

MINUTES

HARRISBURG PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

January 8, 2020

**THE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CITY GOVERNMENT CENTER
PUBLIC SAFETY ANNEX, ROOM 213**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Joseph Alsberry, Chair
Shaun E. O'Toole
Jamesetta Reed
Ausha Green
Anne Marek
Zac Monnier (arrived at 6:39 PM)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Vern McKissick, Vice Chair

STAFF PRESENT: Geoffrey Knight, Planning Director
Tiffanie Baldock, Senior Deputy City Solicitor
Neil Grover, City Solicitor

OTHERS PRESENT: See Sign-In Sheet

CALL TO ORDER: 6:34 PM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Commissioner O'Toole moved, and Commissioner Marek seconded the motion, to approve the minutes from the November 6th meeting without corrections; the motion was adopted by a unanimous (4-0-1; Commissioner Reed abstained) vote.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

1 Variance Applications for 100 North Cameron Street, zoned Downtown Center (DC), filed by Gina Holmes with Holmes Honey Tree, to request relief from the Specific Criteria regulations in Section 7-309.2(m)(2) requiring an on-site, secure, outdoor play area.

Mr. Knight gave a synopsis of the report, recommending Approval with Conditions; the conditions were that:

1. The Applicant will establish an interior recreational area for children so that they may have space for active play. Additionally, the Planning Bureau recommends that the Applicant schedule trips for children to nearby parks and outdoor spaces such as Royal Terrace Park or Reservoir Park, so that they may have opportunities for outdoor, active recreation.
2. Any signage advertising the proposed use will conform to the regulations in Chapter 7-325 of the Zoning Code; if such signage will not be in conformance, then a zoning relief application will be filed as necessary.

The case was represented by Gina Holmes with Holmes Honey Tree (the business owner), 100 North Cameron Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101 (aka “the Applicant”).

Commissioner Alsberry asked the Applicant whether the conditions in the case report were acceptable; the Applicant responded that they were. Commissioner Alsberry stated that he was familiar with the property from his previous job with the Workforce Investment Board and confirmed that there was no available space on the property for a play area. The Applicant stated that she would make accommodations for an interior play area since she had the space to do so.

Commissioner Marek noted that the commissioners had received an existing floor plan of the building in their packet and asked whether the Applicant had a floor plan that showed the proposed layout of the facility and identified a location for a play area. The Applicant noted that the documentation included a floor plan of the third floor of the building and noted the area highlighted in yellow was the proposed footprint, and that the area outlined in red was a potential expansion area. Commissioner Monnier noted that their packets did not include color; Mr. Knight noted that the Applicant had only submitted a single copy of the documentation and that the City’s color printer wasn’t available to reproduce that documentation for the packets. He circulated the original copy of the documentation from the Planning Bureau’s files.

Commissioner Marek asked whether the Applicant had a proposed site plan of what the facility would look like and the rooms that would provide an area for expansion. She noted that the commissioners were being asked to approve a proposal with a condition that they weren’t sure whether the Applicant could meet. She stated that the commissioners may want to modify that condition of approval or require a proposed floor plan showing where the noted recreational area might be located. Mr. Knight stated that he felt that was a reasonable condition. The Applicant asked whether she would be required to show that in a picture or drawing, noting that the pictures included in the application submission showed the interior space. Mr. Knight noted that the Applicant had only provided one copy of the interior photos, and that he could not provide additional copies to the planning commissioners due to the aforementioned color printing issues; he circulated the set of photos submitted to the Planning Bureau for the commissioners’ review.

Commissioner Marek noted that the rooms were fairly large and it appeared as though they could accommodate an interior recreation area. The planning commissioners spent time reviewing the submitted photographs. Commissioner Marek reiterated that she was hoping to see a to-scale drawing of the proposed floor plan. Commissioner Alsberry stated that he agreed with Commissioner Marek regarding the need for a proposed floor plan, noting that applicants generally provided such documentation for review. Mr. Knight asked for confirmation that the condition of approval was that the proposed floor plan be provided prior to the Zoning Hearing Board meeting; Commissioner Marek confirmed that was the intention. The Applicant confirmed that she would have that ready for the Zoning Hearing Board meeting.

Commissioner Alsberry asked whether there was anyone from the public that was for or against the project; there were no comments.

Commissioner Marek stated that she was also familiar with the building and confirmed that the third floor had space available for a day care facility; she stated that child care was a continuous need for families in the city, so she was happy to see the proposal. Commissioner Green agreed with the need for a proposed floor plan.

Commissioner Green noted that there was plenty of parking on-site for the proposed use; the Applicant stated that her reserved parking was located on the opposite side of the building from the accessory parking lot so that she had the required loading and unloading area. She also stated that the building was very secure and had camera surveillance. Commissioner Alsberry stated that his general concerns were related to parking, and that he was happy to hear the Applicant had secured dedicated parking. He also noted that many clients who accessed professional services at the building also had children who needed supervision while they were working on professional development activities.

