

May 18, 2020  
7:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of Doylestown Borough Council was held on the above date and time via a Zoom Rooms meeting, with the following members present: Council President Jack O'Brien, Vice President Noni West, and Council Members Ben Bell, Tim Brennan, Larry Browne, Joe Flood, Joe Frederick, Jennifer Jarret, and Wendy Margolis. Also present were Junior Councilperson Alec Maraska, Mayor Ron Strouse, Borough Manager John Davis, Borough Solicitor Ernest Closser, Central Bucks Regional Police Department Police Chief Karl Knott, Borough Engineer Jim Dougherty, Building and Zoning Director Karyn Hyland, Planning/Public Works Director/Deputy Borough Manager Phil Ehlinger, and Water Director Chris Norris. Finance Director Caroline Brinker was absent due to her attendance at the Fanny Chapman Pool Board meeting occurring at the same time.

#### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. O'Brien called for a motion to approve the **April 20, 2020 Council Meeting Minutes**. (West-Margolis) The vote was called and the minutes were unanimously approved.

#### **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Strouse stated that the focus of elected officials now has to turn to how to reopen and revitalize our community safely at the same time that we continue to fight the virus and ensure that it does not come back with a vengeance. He said that broad conversations with merchants and restaurants are encouraged so that their challenges and ideas are understood. The Mayor said we have a uniquely talented and capable health care resource in Doylestown Health that needs to be part of the conversation so that basic healthy practices are at the core of "reopening".

Mayor Strouse said that businesses can adapt as is evidenced by the grocery stores and pharmacies which have operated through the pandemic, adapting and learning, and doing it relatively safely. He said that we need to work with merchants and restaurants to build on what has been learned to provide a safe environment throughout Doylestown, to achieve distancing and hygiene standards that are safe. He said that businesses that cannot do that need to remain closed until it is safe to reopen.

The Mayor said that the economic climate in Doylestown is going to be different than what it was a few months ago. He said that elected officials and Borough Staff will need to reevaluate infrastructure to encourage economic and social activity and growth in the context of our historically rich community. Mayor Strouse said that we have already rallied, in so many ways, to show support and meet this crisis, but we are really only beginning to meet the challenges in healthcare and in economic recovery. He thought Doylestown is a uniquely qualified community

with talent and resources, and we need to have commitment to come out on the other side of this crisis even stronger than where we started.

**PUBLIC SAFETY - Mr. Frederick**

Mr. Frederick said the committee did meet, but he had to leave early so he asked Mr. Browne to comment. Mr. Browne reported that they had an in-depth discussion with Chief Wood from Doylestown Fire Company, Chief Pressler from Central Bucks EMS, and Chief Knott, all of whom gave the status of their manpower, readiness, finances, and response to events. Chief Pressler noted that while there were some early financial concerns, they did get a PPP loan which has helped. Mr. Browne stated that they also discussed the Borough holding a recruitment event for the fire company once the situation allows. In addition, Mr. Browne stated they discussed forming a FEMA-type CERT team, Civilian Emergency Response Team, again, when conditions allow.

**PUBLIC WORKS AND ADMINISTRATION - Mr. Flood**

Mr. Flood stated he had no report and then asked Mr. Ehlinger for any comments he had. Mr. Ehlinger reported that the Public Works Department continues to work on the new park and borough hall, and they are making progress especially given the separated crews.

Mr. O'Brien stated that he agreed with Mr. Ehlinger regarding the progress as he travels past the site frequently and sees a lot of activity.

**COMMUNITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS - Mr. Bell**

Mr. Bell stated that the committee did meet this month where they discussed the Farmers' Market and they decided to permit the market to proceed through May with the continued use of barricades, masks, hand sanitizers, and social distancing. He said they also discussed the Pride Festival and noted that they will have block party on October 3. Mr. Bell said they are looking at nearby locations rather than being adjacent to the Farmers' Market. Lastly, Mr. Bell reported they discussed ways to recognize and show support of our long-term care facility workers. He said on May 15, Council members, the Mayor, a Public Works vehicle, the old fire Doylestown Fire Company engine, a vehicle from Central Bucks EMS, and the Borough's Fire Marshal, formed a caravan and drove by the four facilities with signs and cow bells.

