

**MOUNT POCONO BOROUGH COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2019
6:00 P.M.**

President C. Williams opened the Public Hearing at 6:00 P.M. with the following members present: Vice President F. O'Boyle Councilmembers: D. Casole; T. Ford; A. Montanez; and, M. Hensel. Mayor M. Penn; Solicitor J. Fareri; Zoning/ Codes Enforcement Officer D. Noonan; and, Borough Secretary/ Treasurer L. Noonan were also present.

S. Stewart-Keeler was absent.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said by all.

Solicitor J. Fareri stated that tonight's meeting is a Public Hearing. He introduced Attorney Huffman who was present on behalf of the Applicant Stan Brudish. There is a court stenographer at tonight's meeting. He requested that everybody speak slowly and clearly and do not speak over one another in order to aid the stenographer in accurate records. He noted that the order of business this evening would be Attorney Huffman would present evidence and that there would be Borough Council questions to the witnesses and then Borough Council would open the floor to residents of the Borough for questions and comments. Nonresidents are not permitted to speak at this Public Hearing. Solicitor J. Fareri stated that they would permit limited questions, please keep your questions concise and don't repeat questions asked by others.

COUNCIL EXHIBITS

Solicitor J. Fareri entered the following item as Council exhibits:

Council Exhibit #1 – a Zoning map outlining the location of 25 & 27 Fairview Avenue.

Council Exhibit #2 – a letter and subsequent documents from Attorney Deborah L. Huffman, which consisted of the petition of the Zoning map change for the properties located at 25 & 27 Fairview Avenue.

Council Exhibit #3 – a letter from the Monroe County Industrial Development Authority (MCIDA) advising Borough Council that MCIDA has applied for LSA Grant on behalf of Hoops International, Inc. in the amount of 840,000.00. This also included a business outline of Hoops International, Inc.

Council Exhibit #4 – the review and comment letter from the Monroe County Planning Commission.

Council Exhibit #5 – the review and comment letter from the Mount Pocono Planning Commission.

Council Exhibit #6 – proof of publication that the Public Hearing was advertised in *Pocono Record* on October 23rd, and October 30th, 2019.

Council Exhibit #7 – a Zoning Officer certificate that the property was posted, and letters were sent to the contiguous property owners.

Council Exhibit #8 – copies of letters and receipts of the certified mailing.

APPLICANT EXHIBITS

The floor was now turned over to Attorney Huffman.

Attorney Huffman advised that she would be calling on several witnesses to testify this evening for the proposal of the request for the Zoning map change of property located at 25 & 27 Fairview Avenue.

Applicant Exhibit A – Witnesses: She will be calling on Zoning/ Codes Enforcement Officer Dennis Noonan, Steve Argen and Andy Kruper.

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All three (3) were sworn in to testify by the court stenographer.

Attorney Huffman called Zoning/ Codes Enforcement Officer D. Noonan and asked various Zoning related questions as to the location and current use of the property, the current Zoning and what is permitted in a R-1 and C-1 Zones.

Questions to witness.

Councilmember D. Casole read a statement in opposition of the petition of the Zoning map change for the property located at 25 & 27 Fairview Avenue and encouraged all Councilmembers to vote no.

Attorney Huffman then called Steven Argen, a certified broker and appraiser for local real estate in Monroe County.

Mr. Steven Argen advised that he appraised the property for the former church and was the referral agent for Hoops International, Inc. He noted that he is very familiar with the property as he went to church there, he was married there and was confirmed there. He testified that he sits on the advisory board and helps Hoops International find a base for their non-profit work. He also noted that Stan Brudish does business with Hoops International, Inc. on all continents and explained what Hoops International, Inc. does. He further noted that Mr. Brudish would keep the church and rectory looking exactly the way it does now, the inside would be a community center where children would learn how to play basketball and life skills through coaching for self-control, teamwork and integrity. The purpose of the community center is for the community, not to house people. They will integrate with the community center and hopefully provide daily tutoring and life skills. It was noted that Mr. Brudish was away on a group outing in Costa Rica, which was planned and scheduled a year ago. This would be a place where the youth of Mount Pocono and neighboring communities could come. He explained this location was chosen because it is an area where they could reach millions of people on one (1) tank full of gas. Mr. Argen noted that an LSA Grant for Youth Star was obtained and he was engaged to do an appraisal. When the deal fell through, he reached out to Hoops International, Inc.

Mayor M. Penn asked how many residents of the Borough would benefit from Hoops International, Inc.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Jean Simchak, 39 Fairview Avenue, read a statement regarding the history of Fairview Avenue and the businesses that were once were located on Fairview Avenue. She discussed the impacts of the residents in the Borough especially should the property be Zoned to C-1.

Mike Oser, 39 Fairview Avenue, discussed that Hoops International, Inc. is the first of its kind. He reviewed their business plan and discussed the pay to play/ refurbishing of the church. He felt that this was putting the cart before the horse giving them the Zoning then they would tell us what they are going to do.

Tom Neville, 209 Knob Road, asked residents present who is not in favor of this Zoning change request.

It should be noted that the majority in attendance were not in favor of the Zoning change.

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Pastor Leanon Trawick, stated that he would like to see this happen but not at the location of 25 & 27 Fairview Avenue. He felt the former Luciano Restaurant would be a perfect location. He also stated that he was in the process of building a community center behind his church, it's the same thing on different dirt.

Brian O'Keefe, 28 Fairview Avenue, asked how many times they have purchased properties.

Patty Bucco, 140 Winona Road, asked how many employees. The answer was four (4).


Sean Terrell, 89 Fairview Avenue, questioned what exactly they are going to do.

At this time, Solicitor J. Fareri closed questions.

Attorney Huffman asked Borough Council to think what they want to happen with this property. If it remains an R-1 zone, it's unlikely a user will be found, and the church would become blighted and implored Borough Council to consider the Zoning.

Solicitor J. Fareri stated that the Public Hearing will now be closed, and Borough Council will take all testimony and comments under advisement and that they will vote on this matter at an upcoming meeting.

Respectfully submitted,



Lori Noonan, Borough Secretary

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