

NORRISTOWN MUNICIPALITY
COUNCIL WORK SESSION MINUTES
JUNE 18, 2024

The Council Work Session of Tuesday, June 18, 2024 was called to order by Council President, Thomas Lepera, at 6:30 PM in Municipal Hall Chambers, 235 East Airy Street, Norristown, PA.

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

The following Council members were in attendance:

Rebecca Smith
Tiffani Hendley
Lauren Hughes
William McCoy
Dustin Queenan
Thomas Lepera

Also in attendance were:

Interim Municipal Administrator, Fire Chief Thomas O'Donnell; Patrick Hitchens, Acting Municipal Solicitor; Jayne Musonye, Director of Planning and Municipal Development; Kathy Pfister, Director of Finance; Thomas Odenigbo, Director of Public Works; Richard Lockhart, Assistant Fire Chief; Bri'Ana Hawkins, Recreation Director; Amrinder Singh, Code Enforcement Manager; Khal Hassan, Pennoni Engineering.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Council Vice President, Dustin Queenan**, to approve the Minutes of the June 4, 2024 Council Meeting. **The motion passed 6-0.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION ANNOUNCEMENT

Council President Lepera announced that Council met in Executive Session prior to the Council Meeting to discuss real estate and litigation issues.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Council Vice President Queenan announced that Jessie is available in the rear of the Chambers to provide headphones for translation to Spanish.

Council President Lepera announced that Council will not have a meeting on July 2, 2024 and the July 4, 2024 Stormwater Authority meeting is cancelled due to the holiday.

There will be a street clean-up on Main Street near 221 on June 22nd from 9 to 12.

The Summer Concert Series runs from June 23 to September 1st at 1325 Harding Boulevard.

Movie Nights at 1325 Harding Boulevard on Thursdays, June 27, July 11 & 25, August 8, 22 and September 5 at 6 pm.

Fourth of July Celebration – Thursday, July 4, 2024 – 1 pm Parade from St. Francis Church to Harding Blvd. – 3 pm Party in the Park and Fireworks.

Juneteenth Jubilee Street Festival – June 19th from 12-6 pm Dekalb and Main Streets.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Noreen Morello, 504 East Fornance Street – Ms. Morello said she understands the need for the Responsible Contractor Ordinance but she commented on what she doesn't agree with. She commented that preventing repeat offenders from working doesn't help them build a productive life and it sets the stage for criminal activity. She said that an employee should be given a chance to turn their life around.

James Watters, 913 Hamilton Street – He said he got involved in the Leadership Academy in 2013 due to some live wires that fell on a school bus on Oak Street. He said he coaches what the defects are. He said that 5 poles were fixed because of his involvement. He said that Public Works has been efficient with this issue. He said there are still leaning poles and there are 17 different cable companies. He said there is a company responsible for telling the cable companies to remove the leaning poles. He complained to the Public Utility Commission and sent letters out to the companies.

PLANNING & MUNICIPAL DEVELOPMENT

This item is the third item on the agenda.

Public Hearing: to consider adoption of Ordinance 24-01 to amend Chapter 320 Zoning of the Municipal Code Section 320-182A.(5) to increase the maximum impervious surface for a Zoo Use, either alone or in combination with other Uses, in the RE Recreation District from 10% to 40%

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

Solicitor Hitchens presented the Exhibits: M1 – copy of the Public Hearing Notice, M2 – copy of Ordinance 24-01, M3 – copy of Montgomery County Planning Commission Review Letter dated May 24, 2024, M4 – April 24, 2024 Attorney Greg Davis letter with narrative asking to consider the Ordinance.

There were no questions from Council.

Director Musonye provided a background of what led to this Ordinance. She noted that the amendment was proposed on May 17, 2024 and Ordinance 24-01 was recommended by the Norristown Planning Commission at the June 11, 2024 meeting.

There was no public comment.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Hendley, seconded by Council Vice President Queenan**, to close the Public Hearing. **The motion passed 6-0.**

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Councilwoman Hughes**, to adopt Ordinance 24-01 amending Chapter 320 Zoning of the Municipal Code Section 320-182A(5) to increase the maximum impervious surface for a Zoo Use, either alone or in combination with other Uses in the RE Recreation District from 10% to 40%. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Public Hearing: to consider adoption of Ordinance 24-02 to amend Chapter 320 Zoning of the Municipal Code to create subsection 320-247A(8) increasing the maximum height of fences, freestanding walls, and retaining walls for a Zoo Use in the RE Recreation District

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Hendley, seconded by Councilman McCoy**, to open the Public Hearing. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Solicitor Hitchens presented the Exhibits: M1 – copy of the Public Hearing Notice, M2 – copy of a draft of Ordinance 24-02, M3 – copy of the Montgomery County Planning Commission Review Letter dated May 24, 2024, M4 – copy of Attorney Greg Davis letter with narrative requesting the Ordinance.