On a different matter, Mr. O'Brien said he received an email through Mayor Strouse from Mr. Brexler from Doylestown Health regarding public education through a table or something similar. He thought perhaps this could be tried at the Farmers' Market. Mayor Strouse added that Doylestown Health is very enthusiastic and has used this before where they hand out masks, a fact sheet, and teach children proper hand washing. He said we have a very cooperative partner there. Mr. O'Brien thought we should pursue this to help educate the community.

## ZONING AND PLANNING - Mr. Brennan

1. **Application for Minor Subdivision Approval, Victoria Zebro & JEHL Limited Partnership, 43 Lafayette Street and 303 West Court Street.** Mr. Brennan said that Victoria Zebro and JEHL Limited Partnership, owners of TMPs 08-008-001 and 08-008-002, have proposed a lot line adjustment to convey a portion of TMP 08-008-002 to TMP 08-008-001. He said that Victoria Zebro, owner of TMP 08-008-001, will use the increased lot area for a garage and additional second-floor living space. A new garage will be constructed on 08-008-002. Mr. Brennan said that the applicant has been granted the necessary variances and Certificate of Appropriateness.

Mr. Brennan stated that this application was reviewed by the Borough Planning Commission in April 2020. The Commission recommended approval with the following conditions: (1) that the applicant resolve all outstanding issues in the review letters of the Borough Engineer, Borough Water Engineer, and Bucks County Planning Commission to the satisfaction of staff; (2) that the project comply with all applicable building and environmental regulations including local, state, and federal.

Mr. Brennan said that in consideration of the foregoing, the following waivers from the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance are recommended: (1) §804(a)(1), to waive the requirement to show objects to a scale of one inch to 100 feet; (2) §804(c)(2), to waive the requirement to show certain existing features not pertinent to the minor subdivision; and, (3) §804(c)(3), to waive the requirement to show the location and character of existing buildings, wooded areas, and other features.

Mr. Brennan said that if Council is in agreement with the Planning Commission's recommendation, it may grant approval by carrying a motion to do so. (Brennan-Margolis).

Attorney Edward Wild, counsel for applicants, was present and said he had nothing to add. He said the applicants agreed to the conditions as stated.

With no further comments from Council, Staff, or the public, the vote was called. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

2. **Zoning Hearing Board Report.** Mr. Brennan referred to Ms. Hyland, who reported that the Zoning Hearing Board will hold a virtual public meeting via Zoom on May 28, 2020, at 7 p.m., to hear the following applications: 686 North Chubb Drive, Colleen and Scott McGuffin, who request variances from Section 502 of the Doylestown Borough Zoning Ordinance to permit less than the required side and rear yard setbacks to permit the installation of an in-ground pool; and, 430 Linden Avenue, Charles and Kirah Fasano, who request variances from Section 502 to permit less than the required side yard setback and more than the permitted building coverage, and floor area ratio to permit the removal of a 1-story portion of the house to the rear and the construction of a 3-story addition in its place which includes a garage.

Ms. Hyland said that the Zoning Hearing Board will also hold a virtual public meeting via Zoom on June 3, 2020, at 7:00 p.m., to hear the following applications: 396 Linden Avenue, Richard and Lisa Chase, who request the following variances: from Section 502 to permit less than the required side yard, from Section 514.2 to permit a generator to encroach into the side yard

setback, from Section 502 and 504.3 to permit more than the lot coverage permitted and from Section 502 and 524 to permit more than the maximum floor area that is permitted. The applicant proposes an addition together with a porch, patio and attached garage to the existing dwelling; and, 164 East Court Street, Nicholas Gray, who requests a variance from Sections 502 and 524 to permit more than the permitted lot coverage to allow a garage addition with roof deck to the existing dwelling.

Mr. Bell asked how the grade plain was measured out for 430 Linden. Ms. Hyland stated it was measured to the rear of the garage.

3. **HARB Certificates of Appropriateness.** Mr. Brennan said that in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Historic and Architectural Review Board did not hold its regular monthly meeting on April 23, 2020. He said that the following applications were submitted for review and have been distributed to the HARB for consideration. Mr. Brennan said that Borough Staff, in conjunction with feedback received from individual HARB members, makes the following recommendations: Sign Applications: none; Building Applications: 1) 338 W. Court Street, an addition, by Bradley Burger; 2) 139 East Oakland Avenue, an addition, by Kenneth Armour, 3) 50 North Main Street, an addition and renovation, by Stephen Worth, 4) 26 South West Street, for windows, by Amy Skuse. Mr. Brennan said that Staff recommends approval of these applications as submitted.

Mr. Brennan said that if Council is in agreement with the recommendations, it may approve issuance of the certificates by motion. (Brennan-Frederick) With no comments from Council, Staff, or the public, the vote was called for approval of the Certificates of Appropriateness. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

#### **ENVIRONMENT AND RECREATION - Ms. Margolis**

Ms. Margolis stated although they did not meet she did want to mention that most grocery stores are still allowing people to bring their plastic bags for recycling. She asked that people hold onto the plastic bags if they can't get them to a store or the store isn't accepting them because at some point, they will bring that back at the Farmers' Market.

Ms. Margolis also stated there have been questions regarding when or if Fanny Chapman Pool will open. She said the pool does intend to open if they can and they have been preparing to do so, as long as it opens by August 1. Ms. Margolis said it is still unclear when Bucks County will move from the red to yellow and then to green stage, so information about the pool will be forthcoming.

#### **WATER UTILITY - Ms. Jarret**

Ms. Jarret said the committee did not meet. She said spoke with Water Director Chris Norris today and he confirmed he had nothing to be addressed.

## **FINANCE/PENSION - Ms. West**

### **1. Authorization to Advertise Bid: Borough Hall and CBRPD Additions and Alterations.**

Ms. West stated that Bid plans and specifications for additions and alterations to the former PennDOT maintenance facility on North Broad Street for the purpose of its conversion to a new Borough Hall and Central Bucks Regional Police Department headquarters are complete and the bid can now be advertised. The bid opening is scheduled for early July such that bids can be considered by Council at their July meeting.

Ms. West said that Chalfont and New Britain Borough Councils have already authorized the advertisement of the bid. Borough Staff and the Finance Committee are recommending that Council do likewise. She said that if Council wishes to follow the recommendation, it could do so by motion. (West-Brennan) With no comments from Council, Staff, or the public, the vote was called. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

**2. Finance Report.** As Ms. Brinker was not present, Ms. West reported that the total of all funds expended was \$761,841.87. Motion to approve the Finance Report. (West-Bell) With no comments from Council, Staff, or the public, the vote was called. All were in favor and the motion passed unanimously.

**PERSONNEL - Mr. O'Brien:** None.

## **PROFESSIONALS' REPORTS**

**Engineer's Report** - Mr. Dougherty: No report.

**Solicitor's Report** - Mr. Closser: No report.

**Central Bucks Regional Police Department (CBRPD) Activities Report.** Chief Knott: No report. The monthly activity report provided to Council shows there were 933 incidents in the Borough in April 2020, and year-to-date, the Department spent \$1,878,408.76 and were at 31.19% of their yearly budget.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT:** None.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Margolis encouraged everyone to use the new mail-in ballot feature for voting this year. She said the Pennsylvania primary election is now on June 2 due to Covid-19.

Mr. Frederick commented that there are some people opening their business while still under the red phase in Bucks County. He noted that if they do so, they could be jeopardizing their insurance coverage and putting themselves at risk of having their claims denied, and risk losing required licensing.

**OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 7:28 pm, an Executive Session was announced for a personnel matter. No announcement was expected upon conclusion of that session.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

At 7:45 p.m., Mr. O'Brien entertained a motion to adjourn. (West-Margolis). The vote was called and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

John H. Davis  
Borough Manager

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