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STRASBURG BOROUGH COUNCIL
MARCH 10, 2020
MINUTES

Members Present: Mike Chiodo Ray Garraffa
 David Dunn Will Hutchinson
 H. Dale Spaulding Jim Rice
 Bob Bennethum

Others Present:
 Bruce Ryder, Mayor Lynn Commero, LNP
 Lisa M. Boyd, Borough Manager John Mroz
 F. Steven Echternach, Police Chief Kevin Adams
 Scott Weichler LaJune Ranck
 Tom Lainhoff Beth Gunnion

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE TO THE FLAG: Council President Mike Chiodo called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m., followed by the salute to the flag. President Chiodo announced that the meeting is being audiotaped and maintained until the minutes are approved. The Borough Manager took the roll call.

REQUESTS TO BE HEARD: None.

MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 11, 2020: A motion was made by Dale Spaulding, seconded by Dave Dunn and passed unanimously to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2020 meeting as printed.

REPORTS:

MAYOR – Mayor Ryder had nothing to report.

PRESIDENT – President Chiodo reported that the latest Pension reports we received were dated December 31, 2019 and showed approximately a 22% return. He did note that the stock market has recently dropped.

MANAGER – The Borough Manager’s written report for February 2020 was received and accepted. She announced that the Police Chief is the lead on the Coronavirus. Chief Echternach stated that we are prepared and he receives daily updates from the CDC and WHO.

POLICE – The Police Department’s report for February 2020 was received and accepted.

PUBLIC WORKS – The Public Works report for February 2020 was received and accepted.

ZONING OFFICER – The Zoning Officer’s report for February 2020 was received and accepted.

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CONSENT AGENDA: A motion was made by Ray Garraffa and seconded by Jim Rice to approve the following items on the Consent Agenda, motion carried with members Chiodo, Garraffa, Hutchinson, Spaulding, Rice and Bennethum casting assenting votes, and member Dunn abstaining from voting because of his position with the State:

PAYMENT OF BILLS IN THE AMOUNT OF \$173,783.51

HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD CERTIFICATES OF
APPROPRIATENESS – 51 EAST MAIN STREET AND 122 SOUTH
DECATUR STREET

APPROVAL FOR STRASBURG FIRE POLICE TO ASSIST AT RAILS & ALES
EVENT

APPOINTMENT OF DAVID ESH AS ZONING HEARING BOARD MEMBER

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

148 EAST MAIN STREET – APPEAL OF HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD'S RECOMMENDATION REGARDING WINDOWS:

The applicant applied to install vinyl windows on the left (East) side of the new office building to the rear of 148 East Main Street and HARB's recommendation was to deny the request. Mike Chiodo stated that HARB's recommendation follows the Historic District Ordinance. Tom Lainhoff stated that this applicant previously requested to replace all of the wooden windows on this building and that was considered and voted on by HARB on October 1, 2019 and Council on October 8, 2019 to allow them to replace all of the wooden windows with wooden windows.

Property owner, Kevin Adams, showed the members a video of his property on his cell phone. He stated that they have improved the property over the last three years since they purchased the property. He believes this building does not have historical value, does sit back off the street, and it already has some vinyl windows. He added that he agrees that the log cabin at the front of the property has historical value and they will restore it to original if anything ever happens to it. Mr. Adams stated that he was opposed to wooden windows because of the additional maintenance and one of the windows on the East side is already vinyl.

Tom Lainhoff stated that, in addition to the one wooden window on the East side of this building, there are five windows that are visible from the cartway on the West side.

Kevin Adams stated that he does not believe the windows on the West side are visible from the cartway and do not fall under HARB's jurisdiction. He stated that he planned to also replace those with vinyl but did not include them on his last HARB application because he does not believe they are visible.

Bob Bennethum stated that he drives and walks past the property and the windows on the East and West side of the new office are visible from the roadway.

Mr. Adams stated that he would like all of the windows to be made of the same material and he wants them to be vinyl. Tom Lainhoff stated that all of the windows can be replaced with wooden windows so they all match. Mike Chiodo stated that HARB is the recommending body

and Council is the deciding body and Council can vote on the matter if Mr. Adams wants to replace all the windows with wooden windows. Mr. Adams stated that he does not want to replace the existing vinyl windows with wooden windows.

