

The Easton Planning Commission met on Wednesday, January 5, 2011 in the 6th Floor Council Chambers, Easton City Hall. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Charles Elliott. Present: Charles Elliott, Robert Sun, William Heilman and Dennis Lieb. Also in attendance were staff members Brian Gish, Chief Planner; Carl Manges, City Planner; and Tina Woolverton, Secretary. Joel Scheer, City Solicitor, was present.

The agenda was approved with an addition from the Chairman.

The first agenda item was the reorganization of the Planning Commission. A motion to nominate Charles Elliott as chair was made by Mr. Heilman, seconded by Mr. Sun, approved by all. A motion to nominate Mr. Sun as vice-chair was made by Heilman, seconded by Mr. Lieb, approved by all.

A motion to approve the minutes of the December 1, 2010 meeting was made by Mr. Sun, seconded by Mr. Lieb, approved by all, but Mr. Elliott, who abstained from voting as he was not present at the meeting.

Privilege of the Floor. Mr. Thomas Jones of 934 Butler Street was present. He presented the Commission with a copy of a letter from the Douglas McLearn of the PHMC to Davis Calhoun of Finelli Consulting Engineers. The letter was in regard to the PHMC's review of the submittal of plans for the Dutchtown Commons Development. The letter stated the opinion of the PHMC is that the proposed development would have an adverse effect on the Easton Historic District.

Special Exception and Development Plan – EAJSA Pump Station – 591 S. Delaware Drive.

Mr. Manges said the applicant, Easton Area Joint Sewer Authority, proposes to demolish approximately 970 s.f. of two existing pump station buildings for the construction of a new pump station building. The new building will be flood-proofed and will encompass the same foot print as the existing structures. The new structure will be six feet taller than the existing buildings. Upgrades to the electrical and mechanical systems will also be made. The property on which the improvements will be made is owned by the City of Easton and located in the South Side Zoning District, Flood Hazard Overlay District, Block Class A, as well as the FEMA defined 500 and 100 Year Floodplain, therefore requires special exception review for development in the floodplain. Jeff Morgan, the EAJSA Engineer and Joseph Pinkey, Engineer for Spotts, Stevens & McCoy were present. Mr. Lieb asked why the new buildings were not brick like the existing ones. Mr. Morgan said cost had been a driving force in the decision. Mr. Gish added the original plans had been for block buildings, and the staff and EAJSA had discussed ways to make the buildings more attractive and waterproof. He said they had determined that fiber cement siding would be attractive for the community and practical in upkeep for the EAJSA. Mr. Lieb said he felt the existing pavilion-like buildings were more attractive. Mr. Heilman questioned what fiber cement siding was. Mr. Gish explained it looked like clapboard siding, but was made of a durable cement fiber blend, which is much more durable and waterproof than wooden siding would be. Mr. Sun questioned the purpose of the fan units shown on the roof. Mr. Morgan said their purpose was for safety, to provide ventilation to the workers. He added the last upgrade to the buildings had been in 1977 and for this rehabilitation they had received grant funding for waterproofing. Mr. Bruce Groner, who owns the property behind and above the location said he had three concerns, building height, lighting, and exhaust direction. Mr. Pinkey said the building would be six feet higher than the existing one at the hip wall. Mr. Groner said there had been problems with the lighting in the past, but it had been corrected by EAJSA, along with the direction of the ventilation. Mr. Morgan said he is aware of Mr. Groner's concerns and said the ventilation was not being changed and new lighting was proposed for the front of the building and would be motion activated. Mr. Thomas Jones of 934 Butler Street said if the older building is more than 50 years old, and it appears to be, an application for review needs to be sent to the PHMC. Mr. Morgan said he was not certain if that had been done, or if a reply had been received. Mr. Elliott suggested adding an item to the resolution saying the applicant would need to obtain a review by the PHMC to the extent required by law. A motion to approve the revised resolution recommending special exception approval to the Zoning Hearing Board and granting

conditional final approval of the development plan was made by Mr. Leib, seconded by Mr. Sun, approved by all.

Special Exception – 700E Old Philadelphia Road – Subway Restaurant. Mr. Manges said the applicant, Bhavan Patel, proposes to establish a C5 – Eating & Drinking Place (Subway) in store 5 of the currently vacant one story retail/commercial building at 700E Old Philadelphia Road, which is across from the CVS building. The store is approximately 1296 s.f. The property is located in the South Side Zoning District, Block Class A, Street Corridor Enhancement Overlay District where the proposed use is permitted by Special Exception. In addition to the Special Exception for use, he said the applicant was seeking a variance from the Zoning Hearing Board for the size of the sign. Attorney Plunkett, representing the applicant, and Mr. Patel, husband of the applicant, were present. Mr. Plunkett said the applicant has had conversations with staff regarding the size of the signage and is happy to comply with the requested size and style. Mr. Lieb said his previous convictions stand, and he does not promote chain retailers. Mr. Gish said the structure exists and is designed for commercial tenants, and it is in the City's best interests to have the spaces filled. He added that while this application is for a franchise, it is obviously a family-owned entity. Mr. Lieb questioned whether the initial project had been approved under the new code. Mr. Manges replied it had. Mr. Sun questioned why a variance was being sought for the size of the sign, and why the code was not being enforced. Mr. Gish said the design of the building's façade lent itself to larger signage, and the proposed sign for Subway was in keeping with the signage approved for CVS and Dunkin' Donuts. He added none of the signs were backlit, but were instead lit with matching gooseneck fixtures and were constructed of wood, not plastic. Mr. Thomas Jones of 934 Butler Street referenced a guide that was created in the 1980's, the Easton Design Guide. He said pictures and sketches are worth a thousand words, and that the guide was sent to, and used by municipalities all over the country. Mr. Sun questioned what would prevent the applicants from requesting other signage variances from the Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. Manges said any additional variances would need separate applications. Mr. Sun requested to add wording to the resolution that would prevent the applicant from seeking other variances for signage. MR. Elliott provided a revision to the resolution. A motion to approve the revised resolution recommending approval of the sign variance to the Zoning Hearing Board was made by Mr. Heilman, seconded by Mr. Sun, approved by all but Mr. Lieb, who abstained from voting.

Staff Update 600 Block of Northampton Street Master Plan. Mr. Gish said the survey results are in, and staff is finalizing an inventory and existing conditions report.

EAC Update. Mr. Elliott said the EAC had discussed their role in the Comprehensive Plan re-write at their meeting.

Mr. Elliott introduced a resolution recognizing and commending Mary Viscomi for her years of service to the Planning Department and the Planning Commission. The resolution directed the Chairman to prepare and issue a certificate of the Commission's appreciation and request the Mayor and City Council also recognize Ms. Viscomi's contributions. A motion to approve the resolution was made by Mr. Sun, seconded by Mr. Heilman, approved by all.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.