

MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Regular Meeting
August 25, 2014

Public Hearing – Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Carnes opened the hearing at 7:40 pm.

Mr. Comitta explained the state requires municipalities to update their comprehensive plans every 10 years. The City of Coatesville's Comprehensive Plan puts and importance on the "New City, Old City" development plan. The City of Coatesville is poised for positive change with the enhancement of its assets and is on the cusp of successful, ongoing revitalization over ten years.

The City of Coatesville has assets that will be enhanced, including, The Coatesville Train Station Improvements; the Brandywine Creek, and the expansion of the Brandywine Creek Riverwalk; the National Iron and Steel Museum; the Stewart Huston Charitable Foundation and its system of buildings; and the Lincoln University Business School at the former Gordon School.

In addition, enhancements are emerging in the Downtown and nearby sites, to help spur revitalization efforts, such as; the redevelopment of vacant building near Coatesville Train Station; the redevelopment of the Flats; the redevelopment of vacant buildings in the Downtown; the transformation of Gateway Park; and the re-purposing of street and vehicular circulation to improve the transportation infrastructure.

The Comprehensive Plan update focuses on the future growth and change from three perspectives: Future land use innovations; future zoning innovations; and future transportation and circulation innovations.

Mr. Comitta suggested a Comprehensive Plan Committee. He explained the City can apply for grants to help with Ordinance amendments and Zoning changes.

Mr. Suber questioned the grant process and what would happen if the City did not receive the grant. Mr. Comitta and Mr. Smiley, Chester County Planning Commission, explained if the City is turned down, they can reapply the following year. Mr. Suber inquired about the youth in the City. Mr. Comitta explained that the Lincoln University made suggestions in the plan.

Mr. Bentley who represented the Trinity Episcopal Church inquired about an update on the Train Station Development. Mr. Comitta explained County representatives helped design maps in the plan are showing a "gravitational pull around the train station." The final report has not been completed.

Mr. Smiley stated a conceptual plan is being looked at for the train station site and the properties on Fleetwood Street.

Mr. Comitta announced there is a fun section in the plan call the overarching considerations for comprehension plan implementation.

Vice President Collins made a motion close the Public Hearing on the City of Coatesville Comprehensive Plan at 8:12; Mrs. Lavender-Norris seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Call to Order

President Hamrick called the meeting to order at 8:15 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Council members present were President Joseph Hamrick, Vice President David Collins, Mssr, Edward

Simpson and Ms. Marie Hess, Mrs. C. Arvilla Hunt, Mrs. Ingrid W. Jones, and Mrs. Linda Lavender-Norris. Staff members present included City Solicitor John Carnes, Finance Director John Marcarelli, Director of Planning and Codes Enforcement Damalier Molina, Public Works Director Donald Wilkinson, Police Chief John Laufer, and recording secretary Ruthann Mowday.

President Hamrick announced an Executive Session was held earlier this evening, August 25, 2014, to discuss personnel and legal matters

Approval of Minutes:

Mrs. Hunt made a motion to approve the August 11, 2014 meeting minutes; Mrs. Lavender-Norris seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0. Mr. Simpson was not present for the vote.

Approval of Accounts Payable

Mrs. Lavender-Norris made a motion to approve the accounts payables; Ms. Hess seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0. Mr. Simpson was not present for the vote.

Additions, Deletions or Modifications to the Agenda

Vice President Collins made a motion to add regular action item 5) Receive and consider allocation \$5,000 in fund for the career expo; Mrs. Hunt seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0. Mr. Simpson was not present for the vote.

Mrs. Hunt made a motion to delete regular action item 4) goals and objectives until Council has a chance to further discuss and redevelop their plans; Mrs. Lavender-Norris seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0. Mr. Simpson was not present for the vote.

Presentations

1. Swearing in of Officers – Officer Ryan Corcorran and Officer Jared Davis

Honorable Judge Grover Koon swore in Officer Ryan Corcorran was sworn in as a full-time City of Coatesville Police Officer as his wife and children held the bible.

Honorable Judge Grover Koon swore in Officer Jared Davis was sworn in as a full-time City of Coatesville Police Officer as his parents held the bible.

Chief Laufer thanked Judge Koon for swearing in the Officers and Council for their support and keeping the Police Department properly staffed.

2. 2013 Audit – Pamela Baker

Ms. Baker announced this is the first time in years the City has positive balances in all but one fund at years end. The collection of earned income taxes has helped to raise revenues countywide.

In previous financial statements/audit there were qualifiers that needed to be resolved, all but one has been completed but is in the works. The one qualifier left is the Solid Waste receivables. The City has hired a third party in 2013 to handle the billing. This will take a couple of years to get under full control, but they have made the steps to move forward.

The City's assets exceeded its liabilities by \$24,254,899 (total net position) for the fiscal year reported) this total includes both governmental and business type-activities.

The total net position is comprised of the following: Net investment in capital assets of \$10,021,155. This includes property and equipment, net of accumulated depreciation, reduced for outstanding debt related to the purchase or construction of capital assets.; unrestricted net position of \$14,233,744, which is available to fund the continued operations of the City.

