

MINUTES

HARRISBURG PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING

March 4, 2020

THE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CITY GOVERNMENT CENTER
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MEMBERS PRESENT: Joseph Alsberry, Chair
Shaun E. O'Toole
Jamesetta Reed
Ausha Green
Anne Marek
Zac Monnier

MEMBERS ABSENT: Vern McKissick, Vice Chair

STAFF PRESENT: Geoffrey Knight, Planning Director
Neil Grover, City Solicitor

OTHERS PRESENT: See Sign-In Sheet

CALL TO ORDER: 6:37 PM

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Commissioner O'Toole moved, and Commissioner Marek seconded the motion, to approve the minutes from the February 5th meeting without corrections; the motion was adopted by a unanimous (6-0) vote.

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

1 Zoning Code Amendment for Bed & Breakfast uses, filed by Michael & Sally Jo Wilson with the Manor on Front, to revise the existing definition to permit manager-occupied operation of such uses and to revise the allowance of such uses in various zoning districts.

Mr. Knight gave a synopsis of the report, recommending Approval.

The case was represented by Mike Wilson with the Manor on Front (the property and business owner), 2917 North Front Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110; and Ronald Lucas, Esq. with Stevens & Lee (the legal counsel), 17 North 2nd Street, 16th Floor, Harrisburg, PA 17101 (aka "the Applicants").

The Applicants noted that they had gotten approval from the Zoning Hearing Board regarding their most recent Special Exception request to expand the existing use from 6 bedrooms to 14 bedrooms. They noted that their business occupied two (2909 & 2917 North Front Street) of the three

buildings which were previously slated for demolition when they were under previous ownership; they noted that they purchased the properties in 2014 and renovated them for the existing business, which was established in 2015.

They noted that they were looking ahead to the future, and that if they weren't able to fully operate the business themselves, they would like to ensure it could be run by a full-time manager; likewise, if they eventually sold the business, they wanted to ensure it would still operate as a bed & breakfast which would be easier if an on-site manager could be permitted by right. They noted that it would be more likely to remain a viable bed & breakfast in the future if it was permitted to be manager-occupied.

The Applicants noted that Planning Bureau staff had recommended that the use be permitted in other commercial zoning districts as well. They noted that the only two operational bed & breakfast uses were in the Riverfront district, and stated that there were many older, large residential buildings along the river which had been converted to office uses, and that this proposal would offer an easier path to an alternative business, which would be beneficial to their reuse and encourage reinvestment. The Applicants noted that it was difficult to re-establish single-family residences in these structures.

Commissioner Alsberry asked the Applicants whether the Planning Bureau staff's case report was acceptable; the Applicants confirmed that it was.

Commissioner Marek asked Planning Bureau staff to discuss the bed & breakfast zoning regulations from Lancaster and State College that had been provided in their packets. Mr. Knight stated that the Applicants could likely provide background on those regulations since they had submitted that documentation. He noted that Lancaster had a more robust bed & breakfast industry and thus their regulations better supported and promoted such uses and had been established long enough to determine whether they functioned best for the industry. Mr. Knight noted that many of the larger, formerly residential structures along Front Street had been converted into offices, multifamily apartments, or treatment centers, and that granting by-right operation of the proposed use would provide greater flexibility in how these properties could be used. Mr. Knight noted that State College experienced seasonal travel, particularly during the beginning and end of the school year, which created different sorts of conditions for the bed & breakfast industry that could guide Harrisburg's regulations to ensure they were done well.

Commissioner Marek stated that she appreciated the Applicants had provided the examples and that it helped her understand how proposed amendments were developed; she asked whether the Applicants had researched regulations for York; the Applicants confirmed that they had, and that their regulatory structure regarding bed & breakfast uses was not clear. They stated that downtown Lancaster had been revitalized after the establishment of the convention center downtown and that the area featured bed & breakfast uses which were not owner-occupied. The Applicants noted that State College had maintained a requirement for bed & breakfast uses in residential districts to be owner-occupied, whereas this requirement did not apply in non-residential districts; they noted that language was included in the proposed Zoning Code Amendment. They noted that Planning Bureau staff had agreed that maintaining a Special Exception requirement for residential districts was reasonable.

Commissioner Marek stated that the zoning districts in which the Applicants were proposing to permit by-right establishment of bed & breakfast uses made sense since they were largely commercial. She stated that finding ways to reuse and revitalize the properties in the Riverfront district was something that she supported, and that she appreciated the work the Applicants had done in fixing up their properties and running a successful business.

Commissioner Marek asked whether the regulations regarding manager occupation implied the manager would live on-site. Mr. Knight confirmed that was the case, and noted that Dauphin County had also raised that issue; he noted that the County had recommended that the City monitor that aspects of bed & breakfast uses. He stated that if and when more such uses were established, the Planning Bureau would make it a point to confirm actual on-site occupancy of any managers. He also noted that the two current uses would be operating under legal, non-conformities going forward since they were established prior to the adoption of the current Zoning Code Amendment. Mr. Knight stated that he would ensure the Planning Bureau developed a process to confirm that managers were living on-site as their principal residence.

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

Commissioner Marek noted that the language in the proposed text amendment, it stated that one non-resident employee was permitted, but that in the draft ordinance which had been included in the packets, it stated that two non-resident employees would be permitted. Mr. Knight noted that the ordinance language included in the packet was a draft version that was developed in coordination with the City's Law Bureau at an earlier stage. He noted that the amendment being proposed was that included in the "proposed amendments" document and not the draft ordinance document, and stated that the language would be reconciled in the ordinance that was sent to City Council.

