

## **NORRISTOWN MUNICIPAL WORK SESSION MAY 19, 2021**

The Council Work Session of May 19, 2021 was called to order by Council President Derrick Perry at 6:30 PM by way of the virtual gotomeeting.com application.

There was a **Moment of Silence** followed by the **Pledge of Allegiance**. The following Council members were signed in to the meeting:

|               |               |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Valerie Moman | Hakim Jones   | Sonya Sanders | Heather Lewis |
| Rebecca Smith | Thomas Lepera | Derrick Perry |               |

Also signed in were: Crandall Jones, Municipal Administrator; Chief Mark Talbot, Norristown Police Chief; Sean Kilkenny, Municipal Solicitor; Jayne Musonye, Director of Planning & Development; Kathy Pfister, Director of Finance; Thomas Odenigbo, Director of Public Works; Amrinder Singh, Code Manager.

### **Motion to approve Minutes**

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Lepera, seconded by Councilwoman Sanders**, to approve the Minutes from May 4, 2021. **The motion passed unanimously.**

### **Executive Session**

Council met in Executive Session to discuss litigation issues.

### **Presentation**

#### **J.P. Mascaro & Sons Update**

Garry Coates, General Manager of J.P. Mascaro & Sons' Bridgeport Division, provided an update regarding the contract between Mascaro and the Municipality of Norristown following several complaints from some residents through email and social media. Council President Perry and Councilwoman Sanders addressed Mr. Coates. Mr. Coates responded that they have addressed issues in a 24-hour period. He added that he has appointed two supervisors to educate the community on what the trash service provides. There were call-in public comments from resident Randy Logan and Paul Piantone who commended the service Mascaro provides. There were some residents such as Phil Ellingsworth who say they are not satisfied with the service.

#### **Resolution 21-44: Promotion of Police Officer Aleides Licona to Police Corporal**

Chief Talbot noted that this promotion fills an existing position. There was a swearing-in ceremony by Judge Francis Lawrence, Jr.

### **Announcements**

“Rock the Block” by Habitat MontDelco on Saturday, June 5, 2021 at 8:30 am. Go to the website for details.

“Free Food Give Away” sponsored by “Unincarcerated Minds, Inc.” in collaboration with the American Legion #39 and “Reuniting Families Bail Fund.” Friday, May 21 at 1:00 pm. Location: American Legion #39, 500 E. Marshall Street.

## **Public Comment**

### **Will Donnelly, 223 Fairfield Road.**

My name is Will Donnelly and I'm a Norristown resident. I have a quick and simple question—who do I contact regarding the keeping of chickens or other fowl in a residence? I know there is a ban on it currently, but maybe it ought to be or could be reviewed.

### **Randy Logan, 330 W. Fornance St.**

As a long-time resident of the City of Norristown I would like to state publicly that I support 100% the work of J.P. Mascaro & Sons. This experienced and well-established company has demonstrated time and time again its dedication to our community and neighborhoods; from the guys on the back of the trucks to the company's customer service phone representatives, I want to personally commend them all. The work that is expected of them is not child's play and a daily dedication to a standard of quality service is not just words to them. I have observed it, experienced it and now as you have heard, highly respect it. Thank you city council for having J.P. Mascaro & Sons as my trash and waste removal company in the city of Norristown.

Sincerely,

Randy Logan

### **Beth Sandcroft, 545 Hamilton St.**

I saw on the agenda that JP Masacro would be providing an update. A few weeks ago one of our two trash cans was removed and not replaced leaving everyone in my neighborhood with only 1 trash can and 1 recycling bin. I'd like to know why this was done and are there plans to provide an additional trash can? This has caused more trash to be accumulated outside of the cans, which is unhygienic and creates health concerns especially during the warm months. Additionally, is there consideration for Masacaro to update their trucks with the ability to lift the cans and empty as done in other neighborhoods? Our cans are often thrown down and wheels break off and aren't replaced leaving the homeowner with a broken trash can. For the amount of money we pay we deserve better customer service. Hoping Norristown can improve this process.

Also, I live on Hamilton Street which is a wide boulevard-style street. We have issues with cars speeding up and down consistently. I think many think of it as a quick access street. Over the last eight years, residents have been almost hit, and family pets have been stuck and killed. We have a lot of families and elderly on this block and would like the committee to consider installing speed bumps to curb speeding.

Sincerely,

Beth Sandcroft

### **Ramon Rios, 225 Chain St.**

Should the municipality install speed bumps to curb speeding on our streets?

I believe that if we have the money to do so, and if it would not cause further issues to parking, or snow removal, then I would be happy to have a speed bump on the 200 Block of Chain Street. I constantly see drivers coming off of main street that speed down our road, even though we have a lot of families and children in the area.

Thank you for your time!

### **Paul Piantone, 101 E. Main St. Suite B**

Dear Council

I manage several 1- and 2-unit buildings in Norristown. Mascaro Trash service is very good, they come on schedule and if something happens and they miss, they are called and they come back.

We are very happy with the service. Thank you

### **Meghan Ward, 1616 Dekalb St.**

I definitely endorse the idea of speed bumps. I also welcome any proposals that include solutions to the speeding on Dekalb (where I live). I recognize speed bumps might not be feasible (state road, major artery), but speeding is certainly a contributing factor in the countless accidents at Dekalb and Brown. To my knowledge, nothing proactive has been done. It's always reactive.

I know from looking into this previously that a traffic light is not an option (insufficient cross traffic at Brown), but what about a camera and ticketing system? It would deter speeding/generate revenue.

Sincerely,  
Meghan Ward

**Mark Chalphin, 714 Merrill Court, Plymouth Meeting**

I am the Chairman of the Greater Norristown Corporation. I regret not being able to attend the meeting this evening, but would like to comment in favor of the application by Sarah Peck.

I have been a lifelong resident of the Norristown area. I graduated from Norristown High in 1971, and our family business was in Norristown from 1960 until 2015. I have great interest in the betterment of Norristown, and have rarely seen a proposal that would create as much positive change.

Sarah Peck has compiled an outstanding track record as a developer in Norristown. Her three communities on DeKalb Street have turned out beautifully, and brought in much needed new taxpayers. They have transformed disused vacant lots into thriving communities. She has earned a great reputation in town and throughout the county for her ability to build high quality housing at affordable prices.

This particular site has been the object of proposals from other developers that have fallen through for various reasons. Norristown now has the opportunity to work with someone we know who has already done great things for us. Sarah will again take an abandoned site and create a neighborhood that Norristown will be very proud of. Any assistance the Municipality can render - such as tax abatements, etc. - would be very helpful in making this project viable, especially in these times of soaring costs.

Please act favorably on this exciting project for Norristown.

Sincerely,

Mark Chalphin

**Police**

**Resolution 21-49: Motion to approve requests for Disabled Parking Spaces**

Chief Talbot noted that these requests verified that the residents have physical limitations.

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Lepera, seconded by Councilwoman Moman**, to approve handicapped parking spaces at the following addresses:

631 E. Basin Street  
1421 Juniper Street  
220 Jacoby Street  
826 W. Main Street  
329 Buttonwood Street

**The motion passed unanimously.**

**Planning & Municipal Development**

**Concept Plan presentation for the Kennedy Kenrick site**

Sarah Peck, Developer, Progressive New Homes, who will be working with Developer, Leonard Iacono,

presented the concept and the process for development on the Kennedy Kenrick site which includes apartments, duplex and triplex townhomes. There was a Power Point presentation and question and answer session. There were some concerns about some of the language in the proposed zoning text. The Municipal Solicitor stated that language suggestions will be forwarded to Ms. Peck.

**Public Comment:** Mr. Gambone, Board President, who lives at Arbor Knoll and lived at Sarah Peck's first development on Dekalb Street, commented that her developments are "well built" and "create a community." He added that he is in favor of the speed bump installation because of speeding cars on his street. He said that a car flipped over from speeding.

**Ordinance 21-07 of 2021 and Ordinance 21-08 of 2021: Public Hearings to consider adoption of the boundaries of the deteriorated areas to be included within the Municipality's residential tax exemption program (ReTAP) and adoption of the boundaries of the deteriorated areas to be included within the Municipality's mixed-use exemption program (MTIP)**

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Lepera, seconded by Councilwoman Moman**, to open the Public Hearing. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Municipal Solicitor Kilkenny provided Exhibit A (copy of 21-07), Exhibit B (copy of advertisement of the Public Hearing), and Exhibit C (copy of Ordinances.)

There was a question of clarity regarding the language for the MTIP which was made clear.

There was no Public Comment.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Council Vice President Lepera**, to close the Public Hearing. **The motion passed unanimously.**

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Moman, seconded by Council Vice President Lepera**, to approve Ordinance 21-07 and Ordinance 21-08 which adopts the boundaries of the deteriorated areas to be included within the ReTAP and adoption of the boundaries of the deteriorated areas to be included within the MTIP. **The motion passed unanimously.**

**Resolution 21-50: request for Preliminary/Final Land Development approval for 820 Thomas Street**

Mr. Joe Estock, representative for applicant, Michael Marchese of Parker Street Properties, presented the details of the eight requested Waivers. Khal Hassan, Municipal Engineer, noted that several of these Waivers have been granted but still require Council approval.

