

Jeannette Planning Commission | Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: October 4, 2017

Attendance:

- Alec Italiano, Chairman: Present
- William Pacelli, Co-Chairman: Present
- Joseph Carle: Present
- Donald Deguffroy: Present
- Jonathan Gibbon: **Absent**
- Laura Smith: Present
- Judy Soles: Present
- Brian Lawrence, Westmoreland County Planning: Present
- Seth Koons, Westmoreland County Planning: Present
- Daniel Carpenter, Westmoreland County Planning: Present



Call to Order:

- Meeting called to order at 5:30 PM. Jonathan Gibbon was the only member absent.

Previous Meeting's Minutes:

- Joseph Carle made the note that per the previous meeting's minutes, he did not state that the planning commission should act as a "mediator" to the City Council.
- The minutes were unanimously approved with the edits made per the comment from Joseph Carle.

Staff Report: **Zoning**

- Brian Lawrence noted that the 1st reading of the Jeannette Zoning Ordinance was held on September 25th, per the requirements of the State's MPC. Lawrence stated that the meeting started at 6:30 PM and was adjourned at 6:37PM. Lawrence attributed the short meeting time to the significant amount of public outreach that was done for the ordinance; and that this allowed for all the public comments to be heard prior to the first reading. Lawrence stated that council was likely to adopt the ordinance at the 2nd, and final, public reading at the October 11th meeting.

Old Business:

- Alec Italiano briefly discussed how he had talked about getting some definitive ideas on paper to present to council.
- William Pacelli asked if there was any update on the Monsour property. Brian Lawrence stated that the county has accepted the proposed development, but that there was much more to do. Lawrence discussed how the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) was working with the developer on the design of the site, and how the development would have to comply with the new zoning ordinance should it be adopted by the Jeannette City Council. Lawrence wasn't sure how familiar the developer was with the zoning ordinance.
- The Planning Commission voiced interest in inviting the developer of the Monsour property to attend a planning commission meeting. Daniel Carpenter stated that he would be willing to bring his review comments, or the plans themselves, of the development to the Planning Commission after the Planning Department receives the application for land development.
- Alec Italiano started a discussion on the glass plant, and the ongoing demolition. Brian Lawrence talked about the impact of the environmental analysis on the future development of the site, and the alternatives for environmental remediation.
- Alec Italiano moved the commission on to the new business on the agenda.

Agenda Item #1: **Corridors and Gateways**

- Laura Smith started the discussion by suggesting that the commission switch their focus from the "Corridors and Gateways" section of the Comprehensive Plan to the "Downtowns" section. Smith thought this would be a more appropriate approach on account of all the recent business activity in downtown Jeannette. Smith touched on the proposed amphitheater in the downtown and passed around some conceptual sketches of the site and structure. Alec Italiano talked about the role of the Planning Commission in the "Public Relations" initiative of the Comprehensive Plan. Italiano stated that he would be willing to write a draft for a press release that would speak about the Planning Commission and the ongoing work being done as part of the comprehensive plan. Smith also brought up the Jeannette Business Association (JBA) and their ethnic food festival as another method of PR for Jeannette. Smith also stated that DeLallo's recently joined the JBA. Smith talked about her excitement for the festival, and how the community of Jeannette is coming together to support the event.
- Donald Deguffroy brought up his list of potential street improvements as something that could be taken before council as a method of improving the downtown. Joseph Carle reiterated his point from the previous meeting that the streets are already maintained by the city, and that presenting the list to council would not be necessary. Alec Italiano thought it may be beneficial to put the list together in an effort to assist the new mayor as he enters office. Brian Lawrence thought that it would be helpful to have the road manager attend a Planning Commission meeting to help the commission understand the struggles he faces with maintaining the roads in the city.

- The conversation then focused back towards the process moving forward on the Comprehensive Plan. Brian Lawrence urged the Planning Commission to remember that the steps outlined in the Comprehensive Plan are those they should be following. Lawrence introduced, to the commission, the idea of forming a “Community Appearance Group” that would be focused on improving the corridors and gateways in Jeannette. Lawrence then talked about the planning staff’s idea to help develop a data collection tool that would be utilized to conduct an existing conditions inventory of each of the defined corridors and gateways. Laura Smith informed the commission that the blight group (who is focused on removing blighted properties throughout Jeannette) has already completed an inventory of the blighted properties around each of the corridors and gateways, and some of the additional existing conditions that the inventory would have focused on.
- Through further conversation fostered by Laura Smith, the commission decided that a focus on the downtown initiatives in the comprehensive plan would be more pertinent. The commission decided that each member should read that section of the comprehensive plan and come to the next meeting prepared to start the process of a “Downtown Plan”.

Public Comment:

- Margie Stanislaw, a resident of Jeannette, gave her opinion on the potential development of the Zion site in Jeannette. Stanislaw urged the group, and the county, to explore ways to have the site developed into a mixed-use neighborhood center that could be an economic draw for the city and the surrounding municipalities. Stanislaw also talked about the business being conducted by CME Digital Marketing (based out of Jeannette) and the impressive projects they have completed.

Adjournment:

- The meeting was adjourned at 6:41 PM.