Commissioner Alsberry asked the Applicant whether she had secured the necessary certifications to operate a child care facility. The Applicant stated that she was in the process of securing approval from the Child Care Network and that the last steps in getting approval were receiving a Mercantile Permit, which required approval of the current Variance request.

Commissioner Green moved, and Commissioner Marek seconded the motion, to Approve the request with Staff & Additional Conditions; the additional condition was that the Applicant would provide a proposed floor plan prior to being heard by the Zoning Hearing Board. The motion was adopted by a unanimous vote (6-0).

2 Variance Application for 440 Kelker Street, zoned Commercial Neighborhood (CN), filed by Tarik Casteel with TLC Work-Based Training, Inc., to exceed the allowable residential density by establishing eight units within a proposed “Multifamily Dwelling” project.

Mr. Knight gave a synopsis of the report, recommending Approval with Conditions; the conditions were that:

1. The Applicant will ensure that the mature trees in the northwest corner of the property are retained during site preparation and construction.
2. The Applicant will coordinate with the City Engineer’s Office on the construction/ rehabilitation of any sidewalks adjacent to the property, to ensure they are in compliance with ADA requirements and City regulations, and will coordinate with the City Arborist on any proposed trees to be planted on-site or in the surrounding rights-of-way.
3. The Applicant will apprise the Department of Public Works of the development to ensure adequate refuse service to the property.
4. The Planning Bureau would recommend that the Applicant not utilize EIFS for the second and third floors, as indicated in the elevation plans, and instead utilize masonry veneer, cementitious fiberboard, or metal panels as proposed for elsewhere on the building.

The case was represented by Tarik & Demi Casteel w/ TLC Work Based Training Programs, Inc. and TLC Construction & Renovations, respectively (the property owners and developers), 1821 Fulton Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102; and Daniel Wise w/ RJ Fisher Engineering (the project

engineer), 1546 Bridge Street, New Cumberland, PA 17070 (the project engineer)(aka “the Applicants”).

Commissioner Alsberry asked whether the conditions in the case report were acceptable to the Applicants; they replied that EIFS provided better insulation than cementitious fiberboard, and that they felt it provided better longevity than cementitious fiberboard, although they acknowledged that the product had not been around that long. The Applicants noted that they had used EIFS on the adjacent veterans housing project. Commissioner Alsberry asked whether it would be a hardship if the Planning Commission required its use; the Applicants noted that cementitious fiberboard would cost more; he stated that it would have a similar look.

Commissioner O’Toole noted that the Planning Bureau’s case report had recommended the use of an alternative material and had not required it; he asked whether the Planning Bureau had intended stronger language. Mr. Knight noted that the property was not located in an overlay district, such as an historic district, that would provide regulations on aesthetics and stated that the Planning Bureau always recommended products other than EIFS in development projects since it had a cheaper appearance. He also noted that the Planning Bureau had stated that other products proposed for the façade such as brick veneer or metal siding could be used as well; he did confirm that the condition was optional.

Commissioner Marek asked whether the property was in a district that provided any design oversight; Mr. Knight confirmed that it was not.

Commissioner Alsberry asked whether the Applicants were providing any off-street parking for the project. The Applicants noted that the Zoning Code did not require off-street parking in the zoning district in which the property was located; they further noted that they owned the property directly to north, which had an accessory parking lot with 31 spaces. They stated that the homeless veterans’ housing project at 20 units, but that most of the residents did not have a vehicle and thus there would be sufficient off-street parking available to residents of the proposed development. They noted that a shared parking arrangement would be possible.

Commissioner Alsberry asked whether there was anyone from the public that was for or against the project. Mr. Matt Meads (1738 North 5th Street, Harrisburg, PA) noted that he lived directly across Kelker Street from the subject property. He stated that his primary concern was parking and that while the Applicants’ assertion that there were sufficient available spaces in the adjacent parking lot on 1820 North 5th Street, he did think that would be the case in the future. He stated that the Applicants could not guarantee that the tenants of the homeless veterans’ apartments would not have cars in the future. He stated that he was the Pennsylvania State Employees Retirement System (PSERS) Director of Real Estate and that he would never invest in a property that had a parking ratio of 31 spaces for 28 total units because it was “troublesome” and “unusual” and that it was “not good for the value of surrounding property.” He stated that he understood that off-street parking was not required but stated that people would park on the street, which was one-way and “overcrowded;” he stated that his car had been hit by a turning fire truck because parking was so tight. He stated that it was unfortunate that he had invested in a property in the neighborhood and had to park several blocks away, and that his wife came home late at night and that he didn’t want her to park blocks away and walk home.

Mr. Meads also noted that the Fire Department had made many trips to the existing homeless veterans housing project on the block, which was a nuisance for the community. He stated that if there was a fire in the proposed project, the Fire Department would be challenged in getting to the site. Mr. Meads stated that there were many instances of cars parked on the street being sideswiped, and that the proposed project would make that situation worse because more people would be parking on the street.

Mr. Meads stated that the Applicants had done a very good job with the homeless veterans' apartment project and that the building was complementary to the neighborhood. He commended the City on the projects it had undertaken in the community prior to his moving to the neighborhood, but stated that he had concerns about the use of the materials on the building façade. He stated that he wanted to ensure the construction was not done cheaply, which he felt would set back the neighborhood's improvements.