There was a **motion by Councilman Jones, seconded by Council Vice President Lepera**, to approve Resolution 21-50 for Preliminary/Final Land Development approval for 820 Thomas Street. **The motion passed unanimously.**

**Council discussion on Personal Service Shops in the Town Center Zoning District**

Planning & Development Director Jayne Musonye noted that the purpose of the discussion is to receive feedback from Council on whether or not Council wants to restrict more of these shops in the TC Zoning District. Personal Service Shops are defined as, "A business which provides a service to personal needs and not primarily involving retail sales of goods or professional advisory services. Included are barber, beauty salon, tailor, dressmaker, shoe repair, photographer, travel agent, jewelry and watch repair or similar service uses. It does not include massage parlors or tattoo parlors or uses focused primarily on sexual stimulation or gratification."

### **Resolution 21-51: request for Minor Plan Land Development approval for 1437 Dekalb Street**

Director Musonye provided a time line of this request. Alex Tweedle was the presenter highlighting the requested Waivers with regard to lot dimensions, buffering, street trees and lighting. Alyson Fritzges, Attorney, was also present. Khal Hassan, Municipal Engineer, noted that if the adjoining lot conflicts, the Waivers would have to comply but he noted they are acceptable currently.

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Jones, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to approve Resolution 21-51 for Minor Plan Land Development approval for 1437 Dekalb Street. **The motion passed 6-0. (Councilman Jones was not present for voting.)**

### **Building & Codes Enforcement**

#### **Review proposed updates and amendments to Chapter 239 (Property Maintenance)**

Codes Manager, Amrinder Singh, provided complete details of the proposed updates and amendments to Chapter 239. He requested that an Ordinance be prepared and formally reviewed by the required parties and that would require advertisement. Municipal Solicitor Kilkenny suggested to Council to have an almost complete document.

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Moman, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to authorize the updates and amendments to Chapter 239. **The motion passed unanimously.**

### **Public Works**

Council Vice President Lepera took over the meeting.

#### **Revised Chapter 278 of Municipal Ordinance**

Amrinder Singh detailed the main revisions including changing the word “Borough” to “Municipality.”

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Moman, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to approve the advertisement of the revisions to Chapter 278 that meet the present Municipal requirements. **The motion passed 5-1 (Council Vice President Lepera voted nay and Councilwoman Lewis was not present for voting.)**

#### **Proposed Speed Bump Policy for the Municipality of Norristown**

Public Works Director Thomas Odenigbo provided information regarding speed bump types and policies including the approval process which requires 60 days to decide after adopting the Policy.

Council Vice President Lepera requested that the item be tabled so there could be research on what areas have them and their effectiveness but there was no second

There was **a motion by Councilwoman Sanders, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to approve the Public Works Director to work on moving the Speed Bump Policy forward. **The motion passed.**

### **Municipal Administrator**

#### **Resolution 21-47: Municipal Council consideration of establishing a process for limited Municipal maintenance of Private Alleys**

Municipal Administrator, Crandall Jones, provided information regarding establishing a process for limited maintenance of Private Alleys upon proper petition of residents.

There was a motion by Councilwoman Moman, seconded by Councilman Jones, to approve Resolution 21-47. The motion passed 6-0 (Councilwoman Sanders was not available for voting.)

**Request for Municipal Council approval of Assessment Appeal Stipulations agreed upon by the Norristown Area School District, the taxpayer and Norris Hills Apartments**

Crandall Jones noted that Cherry Street Holdings should be added to the names. He noted there was an underpayment of \$17,634.26.

There was a motion by Council President Perry, seconded by Councilwoman Smith, to approve the request. The motion passed 6-0. (Councilwoman Sanders was not available for voting.)

**Resolution 21-52: A Resolution authorizing the President of the Municipal Council to request a DCED Flood Mitigation Program Grant and authorizing the Municipal Administrator to attest the same**

There was a motion by Council President Perry, seconded by Councilwoman Smith, to approve the submission of a Grant application along with Senator Bradford and Senator Cappelletti to DCED in the amount of \$500,000 to complete Phase II of the Sawmill Culvert restoration. The motion passed 7-0.

**Adjournment**

There was a motion by Councilwoman Sanders, seconded by Councilwoman Lewis, to adjourn the Council Meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo, Clerk of Council