Director Musonye presented a background of the process which led to this Ordinance including the Norristown Planning Commission approval at the June 11, 2024 meeting.

There was no public comment.

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

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Hughes, seconded by Councilman McCoy**, to approve the adoption of Ordinance 24-02 to amend Chapter 320 Zoning of the Municipal Code to create subsection 320-247A(8) increasing the maximum height of fences, freestanding walls, and retaining walls for a Zoo Use in the RE Recreation District to be in compliance with the accreditation standards of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Council to approve motion: Landlord Waiver and consent to lease from Tompkins Community Bank

Solicitor Hitchens noted that the bank needs collateral which would be the Lease. He said that if approved, Administration would execute the four documents.

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Hendley, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to approve the Landlord Waiver allowing for the Zoological Society, Inc. to enter a loan agreement with Tompkins Community Bank located in Blue Bell, PA with the Borough of Norristown as the Landlord. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Municipal Engineer's MS4 Public Update year six

Mr. Khal Hassan, Pennoni Engineering, noted that the compliance started in 2018 according to Best in Management Practices. He said that the Municipality has good information regarding the MS4 on their website.

Resolution 24-67: request for amended Preliminary approval to Elon at Montgomery Park III, LP for its overall Master Land Development Plan (1301 Powell Street)

Mr. Adelmann said they will do both presentations together with separate votes.

He presented a Power Point highlighting the Montgomery Park Senior Housing Phase III. He said that Phase III will be subdivided into 2 lots. He said that future development of .6 acres of the Phase will have to go through the Special Exception process. The remaining land will be a 40-unit housing building on Powell & Fornance Streets. He noted there will be landscaping, stormwater, lighting, utilities, street trees, shrubs and plantings. He added they will connect the sidewalk loops.

He noted that all remaining comments from the Engineer's Review Letter are "will comply."

There was a **motion by Council Vice President Queenan, seconded by Councilwoman Hendley**, to approve Resolution 24-67 for an amended Preliminary approval to Elon at Montgomery Park III, LP for its overall Master Land Development Plan for 1301 Powell Street. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Resolution 24-68: request for Preliminary/Final Land Plan Approval to Elon at Montgomery Park III, LP for Phase III Land Development (1301 Powell Street)

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Hughes, seconded by Councilwoman Smith**, to approve Resolution 24-68 for Preliminary/Final Land Plan approval to Elon at Montgomery Park III, LP for Phase III Land Development (1301 Powell Street). **The motion passed 6-0.**

Resolution 24-69: Request for Preliminary/Final Plan approval to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the Norristown State Hospital Building 19 Parking Lot Expansion (1001 Sterigere Street)

The representative explained that the parking lot expansion requested is on the eastern side of the property and it would be for administration purposes only with a total of 42 spaces for employees. He said there were stormwater Waivers and 3 Waivers for parking. There were also Waivers for curbing, planting and trees that will be addressed.

There was a **motion by Councilman McCoy, seconded by Council Vice President Queenan**, to approve Resolution 24-69 for Preliminary/Final Plan approval to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the Norristown State Hospital Building 19 Parking Lot Expansion (1001 Sterigere Street). **The motion passed 6-0.**

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

Monthly Update to Council: Presenting Departments – Recreation

Bri'Ana Hawkins, Recreation Director, introduced An-Nisa Kim, Recreation and Media Specialist, to assist her in her Power Point presentation.

Ms. Hawkins noted that the old playground equipment and trees near them were removed from Elmwood Park, a pavilion is being installed at Riverfront Park, there was a meeting with Keystone Construction Group and the Recreation Department is considering a Pickleball Court.

The Power Point included topics:

What is Recreation?
What do we do?
Parks & Green Spaces
Sports Facilities
Parks & Facilities
Summer Programs
Game Room
Spring Basketball
Tournaments

Councilwoman Hendley asked if there are other programs being considered for the Fall such as Chess. She commented that the other programs are year round. Ms. Hawkins said that they can only offer what the community wants. Also, she said that the website is updated.

ADJOURNMENT

There was a **motion by Councilwoman Smith, seconded by Council Vice President Queenan**, to adjourn the Council Work Session. **The motion passed 6-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Roseann M. Santangelo