Mr. Howard Lewis, Jr. (owner of properties at 426, 428, 431, and 433 Kelker Street, Harrisburg, PA) noted that his properties were south of the subject property and asked whether there was a plan to address storm-sewer capacity. He noted that he had previously had to excavate the rear yards of his properties about eight years ago to address sewer problems. He asked whether the project would put additional strain on the system. He also stated that there were some parking issues on the block and that his vehicle had been sideswiped at night due to the narrow width of the roadway.

Mr. Marc Harris (1732 North 5th Street) stated that the Applicants did a great job on the homeless veterans' housing project and that the subject property was well-maintained. He stated that the project's impact on the intersection would be a concern, noting that there were parking issues in the area and that the project would make that worse. He noted that he had lived at the property for seven years and spent a lot of time making the neighborhood better; he stated that the project had the potential to either enhance or disrupt the neighborhood. Mr. Harris stated that he hoped they were able to come up with the best solution to address everyone's issues.

Mr. Abey Abraham (1736 North 5th Street) stated that he echoed the other sentiments and that his biggest concern was having parking for his wife when she got home late from work. He said that the Applicants' current homeless veterans' housing project did not affect parking in front of his house, but that there would definitely be an impact after the current project was complete. He stated that he was impacted by other multifamily units in the area taking up "his" parking space. Mr. Abraham stated that he wanted to ensure he or his wife had a place to park his car when he came home at night. He also noted that speeding in the area was bad and that no one obeyed the stop sign; he stated that he had requested that police officers monitor the intersection. He stated that if there were more cars on the street, they would be hit too. Mr. Harris claimed that there were only two stop signs between Harris Street and Maclay Street, and that people used it as a bypass of 6th Street. Commissioner Alsberry noted that the Planning Commission was not considering the issue of speeding in its review.

Mr. Abraham stated that he really liked the homeless veterans' housing project and thought that the current project may be an expansion of that facility, but was concerned to hear that it would be

multifamily units. He also stated his concern about the prevalence of fire trucks responding to incidents at the homeless veterans' housing project, and that it often woke him up in the middle of the night.

Commissioner Alsberry asked the Applicants whether they wanted to respond to the concerns. They stated that they felt they had already responded to the parking concerns with a proposal to allocate parking spaces in the adjacent accessory parking lot. They noted that there were 20 units at that facility and 31 parking spaces, so that there would be at least 11 parking spaces available for residents of the proposed project. They noted that the Zoning Code did not require either project to have off-street parking for the uses.

Mrs. Casteel noted that she worked at the homeless veterans' housing project and that there was usually only a single individual per unit and that many of the individuals had physical disabilities preventing them from driving, which reduced the ownership and storage of cars by residents. She stated that although residents would be rotating in and out, the majority of the time, the individuals did not have cars. Mrs. Casteel stated that their fire alarm system was fairly sensitive and that they could adjust the sensitivity to reduce the number of responses by the Fire Department.

The Applicants also referenced the stormwater runoff concerns and presented a site plan, noting that the entirety of the runoff from the roofs would be collected in the rear of the site. They noted that there were two stormwater management facilities that would collect runoff from the roof and infiltrate it directly into the ground which would control the rate of runoff. They noted that they runoff onto Kelker Street would be reduced because more of the site would drain to the rear, rather than into the street. The Applicants noted that the infrastructure would be connected into existing stormwater management facilities on Fulton Street, via the Kent Alley right-of-way, so that any overflow would be directed to the west. They noted that CRW had reviewed the plans and made some administrative comments that they were intending on addressing.

Commissioner Marek stated that she would like to see an agreement in place regarding the allocation of spaces in the parking lot on the adjacent property, but noted that off-street parking wasn't required. Commissioner Green suggested that the neighbors who had attended the meeting coordinate with the Harrisburg Parking Authority to get a residential parking permit zone created in the neighborhood. She noted that this might help alleviate some of the issues the public had expressed. Commissioner Green also noted that the commissioners could not put a condition related to parking on the project since they were not required to have off-street parking.

Commissioner Alsberry noted that an individual in attendance wanted to speak and stated the Planning Commission did not allow back-and-forth dialogue. Mr. Meads stated that he didn't see the need for a Variance request unless the Applicants were only trying to make more money. Commissioner O'Toole stated the Applicants were requesting a Variance to establish 20 units on-site; Mr. Knight corrected him and noted the request was only for 8 units. Commissioner Marek noted that the Applicants could construct 6 units by right and that the Zoning Code was a bit vague in reference to how density was reviewed. Commissioner O'Toole stated that the planning commissioners took public comments seriously, but reiterated that off-street parking was not required in the zoning district in which the property was located and thus they could not make it a

condition of approval, and that the only issue they were deciding on was whether to recommend approval of the proposal to establish 8 units or only allow the Applicants to construct 6 units.

Commissioner Marek asked whether the Applicants had considered vacating Kent Alley and consolidating the parcels to increase the square footage, which would potentially permit more units by right. The Applicants stated that the land gained from a vacation of Kent Alley would likely not permit the by-right construction of 8 units. Commissioner Marek asked whether that right-of-way was an open street; the Applicants confirmed that it was only an improved street.

Commissioner Alsberry asked the Planning Bureau staff their thoughts about vacation; Mr. Knight noted that he had had preliminary conversations about the vacation of the street, but that vacating the right-of-way would not create conditions for the by-right development of 8 units and that MPC requirements made the street vacation process take longer than the zoning relief or land development reviews. Mr. Knight noted that he had considered that aspect and addressed it in the case report, and that the additional square footage would not enable an additional, by-right unit.

Mr. Knight noted that the structure itself kept a similar massing and site configuration to adjacent properties. He also stated that a condition that the Applicants allocate spaces in the parking lot on the adjacent property, and advertise their availability, would be a reasonable request. Mr. Knight noted that the members of the public concerned about the noise from fire department responses may also be impacted by the location of the fire station around the corner from the project site. He stated that the project's nature would not induce additional fire department response any more than any other surrounding property would. Mr. Knight noted that the concern about speeding and sideswiping of parked vehicles would likely not be exacerbated by the project, as there was nothing inherent in the proposal that would add to the issue.

Mr. Knight referenced Commissioner Green's recommendation to seek a residential parking permit area, and noted that there were other options for addressing speeding and dangerous driving beyond police spot-checks, including curb bump-outs, better signage, and higher-visibility road markings. He stated that the City Engineer's Office would be willing to work with the residents to explore these options.

Mr. Knight noted that the Fire Bureau reviewed the Land Development Plan application that accompanied the Variance application, and considered aspects such as vehicle maneuverability, access to the site, and building compliance with Fire Bureau regulations. He noted that if the Fire Chief felt that the project would adversely impact any of these issues, they would provide comments to that effect, noting that they had done so during the consideration of locations for bump-outs during the 3rd Street reconstruction project. Mr. Knight stated that these concerns would thus not be exacerbated by the proposed project.

Commissioner O'Toole asked whether the Applicants had a proposal for possible rents for the units. They stated that the project would involve a combination of market-rate and low-income units and noted that they had received a PHARE grant [note: this is a reference to PHFA's Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement program]. They stated that the lease for the two-bedroom units would be approximately \$1,200 per month. Commissioner O'Toole noted that it was the first project they had seen in a while that was not entirely market

rate units. Commissioner Marek inquired as to the average floor area of the units; the Applicants stated that they units were 833 square feet for the one-bedroom units and approximately 1,100 square feet for the two-bedroom units.

Commissioner Marek noted that the proposed project, a three-story apartment building, was generally in line with other buildings in the neighborhood. She stated that the Planning Commission often reviewed residential development projects with units that were smaller than the proposed units at a higher price point.

Commissioner Monnier noted that the city had acres of vacant land on which buildings had been demolished, and that the promotion of infill development on a vacant lot was a good concept. Commissioner Marek stated that she was happy to see a vacant property in a residential neighborhood being utilized for infill residential development. Commissioner O'Toole stated that if he were in the neighborhood, he would be concerned about parking as well. Commissioner Monnier disagreed, stating that the paradigm of two cars per housing unit was not an expectation the Planning Commission should set for itself. Commissioner O'Toole agreed and stated that he supported the project; he expressed support for a resolution which recommended that project residents are advised to park in the lot on the adjacent property. Commissioner Marek stated that she also supported that idea, but wasn't sure to which application, the Variance or the Land Development Plan, that condition would be applied. Mr. Knight stated that if parking were as difficult as the residents of the neighborhood claimed, then future residents of the project would likely prefer to have a secured, dedicated space in a lot as opposed to looking for parking on the street.

Commissioner Alsberry noted that an individual in attendance wanted to speak and stated that this was the last opportunity he was providing for the public to do so. Mr. Lewis, Jr. noted that the property included 8 units in a "townhouse look" and asked whether the project would involve four attached townhomes with a unit on the first floor and a unit above in each one. The Applicants referenced the site plan rendering they brought; they confirmed that the building will appear as four attached units, although they would be accessed through only two front doors. Mr. Harris asked if there were entrances in the rear of the building; the Applicants confirmed there were not. Mr. Harris stated that he did not believe the residents would ever park in the rear of the building and then walk around to the front. The Applicants stated that they could accommodate a path from the parking lot on the adjacent property to one of the sidewalks adjacent to the site.

Mr. Harris claimed that residents from the homeless veterans' housing project were already parking on their block. The Applicants stated that they did not believe that, and that only 5 or 6 of the residents had vehicles. He noted that there may be visitors to the residents of that building, but that they usually parked in the lot behind the building. The Applicants postulated that the on-street parking came from the churches on the block; Mr. Harris stated that he did not believe that was the case and had witnessed it himself. Ms. Baldock interrupted and stated that any statements should be addressed to the Planning Commission. Commissioner Marek noted that the Applicants may wish to address some of the issues in a community meeting.

