

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPALITY
COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
JULY 19, 2022

The Council Work Session of July 19, 2022 was called to order by Council President, Thomas Lepera, at 6:30 PM in the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit 23, 2 West Lafayette Street, Norristown, PA 19401.

There was a **Moment of Silence** followed by the **Pledge of Allegiance**.

The following Council members were present:

Hakim Jones
Rebecca Smith
Rashaad Bates
Dustin Queenan
Heather Lewis
Thomas Lepera

Also present:

Crandall Jones, Municipal Administrator; Jayne Musonye, Director of Planning & Municipal Development; Derrick Wood, Norristown Police Chief; Patrick Hitchens, Acting Municipal Solicitor; James Gallagher, Kilkenny Law Offices; Richard Lockhart, Norristown Deputy Fire Chief; Thomas Odenigbo, Director of Public Works; Kathy Pfister, Director of Finance; Amrinder Singh, Code Manager; Ted Dymtryk, Pennoni, Municipal Engineer.

Approval of Minutes

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilman Bates**, to approve the Minutes from the July 5, 2022 Council Meeting. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Executive Session Announcement

Council President Lepera announced that Council met in Executive Session prior to tonight's meeting to discuss personnel issues.

Presentations

Debriefing and discussion by Special Events Coordinator, Tracie Henry, on the Juneteenth and Fourth of July events

Ms. Henry shared that the Juneteenth events were successful, including the vendors, the food and the music. She suggested a later start time, keep the music going continuously and visit businesses along the route. She added that the "Make Music Day" at the Ascension Church was also a success. She said that in the future she would promote the parade more and get more food trucks. She said that the "Party in the Park" finale could be a bigger experience. Another suggestion was barricades instead of cones. Also, she thought maybe the whole event could be promoted as one big event called "Summer Solstice."

Conditional Use Hearing for 257 East Main Street – DB Housing Group

Patrick Hitchens, Acting Municipal Solicitor, provided a brief explanation to the new Council members about the process of a Public Hearing.

He entered the following exhibits:

- M1 (Legal Notice of the Hearing)
- M2 (Application)
- M3 (Copy of Plan from 5/26/22 by Designblenz)
- M4 (Zoning Hearing Board decision July 23, 2020
for application 13-20)

Mr. Hitchens explained that this application was previously allowed by Special Exception. He stated that the applicant is seeking a development amendment.

Mr. Scott Woodruff of Designblenz, provided an explanation of the plans by Power Point. He said they want to create more density with access through Main

Street. He added that the number of parking spaces is 11 with the access through Penn Street.

Public Comment:

Jim Perna, 241 West Fornance Street – He asked for verification of the location.

There was **a motion by Councilman Jones, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to close the Public Hearing. **The motion passed 6-0.**

There was **a motion by Council Vice President Lewis, seconded by Councilman Queenan**, to grant approval of the Conditional Use for 257 East Main Street for the DB Housing Group. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Announcements

Oak Street basketball has resumed.

There will be a Public Meeting on July 25, 2022 at the Carver Center regarding the release of ARPA Funds.

Public Comment

Jim Perna, 241 West Fornance Street – He asked when Via Veneto on Markley Street will open. He commended the road paving. He also commented that he needs a patio and was told to send a drawing of what he is looking to do but he feels he is unable to do that. (It was suggested he speak with the Code Manager after the meeting.)

Finance

Resolution 22-46: Request for Council to approve reimbursement of Municipal expenditures using tax-exempt obligations.

Kathy Pfister, Finance Director, explained this is an IRS requirement and that in May, approval was made for the purchase of CIP equipment for the Stormwater Authority, the Police and Public Works. She noted that some vehicles have to be

paid for before financing is done. She stated that she will come again before Council at August 2, 2022 meeting.

There was **a motion by Council Vice President Lewis, seconded by Councilman Jones**, to approve the reimbursement of above-mentioned expenditures. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Assessment Appeal

Request to approve the Assessment Appeal for 201 West Marshall Street

Mr. Hitchens explained that this is a reverse appeal because the School District Solicitor was able to negotiate an increased assessment based off of sale price.

There was **a motion by Council Vice President Lewis, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to approve the Assessment Appeal for 201 West Marshall Street. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Building and Code Enforcement

Historical Architectural Review Board – June 2022

Mr. Amrinder Singh, Code Manager, explained that a HARB application was submitted for 205 Dekalb Street and he confirmed the work requested is in compliance.

There was **a motion by Councilman Bates, seconded by Councilman Jones**, to approve the HARB application for 205 Dekalb Street. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Planning & Municipal Development

Consider approval of a Conditional Use for 257 East Main Street and Resolution 22-47 amending Resolution 21-40 granting Final Plan approval to DB Housing Group, LLC for the development of a Mixed-Use Structure.

Jayne Musonye, Planning Director, noted that this application was previously approved and the application appeared in front of the Planning Commission and the Design Review Board.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilman Queenan**, to approve the Conditional Use for 257 East Main Street and Resolution 22-47 amending Resolution 21-40. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Resolution 22-45: Request for granting approval for a Preliminary/Final Minor Subdivision Plan to the Redevelopment Authority of Montgomery County at 1001 Sterigere Street, Norristown, PA.

Alyson Fritzges, Solicitor, representing the Redevelopment Authority, was present. She explained that 68 acres would be transferred to the Municipality and they would be able to approve any proposals from the RFP. Mr. Crandall Jones added that this is the last process and the Municipality must now wait for a response from the State.

There was a **motion by Councilman Bates, seconded by Council Vice President Lewis**, to approve the Preliminary/Final Minor Subdivision Plan to the Redevelopment Authority of Montgomery County at 1001 Sterigere Street, Norristown, PA. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Main Street Streetscape Phase IV – Bid rejection

Ms. Musonye explained that this project was funded through the State and CDBG funds. The project runs from Dekalb Street to Green Street on Main Street. She noted that the estimated cost was \$600,000 but many changes have happened since such as material costs, pandemic, etc. She stated that a one-year extension was made for the project. A bid was made for over \$1 million but she stated there is no budget for that amount so she said that, per the engineer, she should change some factors and re-bid and look for other funding sources. She added that she will come back again before Council.

There was a **motion by Councilman Bates, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to approve the rejection of the construction bid received for Phase IV of the Main Street Streetscape project. **The motion passed 6-0.**

1700 Markley Street – Business concept presentation – Tengo: Space as a Server

Ms. Musonye explained that the applicants would like to receive feedback from Council about their business concept. She noted it may involve Zoning and text changes.

Jim Pasquarella and Anna O'Brien of the company provided a Power Point of the proposed use. The concept is "shared flexible storage and warehouse." There would be spaces to work in. There would also be storage. There would be immediate occupancy to support a business climate. They noted that the proposed location at 1700 Markley Street could be a possible flagship for the company. They provided an explanation of all the possible amenities.

Adjournment

There was **a motion by Council Vice-President Lewis, seconded by Councilman Jones**, to adjourn the Work Session. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo