



Minutes
City of Coatesville
Regular Meeting – 1 City Hall Place, Coatesville, PA
Council Chambers
Monday, March 27, 2023

Council Present: President Lavender-Norris; Vice President Carmen Green, Councilwoman Khadijah Al Amin, Councilwoman Charrisse Allen, Councilwoman C Arvilla Hunt and Councilman Donald Folks
Council Absent: Councilman Edward Simpson
Staff Present: James Logan, City Manager; Roberta Cosentino, Assistant City Manager; Richard Troutman, Finance Department; Chief Jack Laufer, Police Department; Robert Jefferson, Solicitor; Ruthann Mowday, Recording Secretary

President Lavender Norris announced an Executive Session was held earlier this evening to discuss personnel, real estate and legal matters.

President Lavender Norris announced Councilman Edward Simpson would not be in attendance.

Approved Minutes

Ms. Al Amin made a motion to approve the March 13, 2023 meeting minutes; Ms. Allen seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Approval of Accounts Payables

Ms. Al Amin made a motion to approve the accounts payables; Vice President Green seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Presentations

1. Cedarville Engineering – Tracey Franey

It's very nice to see you. Some of you were helping me with this project. Tonight, I just want to briefly tell the group what we did in our, I think we figured it was like 15 or 16-month process, to update parts of the zoning ordinance. So, if I need to slow down, please let me know. I mean, I'm just one of those chatterboxes. The sections we revised are definitions, signs, administration and enforcement, nonconforming signs, traditional neighborhood development overlay district, including Manual of Written and Graphic Design Principles for the TND overlay district, Steel Museum District Overlay, Specially Planned District Overlay, and Mixed Use Overlay District. Changes that we made to all sections were, all overlay sections were updated to align with the definition section of the Ordinance and vice versa. We also referenced sections that were currently only referenced by number. So if a reference number was made in the zoning ordinance, we added the entire title of each behind it. The section that we made the greatest changes to were definitions. We didn't change every single definition because not every single definition needed to change, but we did update the definition section again, to align with any changes that we made as well along the process and clarifying any misunderstood definitions or definitions that were maybe out of date. Please be advised to the council that there is an alternate definition for the word 'alteration' that needs to be considered.

As well as the Signs Ordinances, we added the section to allow and govern signage in the C-4 District. There were no requirements previously. We also removed section 224-73D8 to allow the installation of a three-sided billboard within 125 feet of the intersection of Route 82 and Lincoln Highway. Billboards are not currently allowed in the base districts which makes up the historic district so a section prohibiting billboards in the historic district is not needed. For all overlay districts, we listed all the uses in the sections and removed the referenced sections to alleviate confusion. In short, if you've ever looked at some of the overlay districts, they will say it's an allowable use that you can see in district C1 or for district RN4 less allowable uses. So, to alleviate confusion, we listed all of the uses. We also revised building height standards for taller buildings in the city. We didn't remove any capabilities for taller buildings in the city or make it that taller buildings could never exist in the city. We just made it so that - I don't know - typical building permit-- excuse me, building permits need a little bit more by way of zoning, but most it's for even taller buildings, So nobody's going to build a 50-story building here in the city without proper approval and what is actually wanted.

Also, we updated all overlay districts to modernize them for the city needs of the current needs. Residential conversions have been removed as an allowable use. I don't know if they were initially allowing the use in every overlay, but we made sure to remove that clause. The overlay districts allowing building heights up-- this is kind of a tricky one I haven't touched on a little bit, but I've spelled it out a little bit better in order to explain it if I could. The overlay districts allow building heights over 35 feet, and council approval will now require a conditional use approval. So, if some zoning coordinates, some overlay districts said that council could approve a building taller than 35 feet, we just wanted to spell it out they need them to normalize the process. Cedarville feels that this is too large a burden to require the Zoning Hearing Board to make this decision on behalf of the City. Language was added or updated in each overlay district with a potential building height of up to 250 feet in order to provide continuity throughout the City.

Also, Mr. Jefferson was kind enough to provide me with-- well, provide many of us actually, not just me - but a timeline of events of how this process is going. On this timeline, which is basically, right now I'm here for the input. And next, for feedback that many of you may have for the Ordinance changes that you'd like to make or like to discuss, I'm going to say, you get those to me by April 3rd. Vice President Green asked which means April 3rd? Ms. Franey replied yes, April 3rd feedback for me. Vice President Green stated that's an awful lot of reading. A lot to understand. Ms. Franey replied yes, and this timeline is-- okay. It even says right here-- in the timeline, it says, "That assumes everything-- if there's no changes or amendments needed." As I've said about the entire process, this is your Ordinance. Any changes to it, give them to me, and we'll make the change, okay? Vice President Green stated April 3rd is a Monday. Ms. Franey explained that would be best-case scenario, but obviously, if you need more time then you take more time. Just let me know that you need to make more time. Don't let me assume it.