Commissioner Alsberry asked whether the condition regarding the allocation of parking spaces in the lot on the adjacent property should be added to the Variance resolution or the Land

Development Plan resolution. Mr. Knight noted that the applications should probably be voted on at the same time since there was no additional information in the Land Development Plan review that was not included in the current Variance review. He noted that he would add the condition to both resolutions, so that the Planning Commission could act on both applications at the same time. He stated that it may be a good idea to have the resolution state that parking spaces allocated in the adjacent lot should be included in the lease, and that it shouldn't be an issue either before the Zoning Hearing Board or the City Council, so long as the Applicants were in agreement.

Commissioner O'Toole stated that he was having a bit of difficulty placing the relationship of the parking lot to the project and asked whether having a dedicated sidewalk would encourage use of those spaces. Mr. Knight stated he believed it would help. Commissioner Marek noted that the sidewalk might be able to run through the Kent Alley right-of-way. The Applicants showed the relationship of the parking lot to the project site on the plan sets they had brought. They stated that a sidewalk directly from the parking to the sidewalk along North 5th Street would be the most direct route.

Commissioner Monnier stated that he often walked 8-10 blocks from his car to his apartment downtown, noting that was a tradeoff made when living downtown; he acknowledged that the subject property and surrounding neighborhood were in a different situation and thus there were different expectations, but that the community needed to reconsider how many cars they needed and how many a neighborhood could accommodate if the city was to develop its neighborhoods in a urban configuration and promote density and infill construction. Commissioner Monnier noted that it would require a shift in thinking amongst the community.

Commissioner Green noted that the Planning Commission could not require the Applicants to build off-street parking because the Zoning Code did not require it, and that they likely also couldn't require the Applicants to build a walking path. She noted that they may be able to include it as a condition of the Land Development Plan review, but that it couldn't be required in the resolution the Variance request.

Commissioner Monnier stated that he was adding a condition that the Applicants allocate parking spaces in the existing lot on the adjacent property, that they advertise the availability to project residents, and that they construct a walking path to a sidewalk adjacent to the subject property. Commissioner O'Toole asked whether they should specify which to which street the proposed walking path would connect, and Commissioner Monnier stated that it should be left up to the Applicants.

Commissioner Monnier moved, and Commissioner O'Toole seconded the motion, to Approve the request with Staff & Additional Conditions; the additional conditions were that the Applicants would reserve parking spaces in the accessory parking lot at 1820 North 5th Street; would advertise these spaces to residents and encourage their use; and would construct a sidewalk from the parking lot to the sidewalk adjacent to the subject property. Commissioner Reed asked whether they were voting on both applications; Mr. Knight stated that they could vote on both applications at the same time and stated that he would add the conditions to both resolutions. The motion was adopted by a unanimous vote (6-0). The Applicants asked when the City Council meeting would be held; Mr. Knight noted that the Zoning Hearing Board meeting would be heard next and that he could not

confirm the date at which City Council would be reviewing the application, but that he could confirm the Zoning Hearing Board would hear the application first on January 27th.

Commissioner Green reiterated to the members of the public in attendance that they should speak with the Harrisburg Parking Authority about creating a residential parking permit area.

3 Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan for 440 Kelker Street, zoned Commercial Neighborhood (CN), filed by Tarik Casteel with TLC Work Based Training Programs, Inc., to construct eight residential units in a townhome configuration, with associated access and site improvements.

Mr. Knight gave a synopsis of the report, recommending Approval with Conditions; the conditions were that:

1. The Applicant will ensure that the mature trees in the northwest corner of the property are retained during site preparation and construction.
2. The Applicant will coordinate with the City Engineer's Office on the construction/rehabilitation of any sidewalks adjacent to the property, to ensure they are in compliance with ADA requirements and City regulations, and will coordinate with the City Arborist on any proposed trees to be planted on-site or in the surrounding rights-of-way.
3. The Applicant will apprise the Department of Public Works of the development to ensure adequate refuse service to the property.
4. The Planning Bureau would recommend that the Applicant not utilize EIFS for the second and third floors, as indicated in the elevation plans, and instead utilize masonry veneer, cementitious fiberboard, or metal panels as proposed for elsewhere on the building.

The case was represented by Tarik & Demi Casteel w/ TLC Work Based Training Programs, Inc. and TLC Construction & Renovations, respectively (the property owners and developers), 1821 Fulton Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102; and Daniel Wise w/ RJ Fisher Engineering (the project engineer), 1546 Bridge Street, New Cumberland, PA 17070 (the project engineer)(aka "the Applicants").

[Note: the prior Variance application involved request for zoning relief for this Land Development Plan; as such, no additional testimony was taken for this application beyond that provided for the Variance application.]

Commissioner Monnier moved, and Commissioner O'Toole seconded the motion, to Approve the request with Staff & Additional Conditions; the additional conditions were that the Applicants would reserve parking spaces in the accessory parking lot at 1820 North 5th Street; would advertise these spaces to residents and encourage their use; and would construct a sidewalk from the parking lot to the sidewalk adjacent to the subject property. Commissioner Reed asked whether they were voting on both applications; Mr. Knight stated that they could vote on both applications at the same time and stated that he would add the conditions to both resolutions. The motion was adopted by a unanimous vote (6-0).

