

The Easton Planning Commission met on Wednesday, January 6, 2010 in the 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Council Chambers, Easton City Hall. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Charles Elliott. Present: Charles Elliott, Robert Sun, Mary Viscomi, William Heilman and Dennis Lieb. Also in attendance were staff members Becky Bradley, Director; Brian Gish, Chief Planner; Carl Manges, City Planner; and Tina Woolverton, Secretary. Joel Scheer, City Solicitor, was present.

The agenda was approved.

The first agenda item was the reorganization of the Planning Commission. A motion to nominate

Charles Elliott as chair was made by Ms. Viscomi, seconded by Mr. Heilman, approved by all. A motion to nominate Ms. Viscomi as vice-chair was made by Mr. Sun, seconded by Mr. Lieb, approved by all.

A motion to approve the minutes of the December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009 meeting was made by Ms. Viscomi, seconded by Mr. Lieb, approved by all.

**Privilege of the Floor.** None.

**Special Exception – 518 March Street – Lafayette College.** Mr. Gish said the applicant, Lafayette College, proposes to establish a C-6 Retail Specialty Establishment (Consignment Shop) in the vacant first floor of 518 March Street. . The property is located in the College Hill/Institutional 1 Transitional Zoning District; Block Class C where the proposed use is permitted by Special Exception. The anticipated hours are to be 10:30 am to 6:30 pm, Monday through Saturday. There will be one full-time employee and 3-4 part-time employees. Mr. Gish noted there are no proposed off-street parking spaces, however the Zoning Administrator determined the requirement for off-street parking is grandfathered. Staff recommended approval by the Zoning Hearing Board of the proposal. The storefront would be rented to another party, and not operated by the college. The lessee, Rachel Burson, was present. Mr. Elliott questioned if only the first floor would be used for this application. Mr. Gish said it would, as the upper floors are used for student housing. Mr. Lieb questioned how many employees would be working at one time. Ms. Burson said one to two. Mr. Lieb said he feels it is a suitable use and asked Ms. Burson what her customer base would be. Ms. Burson responded 18 – 35 year olds would be the bulk of her business. Ms. Viscomi questioned where the goods for sale would come from. Ms. Burson said she owns the initial stock, and going forward, people will bring in their merchandise and either receive cash or store credit. A motion to approve the resolution recommending special exception approval to the Zoning Hearing Board was made by Mr. Lieb, seconded by Mr. Heilman, approved by all.

**Staff Update.** Ms. Bradley introduced Brian Gish as the new Chief Planner and requested he present his background to the Commission. Mr. Gish said he holds a Bachelor of Science degree from John Hopkins University in Geography and German and holds a Masters Degree in City Planning from the University of Pennsylvania. Previously he was a private sector planner and support consultant for ESRI. Mr. Elliott welcomed him on behalf of the Commission.

Ms. Bradley informed the Commission that the newsrack ordinance was passed by City Council on Monday, January 4.

She said the annual Comprehensive Plan Review has begun and will be a basis for the Comprehensive Plan re-write.

She said the EAC and Councilwoman Warner are working on both a solar and an LEED ordinance.

Ms. Bradley said the LVPC will be soon releasing a rail study. She said the City created their own cost analysis. Maps were introduced showing travel costs to proposed rail stations, population densities around the proposed rail stations, and rail effectiveness as synergy of population density and travel costs. A spreadsheet showing travel time and associated costs with rail service versus bus service from the Lehigh Valley to New York City was also presented.

Mr. Sun asked Mr. Gish what he felt some of the plusses and minuses of the City were. Mr. Gish said the older infrastructure served both as a plus and minus and added the strong institutional presence was an asset and the mixed uses added vibrancy to the City.

**EAC Update.** Mr. Elliott said he was not at the EAC meeting of January 5, but heard the revised street tree list had been approved. He added he sent some information on certain legal issues and enforceability regarding the LEED ordinance to the EAC.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:10 PM.