Mr. Logan explained before you leave, tell everyone if you still remember this has been a project that we started years ago. This is a DCED grant with Chester County, Kevin Myers spearheaded this with the help of Sonia Huntzinger, Councilwoman Lavender-Norris, myself, Tracy, Joe Hamrick, Bill Shaw and a few others, too. [crosstalk]. So a number of individuals worked to amend, it's a lot of areas in our Ordinance that needs to be changed. This is really the beginning of one section of the city This is mostly in the Downtown District and overlay area. Hopefully, as we continue with mending our Ordinance, we'll be able to go down and start east end. Right now, this is concentrated area just to begin. Thank you, Tracy, for the hard work that you put in. and the volunteers that were on the calls. Mr. Jefferson explained just to follow up on that, as the timeline says that you are very nice to me, but it says this assumes everything goes perfectly and there's zero amendments. Obviously, if you need more time, please take it. So it's just a rough draft of a timeline of things that need to be accomplished in order to amend the Zoning Ordinance. We can just change the dates going forward if we need more time. [crosstalk]--

Discussion Items

1. Homeless Encampment

Mr. Logan stated he wanted to share this item with Council an issue that, I mean, the City of Coatesville has not really experienced of any of the things that you've seen in Los Angeles, big cities where there's large population of homeless people in these encampments that have homeless people living and then you have the cleanup, which speaks up in calling for these accounts into-- this is in the packets discussion item 1. There's 5 pages of an article in there. It just speaks to what the particular cost in some cities to clear out the encampments. One page I'm looking at where it says here the sweeps are expensive and often limited a long-time effectiveness. This is the reports on HHS I'm sorry, city spending on Encampments in the range in 2019 from 140,000 \$4.9 million penalty. Again, we're not having this issue, but there has been a number of homeless people that are popping up in the City and these are some of the issues that we've told a couple of our nonprofit organizations that are helping people. But it is kept on the rate, we are [inaudible] revitalized. Vice President Green stated I just want to say that he's been putting me in a lot of time and effort and thought only the problem within the city. I mean, fortunately we don't have anything this large, but it could become something like that. So, you're working through and with a couple of the nonprofits. Trying to come up with some type of solution or at least a help. So, I thank you for this article it's going to help us out a lot data that we need to work together. Thank you. Mrs. Hunt asked if these are like the homeless in Camden, is that those cities that have little areas where they're putting these little small storage sheds. Someone sent me a picture of one a couple weeks ago. Mr. Logan explained they vary. In that picture some of the cities are providing them, but [inaudible] like units. But other encampments are just tents. Some of the college cities are providing porta potties, but it's just the expense now. Sometimes the city's fire department, they're going in and hosing down encampment areas to clean up the waste. It's getting large and large. And again, we don't see it here, but there's pockets in Philadelphia.

Citizens Hearings – Regular Action Items Only (3 Minutes)

There were no citizens comments at this time.

Ms. Al Amin made a motion to close citizens hearings on regular action items only; Mrs. Hunt seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Regular Action Items

1. Receive and consider a Resolution designating Emergency Response Service providers for the City of Coatesville

Mr. Folks made a motion to approve a Resolution designating Emergency Response Service providers for the City of Coatesville; Ms. Allen seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Mr. Logan explained this is a resolution. If you recall, last year we had a similar resolution where Westwood was appointed for the remainder of the year. They designated Westwood as the service provider for ALS. Since then there's been a number of changes in the ALS services going from Westwood to Washington Hose Company now to what we're calling the automated locator. This resolution will basically authorize the City of Coatesville to go into an automated vehicle locator type (AVL) locator service for ALS services. Meaning that when a call that's made here put out [inaudible], how the system works it will identify the nearest ALS service provider to put in the call to Westwood, Minquis, whoever has the ALS service. That will cover the city for 90 days. However, we are currently working on looking at contracts with ALS services with Westwood or Minquis. This resolution may be a short-lived resolution but according to the EMS and that's the Chester County Emergency Services, we have to have a resolution put in place. As I mentioned, we should have proposals from Westwood in a few days, as well as Minquis, I think it's a few days, hopefully by the next City Council Meeting.