4 Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan for the 100 block of North 15th Street, zoned Residential Medium-Density (RM), filed by Tarik Casteel with TLC Cornerstone

Renewal LP, to construct a combination of residential apartments, both as townhome units and within a 24-unit “Multifamily Dwelling,” as well as a community center and a garden.

Mr. Knight gave a synopsis of the report, recommending Approval with Conditions; the conditions were that:

1. Any proposed signage on-site will conform to the regulations in Chapter 7-325 of the Zoning Code and, if not in conformance, will submit a zoning relief request as necessary.
2. The Applicant will coordinate with the City Engineer’s Office to ensure that improvements made to the public right-of-way conform to current ADA standards and Vision Zero best practices, and to coordinate on the implementation of such work with respect to pending street repaving.
3. The Planning Bureau would recommend the Applicant coordinate with the City Arborist regarding the installation of new plantings on-site or in the adjacent public right-of-way.

The case was represented by Tarik & Demi Casteel w/ TLC Work Based Training Programs, Inc. and TLC Construction & Renovations, respectively (the property owners and developers), 1821 Fulton Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102; and Greg Holtzman w/ BL Companies, 2601 Market Place, Suite 350, Harrisburg, PA 17110 (the project engineer)(aka “the Applicants”).

Commissioner Alsberry asked the Applicants whether the conditions in the case report were acceptable; the Applicants confirmed that they were.

The Applicants summarized the development proposal, noting that the residential units would be configured in a mix of two- to three-story buildings, and would include a community center and garden. They noted that the site was well-served by CAT bus routes. They noted that they had previously received zoning relief for various aspects of the project, including relief from the off-street parking requirements, but noted that they had provided two small parking areas along Bombaugh Street. The Applicants noted that they had made a couple small changes to the original proposal, including moving the proposed multifamily apartment building closer to Bombaugh Street to make the off-street parking more accessible. The Applicants noted that they had been in discussion with relevant City staff regarding the changes.

Commissioner Alsberry stated that he felt it was a great project and that the project site had deteriorated over the years, specifically referencing the partially-collapsed church on one of the blocks. He asked whether there was a specific community group representing the area and whether the Applicants had communicated with it. Mr. Knight stated that he wasn’t aware of an active neighborhood association in the area and confirmed that there were neighborhood groups in the surrounding areas, specifically the Schreinerstown Neighborhood Association to the north, Tri-County Community Action to the south, and Summit Terrace to the west. Commissioner Alsberry asked the Applicants whether they had spoken with any of those groups. They stated that they had not, but that they had sent out letters regarding the project to the surrounding neighborhood and that they had received good feedback from the community. They also stated that they had advertised the project and canvassed door-to-door.

Commissioner Marek noted that the Applicant had previously appeared before the Planning Commission to request zoning relief to enable the development; she asked what types of approval had been requested. The Applicants noted that they had submitted four zoning relief requests for off-street parking, density, setbacks, and parking lot screening. Commissioner Marek inquired as to the changes to that proposal that the Applicant had made; they noted that they had swapped the multifamily apartment building with one of the townhouse rows on the same block and had relocated the dumpster on-site.

Commissioner Reed inquired about the location of the parking spaces relative to the townhomes; the Applicants noted the location of the townhouse units within the project footprint. Commissioner O'Toole inquired as to the number of units in the multifamily apartment building; the Applicants confirmed there were 24 units out of an overall total of 50 units.

Commissioner Marek inquired about the configuration of the units in the multifamily apartment building, and the Applicants noted that they would be one- and two-bedroom units and that the townhomes would be two- and three-bedroom units. The Applicants also noted that they tried to design the townhomes to allow the most visibility out of the units. They also referenced their discussions with CRW regarding stormwater management, noting that the patio area of the proposed community center would have pervious paving and that they were installing rain gardens throughout the project. They noted that they had been coordinating with CRW to provide enhanced stormwater management above the required baseline.

Commissioner Marek inquired as to the multimodal elements of the project. The Applicants confirmed that bike racks would be included at the proposed community garden [note: there are also bike racks proposed near the entrance to the multifamily apartment building]. Commissioner O'Toole inquired as to whether the project site was near the "Meander Park" proposed in the draft Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Knight note that it was approximately six blocks northwest of the area of the proposed park.

Commissioner Alsberry stated that he appreciated the inclusion of the community center, even though there was a separate community center in the neighborhood. Commissioner Marek asked whether the community center was only for residents of the project, or whether residents in the surrounding neighborhood could access it. The Applicants stated that it was for the whole neighborhood and that there were some components, such as a communal laundry room, were just for project residents and would be limited by electronic access. They noted that the community room would be available to residents of the entire neighborhood, and that it would be run by the Camp Curtin YMCA on North 6th Street. They also note that church services would be provided in the community center on Wednesdays and Sundays.

Commissioner Alsberry asked whether there was anyone from the public that was for or against the project; there were no comments.

