

**MEETING MINUTES OF THE
BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION
BOROUGH OF WIND GAP
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY, PA
MARCH 7, 2024**

I/II. Opening/Pledge

The meeting was called to order and opened at 7:00 p.m. by 2023 Borough Planning Commissioner Chair Linda Paynter and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. Roll Call

Commissioners Linda Paynter, George Hinton, David Manzo, Michael McNamara and Patrick Webber were present in the Meeting Room. Also present were the Borough Planning Administrator, D. Harbison; Borough and Planning Commission Solicitor, Ronold J. Karasek, Esquire; the Borough EIT, Brian Pysher and the Borough Zoning Officer, Suzanne Borzak. This meeting was held at the Borough Municipal Building, 545 East West Street, Wind Gap, PA 18091.

IV. 2024 Commission Reorganization

The Borough Solicitor was appointed as the Temporary Chair to take nominations for Planning Commission Chair.

Chair: The only nomination for Chair was Linda Paynter. On motion by D. Manzo and seconded by G. Hinton and on a vote of 5-0, Ms. Paynter was unanimously elected as the Commission Chair. Ms. Paynter then assumed the position as Chair for the remainder of the nominations and the elections.

Vice-Chair: Nominations were then taken for Planning Commission Vice-Chair. The only nomination for Vice-Chair was George Hinton. On motion by D. Manzo and seconded by L. Paynter and on a vote of 5-0, Mr. Hinton was unanimously elected as the Commission Vice-Chair.

Secretary: Nominations were then taken for Planning Commission Secretary. The only nomination for Secretary was the Borough Planning Administrator, Debra Harbison. On motion by L. Paynter and seconded by D. Manzo and on a vote of 5-0, Ms. Harbison was unanimously elected as the Commission Secretary.

Meeting Day, Time and Place: On motion of G. Hinton and seconded by D. Manzo and on a vote of 5-0, the day of the monthly meetings was changed to the third (3rd) Thursday of the month beginning with the April 2024 Meeting i.e. Thursday, April 18, 2024. The time and place remained the same i.e. at 7:00 pm at the Borough Municipal Building.

V. Approval of Minutes

The Planning Commission Meeting Minutes of November 2, 2023 were approved on motion made by G. Hinton, duly seconded by D. Manzo and carried on unanimous vote of 5-0.

VI. Public Comment-None.

VII. Plans to be Discussed

- A. Applicant: 3 Aide Properties**
Address: 537 Lehigh Avenue
Project: Low Rise Multi-Family Residential Units-2 stories with 8 units
District: R-8 (Medium Density Residential)

Only Joseph E. Rentko, P.E., the Applicant's Planning Professional, appeared on behalf of the Applicant. Mr. Aide was out of town.

Borough EIT Pysher began the discussion as to the outstanding zoning issues. He states that past Planning Commission were "sticklers" on the fact that the Commission would not review a plan until the zoning issues were first resolved¹. ZO Borzak also commented on one of the zoning issues i.e. if one includes the ultimate right-of-way, there is not sufficient lot area (40,000 sq. ft needed) for eight (8) units...only six (6) units would be allowed.

Engineer Rentko stated that he filed a Sketch Plan in which the present building would be demolished and a two-story apartment building be constructed in its place. He stated that he reviewed the Plan with the Zoning Officer who told him that such apartments are permitted uses in the R-8 Zoning District; and, that eight (8) units would be allowed. At the Planning Commission Meeting, the Zoning Officer stated that the right-of-way vs. lot area was not considered when the Sketch Plan was discussed.

However, Mr. Rentko states that the ordinance recites the distance from the existing "street" right-of-way (56' with 28 feet from centerline) and not the "ultimate" right-of-way (80' with 40' from centerline). This would mean there could be seven (7) units. Nevertheless, a zoning dimensional variance would still be needed. There were questions as to whether the Applicant would be able to establish a hardship for the variance; however, Mr. Rentko reminded the Commission that the hardship for a dimensional variance is much less stringent than for a use variance...and only dimensional variances are required for this project.

Commissioner Hinton stated that he would like to see the apartment building rotated or "flipped" so it would be more aesthetically pleasing. Engineer Rentko stated that he had designed such a plan but the Applicant rejected it.

There were discussions concerning the sidewalk with a "Stop Bar", the front yard setbacks and buffering/landscaping on both sides of the lot to minimize the sight line of the proposed present location of the building.

Borough EIT Pysher stated that a Demolition Permit would be needed and that the Sewer Authority be consulted before such demolition to cap off the sanitary sewer line and otherwise secure Sewer Authority approval.² Mr. Rentko stated that he is planning on one (1) sewer lateral. Mr. Pysher also stated that the curbing and sidewalk should be replaced. Mr.

¹ See the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, Section 309.

² The Commission also suggested that the Applicant address an issue with F Alley where the Applicant previously failed to secure permits for the work that was done; and, he and did not cap off the sewer line.

Pysher was also concerned about impervious cover, stormwater/earth disturbance and that a SALDO waiver should be filed if a preliminary/final land development plan is proposed.

Mr. Rentko stated that he would re-address the rotated building design with the Applicant and also address the Borough EIT issues and then re-present the Plan to the Planning Commission. The Commission felt that this was a wise way to proceed.

On motion made by D. Manzo, seconded by G. Hinton and on a unanimous vote of 5-0, the Plan was then tabled.

VIII. Old Business: None

IX. New Business: None

X. Referral from the ZHB: None

XI. Adjournment – 7:55 p.m. on a motion made by Commissioner D. Manzo, duly seconded by Commissioner M. McNamara, the Motion to Adjourn was carried with unanimous vote of 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,
KARASEK LAW OFFICES, LLC

By: 

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