2. Receive and consider a motion to accept the agreement between ECON Partners and the City of Coatesville for the amount of \$4,000 per month for a period of twelve months

Mrs. Hunt made a motion to accept the agreement between ECON Partners and the City of Coatesville for the amount of \$4,000 per month for a period of twelve months; Ms. Allen seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Mr. Logan explained this is a standard consultant agreement between City of Coatesville and ECON partners. You all know that ECON partners has been providing us services to the City of Coatesville and to RDA because the RDA will be reducing some of their service needs for the ECON partners, we will increase our services for ECON Partners, because? [inaudible] renewal agreement with them. But it also increases the amount of our agreement with them to \$4000 from-- I think we were at 3000. That correct, Rich? Mr. Troutman explained the City was at \$2,500 and the RDA paid \$3,000 per month. [crosstalk]

3. Receive and consider a motion to accept the maintenance contract with Sebastian and Sons for the amount of \$8,500 per year (April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024)

Vice President Green made a motion to accept the maintenance contract with Sebastian and Sons for the amount of \$8,500 per year (April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024); Mrs. Hunt seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

4. Receive and consider a motion to approve the Employee Handbook dated March 2023.

Vice President Green made a motion to approve the Employee Handbook dated March 2023; Ms. Al Amin seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Ms. Al Amin made a motion to close action items; Mr. Folks seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Reports

1. Solicitor

Mr. Jefferson announced he provided a more detailed attorney-client privilege report to council. Since council's last meeting, I communicated with Sam Anya, Esquire, the City's Opioid Litigation Attorney to ensure that the city is taking the proper steps necessary to receive settlement funds. I drafted and provided a proposed timeline for the adoption of the proposed zoning amendments that were addressed earlier. Obviously that timeline is going to change. I communicated with the County of Chester regarding the Millview Basin. I communicated and continued to communicate with outside council regarding litigation matters. And finally, I provided various opinions regarding emergency preparedness.

2. City Manager

Mr. Logan announced this will be a short report. I have provided personnel report in Executive. Outside of that, we continue to move forward with our economic development revitalization. Again, this year, we are looking at working with more companies and workforce development initiatives. I did leave in your box the council's recent assessment report. [inaudible] in the month of June. Our finance director will be providing the snap shot. That is where the city is. And of course, for those of you who live in a city and maybe even outside of the city, you know that there are two restaurants or two new restaurants that have opened. Of course, the record has been open for some time now. It is the old Cultural Society Building. I have been told that the food is amazing. If you haven't had a chance to dine in, please plan to do so. We also have two additional restaurants that will be opening. One at the beginning of 2024 in the spring. That will be 30 Prime. And then the other one is Steel City brewing. Hopefully this year. The city is moving forward. A lot of positive things going on in the community. To our residents and to our council.

3. Assistant City Manager

Ms. Cosentino announced she wanted to share a few things happening in our Codes and Public Works Departments. In February, our Codes Department issued 27 violations, 22 commercial and residential permits, 54 rental licenses and 59 rental inspections. I also want to put out there a reminder that the grace period for rental licenses is up on March 31st. So, what that means is that as of April 1st, those licenses will double. The fees for those licenses will double and additional penalties of interest will be added to the fee for rental licenses. Plans have been submitted for 112 E Lincoln Hwy and they are moving forward with demolition. They are aiming to be open by mid-May or June. Our Codes and Public Works Departments have been working together to identify and pick up areas where there have been some illegal dumping of trash, mattresses, abandoned vehicles, this sort of thing. The City is considering several solutions to identifying and fining people who are illegally dumping around the city. Our Public Works crew has been doing a fair amount of cleanup in the areas of Upper Mount Pleasant Street, Coates Street, and off of Mt Pleasant St, Coates St and South Eighth Avenue. Also, a reminder that the City has a fine of up to \$1000 for illegal dumping, if convicted. Public works has also been doing some additional cold-patching of roads and are working with our engineers to coordinate some road repairs and paving throughout the City this year. Also, I just want to remind everyone that if anyone is

experiencing their trash or recycling or their one bulk item per week not being picked up, we would appreciate a call here at the City so that we can notify our contractors. And also, brand new as of today, street sweeping will be back up and running as of, I believe, April 16th.