The City's governmental fund balances at the end of 2013 was \$8,340,351.

The City's business type activities reported combined ending fund net deficit of \$2,115,064 at the end of 2013.

Long term bonded debt decreased during 2013 by \$68,899.

In the 2012 audit, there were 12 recommendations and two have been completed.

Citizens' Hearings – Regular Action Items Only (3 Minutes)

Paul Evans

Mr. Evans asked the balance in the trust fund at this time. Mr. Marcarelli stated it is currently \$7.5 million. Mr. Evans inquired about how the money is invested and provided various investment options. Mr. Carnes explained there are State rules on how the money is invested.

Ron Suber

Mr. Suber voiced his concerns regarding the withdrawals from the Trust Fund. The City will go bankrupt if we continue to withdraw money. President Hamrick explained they are working to spur growth on revitalization.

Mr. Simpson made a motion to close citizens' hearings on regular actin items only; Mrs. Jones seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Citizens' Hearings – Non-Agenda Items Only (3 Minutes)

Juis Velez

Mr. Velez voiced his concerns on maintenance issues in Abdala Park. Mr. Wilkinson explained he can have an arborous out to look at the tree. Council asked Mr. Wilkinson to take immediate steps to properly remove the branches.

Paul Evans

Mr. Evans inquired about the last two Ordinances passed at the August 11, 2014 meeting. He offered suggestions on fees for rental licenses (never applied for by owner) and fees for formal complaints (landlord/tenant). If there is a violation landlord should be fined, if there is no violation the tenant should be fined. He announced he attended the RFP meeting for the RDA there was no Executive Director for the Authority.

David DeSimone

Mr. DeSimone explained he was very disappointed at the last meeting about the process of what was advertised and what was voted on. He asked of the City was going to work with the landlords or do a bait and switch. He asked politely to work together for a better Coatesville.

Ron Suber

Ron Suber announced the Police Chief is doing a wonderful job. He explained the City needs more minority officers on the streets. Mrs. Lavender-Norris explained the Police Department should mirror the community but there is a Civil Service Process and they need to follow the numbers on the list. Mrs.

Hunt explained they would like to have more minority applicants. They have had discussion with the Police Chief. Mr. Suber stated Council is doing a wonderful job, but need to be aware of the finances.

Paul Dodson

Mr. Dodson explained the information turned over to Berkheimer regarding his properties was incorrect. He has received two bills for 1 property (private hauler and for four bins) another property bill for 6 bins which has a dumpster. He stated he is not paying the \$100 for the private hauler. It is against the Sanchez as it is an illegal tax. He stated they need to get the amount down to a better amount.

Donald Folks

Mr. Folks explained the sidewalk between 125 and 130 4th Avenue has overgrowth on the sidewalk. Mr. Molina explained it is not a City property. President Hamrick asked the City to cut down the growth and charge the owner.

Council asked for people to inform them of the problem areas and they will look in to them.

Carmen Greenridge

Ms. Greenridge explained that she received a parking ticket. There are two signs that overlap. She filed a complaint form but was still required to pay for the ticket. Chief Laufer asked her to speak to Sergeant Ollis to look into the matter. She asked what the hours of operation are at the Community Center. Mr. Hudson explained there are two organizations utilizing the community center a couple days a week.

Mrs. Lavender-Norris made a motion to close citizens' hearings on non-agenda items; Ms. Hess seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Regular Action Items

1. Receive and consider a Resolution of the Council of the City of Coatesville, Chester County, Pennsylvania, adopting the Comprehensive Plan Addendum: Update to the land use element of the Comprehensive Plan [Also, an update of the Revitalization Plan 2002 (Tier I)]

Ms. Hess made a motion to approve a Resolution of the Council of the City of Coatesville, Chester County, Pennsylvania, adopting the Comprehensive Plan Addendum: Update to the land use element of the Comprehensive Plan [Also, an update of the Revitalization Plan 2002 (Tier I)]; Mrs. Lavender-Norris seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

2. Receive and consider appointment of Marguerite Norton to the Board of Housing Appeals for the term 2013 – 2015; Jarrett Jackson for the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for the term 2014-2017; Marguerite Norton to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for the term 2013 – 2016 and Donald Folks for the Civil Service Commission to fulfill the term of 2011 – 2014.

Ms. Hess made a motion to appoint Marguerite Norton to the Board of Housing Appeals for the term 2013 – 2015; President Hamrick seconded the motion. Motion failed 3-4. Mrs. Lavender-Norris, Mrs. Hunt. Mrs. Jones and Mr. Simpson were the dissenting votes.