A motion was made by Dale Spaulding and seconded by Dave Dunn to support HARB's recommendation and have Mr. Adams comply with Windows Section 503 of the HARB Ordinance for the East side windows at the new office building to the rear of 148 East Main Street, which allows him to replace the one existing vinyl window with a matching vinyl window and replace the existing wooden window with a matching wooden window. Motion carried with members Chiodo, Garraffa, Dunn, Hutchinson, Spaulding and Bennethum casting assenting votes. Member Rice voted against the motion.

141 EAST MAIN STREET –

RATIFY AND CONFIRM MEETING WITH RYAN DAGEN: A motion was made by Bob Bennethum, seconded by Dave Dunn and passed unanimously to ratify and confirm the meeting that Lisa Boyd and Mayor Bruce Ryder had with Ryan Dagen, the owner of the Speckled Hen Coffee Shop, to discuss an alternate parking solution.

CONSIDER TAKING A POSITION TO OPPOSE VARIANCE OF THE OFF-STREET PARKING REQUIREMENTS: President Chiodo stated that the applicant's original Zoning Hearing Application was for a variance of the off-street parking requirements. Following the meeting with the Borough Manager and Mayor, the applicant submitted an amended Zoning Hearing Request to extend his existing parking lot on his own property by using porous pavement, but he needs variances for lot coverage and side yard setback. Mayor Ryder stated that this business is located in a residential neighborhood and the business owner has instructed his employees to park on the street to allow for more parking spaces for the patrons, which upsets the neighboring residential property owners.

A motion was made by Dave Dunn, seconded by Jim Rice and passed unanimously to recommend Borough Council authorize a letter of opposition to the Zoning Hearing Board for the variance of the off-street parking requirements for the Speckled Hen Coffee Shop because it will create additional on-street parking in the neighboring residential zone.

CONSIDER TAKING A POSITION TO SUPPORT AMENDED ZONING HEARING REQUEST FOR VARIANCES FROM LOT COVERAGE AND SETBACK REQUIREMENTS: Mayor Ryder stated that our current Zoning Ordinance doesn't allow for more than 60% of the lot to be impervious. He added that the applicant stated that he was unaware that he could apply for a variance from the lot coverage and setback requirements when he initially applied but has since amended his application to allow him to construct a pervious parking lot addition so he can park everyone on his own land. Mayor Ryder is recommending Borough Council consider supporting the amended request because he believes it will be better for the neighborhood.

A motion was made by Dale Spaulding, seconded by Dave Dunn and passed unanimously to authorize a letter of support for an amended Zoning Hearing Board application for variances from lot coverage and setbacks for the expansion of the existing parking at the rear of Speckled Hen property.

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OTHER BUSINESS: None.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS: Chief Echternach announced that the Police Department now has body cameras that were obtained by a DCED Grant that will pay for them for the first five years.

Mike Chiodo commended Bruce Ryder and Lisa Boyd for their work on the Speckled Hen request.

Tom Lainhoff thanked Borough Council, the Mayor, and the Borough Manager for supporting HARB tonight and for participating in the meeting that was held at 329 Miller Street.

Jim Rice asked about HARB's denial for 51 East Main Street to replace existing wooden windows with quality wooden windows. Tom Lainhoff stated that he commended the applicant for their application but the house has existing wooden windows that are in good shape and the Pella windows he was proposing will not last as long as his original windows. Tom Lainhoff stated that replacement vinyl windows and vinyl siding do not last. Jim Rice stated that he struggles with getting his wooden windows open in his house and believes replacement windows improve energy efficiency. Tom Lainhoff stated that he would like to have a workshop to show property owners how to repair existing wooden windows, including one that has been painted closed. Bruce Ryder stated that he researched energy efficiency and replacement windows through federal government housing websites and they stated that replacing windows is not cost-effective because the payback period is very long. Those websites he researched did recommend installing storm windows and he personally installed storm windows on all 26 of his windows.

Mike Chiodo stated that he appointed Ray Garraffa, Dale Spaulding and Jim Rice to serve as the Borough's Negotiating Team for the Police Contract.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Dale Spaulding, seconded by Jim Rice and passed unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa M. Boyd
Borough Manager