Commissioner Marek stated that the project was well-thought and well-integrated into the surrounding neighborhood.

Commissioner O'Toole moved, and Commissioner Reed seconded the motion, to Approve the request with Staff Conditions. The motion was adopted by a unanimous vote (6-0).

OTHER BUSINESS:

1 Community Development update: Heart of the Hill plan

Mr. Knight introduced staff from Tri-County Community Action (TCCA) noting that they would be discussing the status of the Heart of the Hill implementation plan, which was a follow-up on the Heart of the Hill planning study that was completed in 2017. He noted that the document covered a large footprint in eastern Harrisburg and that it would thus be helpful to the commissioners in considering future projects and proposals that might come before them.

Commissioner Alsberry asked the individuals to introduce themselves. Jennifer Wintermyer introduced herself as the Executive Director of TCCA and introduced Julie Walter as the Neighborhood Revitalization Manager. She stated that she appreciated the opportunity to attend the current meeting because there were projects happening around their planning area. She stated that a focus of their planning efforts was community engagement and that she was considering attending more Planning Commission meetings.

Ms. Wintermyer provided background on the history and mission of TCCA. She stated that they had been active for over 50 years and that although they were based in Harrisburg, they provided services through Dauphin, Cumberland, and Perry Counties with a goal of eradicating poverty from those communities. She noted that they pursued this goal through a variety of methods, including directly working with LMI individuals and families, promoting advocacy and education, and through community planning initiatives. Ms. Wintermyer noted that the focus in Harrisburg during their 50 years of operation had been South Allison Hill, but that they had expanded to include Uptown Harrisburg 2015.

Ms. Wintermyer reiterated that their mission was focused on resident engagement, data-driven decision-making, and evidence-based practices. She stated that she wanted to highlight some positives of the neighborhood as a counterpoint to negative assumptions. She noted that it was the original suburb of the city and its original industrial hub, as well as the city's largest National Historic District. She noted that it was a very walkable live/work/play community with mixed-use buildings and a broad variety of food options.

Ms. Wintermyer noted that they had been doing a significant amount of work over the last five years through resident engagement, community and economic development, and property improvements through façade upgrades and vacant lot maintenance. She noted that they had planted low-mow grass in vacant lots and constructed fencing throughout the neighborhood to deter illegal dumping. Ms. Wintermyer discussed an enhanced crosswalks initiative that would be started in Spring 2020 to enhance the community and provide safer routes to school for children; she stated that PennDOT had indicated willingness to apply the approach to communities throughout the state if the efforts provided successful.

Ms. Wintermyer stated that the neighborhood was a wonderful community with diverse populations, but stated that it was disproportionately affected by blight; she noted that the

combined area of all the vacant lots and buildings would be about 26 football fields in total, about a third of the acreage of the community. However, she also highlighted significant new investments in the community including the Harrisburg Housing Authority's MulDer Square project, Hamilton Health Center's growth, CRW's streetscape and stormwater infrastructure projects, and Tri-County Housing Development Corporation's new residential construction.

Ms. Walter discussed the specific Heart of the Hill planning document and process, referring to the double-sided FAQ she had distributed earlier. She outlined the focus area of the study and noted that it was the third successive planning document for South Allison Hill, and that the current community engagement process had started in late 2015. Ms. Walter stated that the community's core values were safety, sense of community, opportunities for youth, and a well-maintained community. She stated that all of the projects they did or sponsored had to meet at least one of those core values. She stated that their goal since the completion of the planning study in 2017 was figuring out how to leverage other projects and programs that had been started since that time, specifically referencing the EPA Area-Wide Brownfields report, CRW's City Beautiful H₂O plan, and the City's draft Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Walter noted that funding for the current implementation plan was provided by Wells Fargo's Regional Foundation and that they had hired a consulting firm (Camiros) in October 2019; she also noted that a Steering Committee was made up of various stakeholders including residents, community leaders, and government officials.

Ms. Walter noted that the core components of the current planning process were focused on housing, community development, safety, circulation, and open space. She noted that the consultant had conducted interviews, surveys, and focus groups, and had gathered a substantial amount of demographic and statistical data to inform recommendations. She discussed community engagement initiatives including a trick-or-treat event in October 2019 and a conversation with students at the Rowland Academy regarding their walking routes to school. She stressed that there was a heavy youth component in their community engagement.

Ms. Walter noted that there would be two more rounds of community engagement prior to the completion of the document. She noted that there would be an early community action project to build awareness and momentum of the implementation of the study. She noted that the goal was to have a project-focused document and not develop "a plan to plan," and that partners and funding sources would be attached to each project. Ms. Walter noted that the implementation plan would have a ten-year horizon and stated that, upon final adoption by the community in Fall 2020, it would be adopted as a sub-area plan in the Comprehensive Plan document.

Ms. Walters stated that she hoped the planning documentation and process would become a blueprint for other areas of the community, and that it treated residents as the true experts on their community. She stated that all of the vacant properties and demographic statistics were being mapped in GIS, and noted that TCCA was evaluating best practices from communities around the world.