Mr. Simpson made a motion to appoint Jarrett Jackson for the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for the term 2014-2017; Ms. Hess seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Mrs. Lavender-Norris made a motion to appoint Marguerite Norton to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board for the term 2013 – 2016; Ms. Hess seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Mrs. Jones made a motion to appoint Donald Folks for the Civil Service Commission to fulfill the term of 2011 – 2014 upon verification of no conflict with being on the RDA; Ms. Hess seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

3. Receive and consider an Emergency Ordinance authorizing the withdrawal (borrowing) and use of principal of a City Reserve Trust Fund in an amount up to Two Million Fifty Thousand dollars for emergency needs

Vice President Collins reminded Council the withdrawal is part of the budget approved in December 2013 and amended in Feb 2014. Mr. Simpson asked if we have done anything to reduce our expenses. He stated there are areas where the City can cut back spending. There are service we are providing that we cannot afford. President Hamrick explained Council is doing everything in its power but are losing the tax base. Vice President Collins explained there is a \$1.4 million shortfall because of the erosion of the tax base. Ms. Hess and Mrs. Lavender-Norris questioned the “emergency” of the transfer. If this was in the budget why is it considered an Emergency? Mr. Carnes explained the requirements for borrowing from the trust fund, require an emergency, which the City will need the funds to continue to operate. Mrs. Jones asked if the funds would be taken on an “as needed basis”.

Vice President Collins made a motion to approve an Emergency Ordinance authorizing the withdrawal (borrowing) and use of principal of a City Reserve Trust Fund in an amount up to Two Million Fifty Thousand dollars for emergency needs; Vice President Hamrick seconded the motion. Motion failed 3-4. Mrs. Lavender-Norris, Ms. Hess, Mr. Simpson and Mrs. Jones were the dissenting votes.

4. Receive and consider allocating \$5,000 in funds for the career expo

Vice President Collins made a motion to allocate \$5,000 in funds for the Career Expo; Mrs. Jones seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-1. Mr. Simpson was the dissenting vote.

Solicitors Report

Mr. Carnes announced he worked with Mr. Comitta on the Comprehensive Plan. He announced the Family Dollar store has received a formal submission. He has been working on various matters involving litigation and assisted the City in its interpretation of codes, rules and regulations.

City Manager’s Report

Mr. Hudson announced a meeting on August 27th at the Downingtown Borough Hall regarding the improvements to Keystone rail line in Chester County, including planned improvements in the City of Coatesville. Representatives from PennDOT and other agencies will be on hand to discuss improvements to each station in Chester County. Senator Dinniman hopes that by bringing together each municipality in Chester County set to receive station improvements, similar questions and concerns regarding the process and timing of planned improvements can be addresses by appropriate agencies.

Vice President Collins announced the Building Bridges Forum being held by St. Paul’s Baptist Church on August 27, 2014. The forum will have discussions aimed at pulling together the communities together to build a better future. The City of Coatesville will be represented by the City Manager, Chief of Police and Vice President of Council.

Discussion Item

1. Trash Recycling process and procedures

Ms. Hess announced that some people have received a lot of trash cans and people are confused about the bulk pickup. Mr. Wilkinson explained they are still picking up all trash until the recycling bins are delivered. Once the recycle bins are delivered, Eagle will only do bulk pick up once a month and not pick up trash from anything other than a City toter. He explained there are issues regarding the old contract (no Business trash pickup) and the new contract (200 trash pickup) with the businesses. To date we have delivered 3,400 toters. Ms. Hess told Mr. Wilkinson the trash company has left the totes in the middle of the alleyway, cars could not get through.

2. Battalion Chiefs

Mr. Simpson stated the agreement for the Battallion Chief was valid until September 2012. Mr. Patton explained reasoning for acquiring the Battalion Chiefs. It was due to lack of supervisory personnel at the scenes. Mr. Simpson explained there is a lack of volunteers around the country and we need to get more volunteers. Mr. Hudson explained that the insurance company has required certain training qualifications for volunteers. Mr. Simpson stated we are spending one million a year on the Fire Department. How come the volunteers are required to meet the qualifications, but command staff does not? He suggested our own Relief Association. Mr. Thornton from the Fire Relief Association has funds for training and insurance for volunteers. Ms. Hess asked about other companies charge us to help. Mr. Hudson explained that we also go and help them. Mr. Simpson asked for the contract to be reviewed, it should not be in effect. Mr. Carnes stated he would review the validity of the contract at this time and get back to Council.

3. Ward Meetings

Ms. Hess inquired about the ward meetings. She asked if we can start them now. Mrs. Hunt stated that the meeting were to be set up together to include the Police Chief, City Manager and other Council members to meet with the residents and address the questions/problems within the ward.

Special Events

There were no special events at this time.

Council Comments

Mrs. Lavender-Norris was in agreement with only taking money as needed from the trust fund. She announced there was a truck filled with tires and tv's. She noted Chief Laufer, Lieutenant Audette and other off duty police cleaning debris off the streets. She is not okay with that. The Public Works Department needs to step it up and get the work done. She thanked everyone for coming out.

Mr. Wilkinson responded to the complaints. There were comments made back and forth by Mr. Wilkinson and Mrs. Lavender-Norris regarding the Public Works Department. Members of Council excused themselves and adjourned the meeting.

Adjournment

Mrs. Hunt made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 pm; President Hamrick seconded the motion. Motion passed 7-0.

Kirby Hudson
City Manager