4. Finance Department

Mr. Troutman explained he would pick up where the Assistant City Manager let off regarding due dates; the Real Estate taxes are due on March 31st with the discounted rate. As of April 1, 2023, they are due at their face value. We have turned over to the county the delinquent 2022s, and we have turned over to Portnoff, our collection agency for the solid wastes, the trash fees for 2022, so both of those will start now having additional fees and interests. With either one, you mitigate the amount of fees and penalties if owners pay sooner. As far as the traditional circle square financial statements that you have, it's obviously only through February, so it's basically 17% of the year, so there's a long time to still cover. We have just spoke and alluded to large pieces of the budget remaining. We continue to monitor those. There are three things that are coming on our radar, may be concerning but uncertain, and there are a few things that we know of that were favorable to the City finances, so we just have to see how it's going to flush out, and so we'll be back to you once we get closer; The commitment is to let Council know as soon as we know. And with that, that's my report.

Citizens Hearings Non-Agenda Items Only (3 Minutes) – Residents/Tax Payer/Property Owner
Donald Lamborn

Mr. Lamborn stated he has three issues. The first issue is just what you mentioned about the Recycling and trash. The prime example is in the West End. The recycling was not picked up on my street. That's first. Okay. Second thing I have is for this gentleman here. My question is why do I have to send my check to pay my taxes to some organization 20 miles out there? Why can't I walk right in here to City Hall and pay my taxes? Is there a particular reason? I just need to know why I have to send it out and chance it getting lost. The Finance Department can't organize a place here to pick it up. I don't understand. And finally, my third issue is I have asked this question and I have the Chief of Police looking at me and going, "Oh, no, here we go again." And that's bad. That probably tells you a lot, right there, about what goes on about [inaudible]. It's so bad [inaudible] you have to have single [inaudible]. And because I know that there's a lot of action going on over in there. Summer's [inaudible] [along?] trash, pathetic and loud voices after 10 o'clock at night. People are calling the police to have them settled down after 10 o'clock at night. I guess the curfew was from 10:00 to 7:00, is that correct? And this [inaudible] always got this problem. They seem to go on and on and on. The Police are called in. You do the best you can, I know that. And I know the Lieutenant knows what I'm talking about. So that's it, ladies and gentlemen. It's all I have to say, I hope I did that under three minutes. Thank you very much.

Ms. Al Amin made a motion to close citizens hearings on non-agenda items; Ms. Allen seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

Special Events

There were no special events at this time.

Council Comments

Mr. Folks thanked everybody for coming out. Piggyback off of Mr. Logan towards the city moving forward. Don't forget about the ribbon cutting for Richie's Water Ice on Lincoln highway this

Saturday at 12 o'clock. I will be missing this one. I got to go out of town. Another restaurant is opening April 10th. Our very own Pizza Hut will be open April 10th. Down at the Pizza Hut place, they've been hiring so if you know anybody that needs a job please go down to the Pizza Hut. They're hiring. They need drivers. They need people to work inside. Another restaurant more tax money for the city. That's a beautiful thing.

Mrs. Hunt wished everyone a good evening everyone. Mr. Folks you are brave and put that date out. [crosstalk]. stated it is a great time to be in Coatesville. Thank you so much Mr. Folks. I just want to thank everyone for coming again tonight and spending the evening with us sharing your comments, as well as listening to briefings that are happening in the city and how we're trying to continue to move forward. I want to thank our staff, for the tremendous job you do daily to keep things moving. And again, all my colleagues it's always a pleasure to work alongside with you as we continue to help move the city forward. Good evening and just keep your eyes and ears open as the [inaudible]. Thank you.

Ms. Allen thanked everyone for coming out. Get home safe to your loved ones. Have a good night.

Ms. Al Amin thanked everyone for coming out. Good evening and safe travels. Thank you.

Vice President Green announced the F.I.S.H event is coming back this year. It is on April 29 and 30th. We all know that that's been a great event and it's been a few years since we've had it. So April the 29th and the 30th. It's a two-day event. We look forward to that. And I just want to thank everyone for coming out. It's always a pleasure to see you when we come out to hear what's going on in the city. So, thank you all and have safe trip home. Good night.

President Lavender Norris stated so, I'm not going to be as short. I'm going to say, what I'm going to say, truly, it's a pleasure to see you all out here again. A little unfortunate we're not packed like we were last time but those that are supposed to be here are here. So, thanks for coming out. We are working diligently to move our city forward. And whether you who are out here this evening, know it or not y'all are certainly a part of the movement and we thank you. We're blessed. I'm grateful and I appreciate my colleagues and the staff as well. I'm excited because the new restaurants mean our money will circulate in our community. What a blessing. Everybody have a blessed night. Be safe and enjoy.

Adjournment

Ms. Al Amin made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Folks seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.