhaps, in the future, the bus stop location may have to be relocated.

Mr. Eich asked about the issues revolving around the Steam Power Plant located directly across the street. Ms. Messner noted Borough staff, representatives from the University, the project's development team, and Mark Huncik had continued to meet on the matter. They had recently determined several possible monitoring sites and were soon to reach a consensus. She reminded the PC that College Avenue was a PennDOT Right-of-Way (ROW) and PennDOT would become involved at some point.

Mr. Eich confirmed the developer was not seeking LEED certification, but would be incorporated several standard practices. Ms. Messner added the Centre Region Code Administration Office has several elements that lend themselves to energy conservation during a building project, but zoning does not regulate it.

Mr. Dutt asked several questions relative to the mid-block alley and loading zone, confirming small semi-trucks and normal delivery vehicles (FedEx and UPS) could easily access the area.

Mr. Graef, who spoke earlier in the meeting, asked about trying to limit the pedestrian activity across College Avenue. He suggested one or more mid-block crossing signals. Ms. Kerner reminded Mr. Graef that College Avenue was a PennDOT ROW and there were strict rules on mid-block crossings. She indicated it was likely the area would not meet those requirements.

David Stone, 539 East Foster Avenue, stated over a five-year period, there had been 25 accidents in the area and perhaps solutions for additional pedestrian crossings could be looked at again after the project had been completed. He said he was encouraged by the recent air quality monitoring and suggested the developer pay for continued monitoring and maintenance for a seven-year period. He also noted as development in the downtown continued, perhaps the University would consider relocating the power plant.

Mr. Eich suggested the developer try to disassemble the existing brick buildings in a way to preserve possible reuse of the material.

Ms. Messner noted staff had not yet completed their review of the final land development plan, but could include PC comments in the Borough's review letter.

Mr. Dumas made a motion for staff to include PC comments regarding the development; Mr. Dutt seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Community Planning - None

Ms. Boniface indicated there were no discussion topics for this agenda item.

Official Reports and Correspondence

Borough Council

Ms. Messner reminded PC that several members of Borough Council and the RDA would be joining them at the training sessions that started on Friday, January 19.

Land Development Plans

Ms. Messner explained how Foxdale had recently acquired some property along Science Street and the PC would be reviewing development plans in the near future.

She stated the State College Area School District planned to submit plans for Memorial Field.

Staff Updates

Ms. Messner noted staff continued to work on the Historic and Architectural Review Board (HARB) project and a survey would soon be available online. She added the PC members should forward the link to their friends, etc., and everyone's feedback would be reviewed and considered for the HARB Guidelines.

Conflict of Interest Memo

Ms. Messner explained the annual requirement for the Conflict of Interest Memo and how it related to federal funding for housing programs in the Borough.

Upcoming Meetings

Wednesday, February 7 at Noon

Thursday, February 22 at 7 p.m.

Mr. Eich noted he had recently received reappointment to the Centre Region Planning Commission.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, Ms. Boniface adjourned the meeting at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Altieri
Office Manager