Commissioner Alsberry noted that he was very familiar with TCCA from his time at the Workforce Investment Bureau (WIB) and that he had previously worked closely with the former Executive Director. He stated that both Ms. Wintermyer and Ms. Walter were doing an incredible job at the organization. Ms. Wintermyer noted that she had worked for four years under the previous

Executive Director. Commissioner Alsberry encouraged them to share any suggestions or recommendations they had for projects in the community with Mr. Knight; Ms. Wintermyer noted that Mr. Knight was on the Steering Committee for the Heart of the Hill implementation plan.

Commissioner O'Toole asked whether the MulDer Square project was complete; Ms. Wintermyer confirmed that the housing development portion was complete, but that the infrastructure work was not finished. Mr. Knight stated that the City intended on beginning work in the current year on the proposed roundabout at the intersection of Mulberry Street and Derry Street, and some ADA ramp and sidewalk reconstructions. Commissioner Alsberry asked whether the residential units were apartments; Ms. Wintermyer confirmed that they were.

Commissioner Alsberry thanked them for attending and presenting on TCCA's planning projects. Ms. Wintermyer reiterated that she hoped their process could be a blueprint for other neighborhoods. Mr. Knight stated that he hoped they would return to present an updated on their efforts closer to the completion of the implementation plan. Commissioner Marek inquired as to the expected completion date; Ms. Wintermyer stated that they hoped to have a final draft around May 2020. She stated that she hoped their plan would coordinate well with the City's final Comprehensive Plan document.

2 Comprehensive Plan Update

Commissioner Alsberry inquired as to the Planning Bureau staff's update on the status of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Knight referenced the question to Mr. Grover, who noted that both the City and Wallace Montgomery, the copyediting consultant for the document, had been served a cease and desist letter by the former consultant (OPA). Mr. Grover confirmed that the City had immediately responded to the letter noting the history of the process and the fact that the signed contract provided a non-exclusive license to all materials related to the document. He noted that OPA had filed a copyright with the US Patent Office. Mr. Grover stated that the City would respond to the appropriate entity in the future.

Commissioner O'Toole asked whether the process would continue to move forward. Mr. Grover stated his intention to have the process continue moving forward while the necessary administrative and legal processes were followed. Mr. Knight noted that the Planning Commission had at least gotten through their workshop reviews of the copyedited document and the plan and comments were now in the hands of the copyediting consultant. He stated that he wasn't sure about the impact on the timeline, but that he was hoping to stay as close to the timeline in the copyediting contract as possible.

Commissioner Marek noted that the consultant was not planning on moving forward until they had a formal response from the City. Ms. Baldock stated that they would be coordinating with the consultant in the near future. Mr. Knight stated that it would postpone the presentation to City Council. He noted that outside of the copywriting issues, the Planning Bureau was working with the consultant to identify visuals and graphics for the final formatted version.

Commissioner Alsberry asked how the schedule for presentation and introduction before City Council would be impacted in a best-case scenario. Mr. Knight stated that he expected the

presentation to City Council to introduce and kick-off the MPC-required 45-day public review period, although he anticipated that that period might be lengthened to 60 days based on Planning Commission input. He stated that he was unsure of whether the comments received during that period would be reviewed and incorporated into the document as necessary by Planning Bureau staff or the copyediting consultant. Mr. Knight stated that the document would then be forwarded to the Dauphin County Planning Commission for review, and that he anticipated the Planning Commission would receive a final document for review in May or June 2020.

Commissioner Reed inquired about the initial presentation to City Council and asked how it would be formatted and who would present. Mr. Knight noted that they hadn't discussed that specifically, but that he anticipated that Lauren Good with Wallace Montgomery would attend, as would members of the Planning Commission; Commissioner Marek volunteered to attend and present.

Mr. Grover noted that there were MPC requirements for presentation and introduction to City Council; Mr. Knight noted that the process would abide by those regulations and confirmed that the City Council presentation would be an extra step beyond the minimum MPC requirements. Mr. Grover asked how the determination was made that the document was complete; Mr. Knight noted that the workshops were only for discussion and that they did not result in a final document. Mr. Grover asked whether Wallace Montgomery was next proposing to present to the Planning Commission; Mr. Knight stated that he felt there would be a final workshop at which the commissioners could review a final draft before the City Council presentation.

Mr. Grover asked where the process was in relation to the Planning Commission taking a final vote before sending it to City Council. Mr. Knight stated that the commissioners would not take a final vote until after the public comment period. He noted that the public review period would be announced at the City Council presentation, after which, the document would be circulated to the general public, the County, the School District, and the adjacent municipalities for at least the requisite 45-day review period. Mr. Knight stated that after the public comments were reviewed for inclusion in the document, it would be sent to the County for their formal review, after which time the Planning Commission would also formally review the draft document. Mr. Knight reiterated that the initial presentation to City Council was not an aspect of the formal MPC process.

ADJOURNMENT: 8:17 PM

Commissioner O'Toole moved, and Commissioner Alsberry seconded the motion, to adjourn. The motion was adopted by a unanimous vote (6-0). The meeting adjourned at 8:17 PM.