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

2 Variance Applications for 50 South Cameron Street, zoned Downtown Center (DC), filed by U-Haul Company of PA, to install more wall signs than are permitted by right and to install signage larger than permitted.

Mr. Knight noted that the Applicant had submitted a request for a Continuance to be heard at the April Planning Commission and Zoning Hearing Board meetings. He noted that they need to address a couple issues related to the size of the proposed signage and conformance with the property investment regulations related to the floodplain and floodway. He noted that the Applicants did intend on presenting the request at the April 1st HPC meeting.

The Commissioners decided to accept the Continuance the request, although no formal vote was taken.

3 Special Exception Application for 263 Reily Street, zoned Residential Medium-Density (RM), filed by Vernon Jones with FLTBYS LLC, to convert the property from one non-conforming use (a “Restaurant”) to another non-conforming use (a “Retail Store”).

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

1. If/When the Applicant installs new signage on-site, it will conform to the applicable regulations in the Zoning Code; additionally, the Applicant will ensure that a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) application is submitted for HARB review for any new signage.

The case was represented by Vernon Jones & Avery Jones with FLTBYS (the property and business owners), 263 Reily Street, Harrisburg, PA 17102 (aka “the Applicants”).

Commissioner Alsberry asked the Applicants whether they had any comments to add to the Planning Bureau’s case report; they stated that they felt they would be a positive addition to the and confirmed that they were intending on proactively coordinated with various arts and culture organizations in the community. They stated that they were discussing a proposal to construct a skate park in the city.

The Applicants noted that there were no structural changes being proposed as part of the project, and that it would just involve general improvements the interior; they stated there was no signage proposed for the exterior of the building and that they would first be applying signage to the windows in the same manner as the restaurant signage that previously existed. They Applicants stated that they might install a blade side in the future. The Applicants noted that they owned the property outright, and thus there would be no business concerns related owner/tenant issues such as rents or contracts.

The Applicants stated that most of their sales were online, and that they were proposing this location to be their flagship store for individuals who wanted an in-person retail experience. They noted that their products were sold throughout the world and thus that it might be a potential economic and tourism boon. They stated that they were not intending to make a lot of money from the store, reiterating that most of their sales were online.

Commissioner Alsberry asked the Planning Bureau staff to confirm what the required parking situation was; he noted that a restaurant had been approved in 2016, but that the area was dense and parking was difficult. Mr. Knight noted that the off-street parking requirements were the same for both “Restaurant” and “Retail Store” uses, and that because the Applicants had indicated that there were going to be less than or as many employees as the previous use, the non-conforming aspect of off-street parking relief was permitted to continue moving forward with the new use.

Commissioner Alsberry asked whether the Applicants expected the store to generate a lot of foot traffic and, if so, whether it would be from people within or outside the community. The Applicants stated that they expected to be open from Tuesday through Saturday, from about 10 AM to 6 PM, unless there were special events going on in the community. They stated that they didn’t expect much walk-in traffic and reiterated that most of their sales were online; they noted that they wouldn’t carry their full line in the store and that customers may have to go online to order in any

event. They also noted that because their inventory on-site would be relatively limited, they wouldn't have many shipments to and from the store; they noted that national and international orders shipped from Chicago.

The Applicants stated that their business was more geared to a local culture of art and skateboarding, and that they hoped to generate visits by people on foot and on bike, and that they hoped to work with the City to have bike racks installed in the future.

Commissioner Monnier noted that he used an electric skateboard to travel around the city and that he was looking forward to shopping at their store. Referencing the previous restaurant use on the subject property, he noted that Harrisburg had an abundance of restaurants to the point where the market was saturated and it was sometimes difficult to create successful new ones. He noted that there was no skate shop in the city and that a retail store would be incorporating an underrepresented use for the city. He also stated that he appreciated the proposal was bringing national attention to Harrisburg.

Commissioner Reed noted that a recording studio was noted in the supplemental documentation, but was not included in the Special Exception application. The Applicants stated that they were considering a personal recording studio for the owner, a musician, which would be separate from the retail store operation. They stated that the recording space would not be open to the public and that they would not be selling from that space.

Commissioner Marek noted she had seen references to the recording studio space on social media and that she wasn't sure whether it was a component of the current proposal. Mr. Knight noted that there was a defined "Recording Studio" use in the Zoning Code, and that such uses required zoning relief only if was operated commercially; he confirmed that if the studio was only for the Applicant's personal use, then it would not require zoning relief.

Commissioner Marek stated that she lived about two blocks away and that restaurants had come and gone in the space as long as she had been there. She stated that it was refreshing to see a retail use that catered to a unique customer base. She also encouraged the Applicants to reach out to neighborhood groups and arts and cultural organizations to coordinate on community events. The Applicants confirmed their intention to do so.

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

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

4 Variance & Special Exception for 1122 Green Street, zoned Residential Medium-Density (RM), filed by Michael Lam with 1122 Green Holdings, to convert the existing institutional use into a "Multifamily Dwelling" and to construct 25 units, exceeding the density regulations in the Development Standards of the Zoning Code.

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

1. If granted approval for the requested zoning relief, the Applicant will subsequently file a Land Development Plan and receive approval from the Planning Commission and City Council.
2. The Planning Bureau recommends that the Applicant establish a unit in the proposed "Recreation/Commercial Space" identified in the proposed floor plan drawings, without increasing the overall number of units. The Bureau feels that the incorporation of a unit in this space (which is approximately 1,650 square feet) may allow the combination of two of the smaller proposed units, thereby providing two additional two-bedroom units on-site and bringing more diversity to the available options.
3. The Applicant will receive approval from HARB for any exterior alterations to the building.
4. The Applicant will coordinate with the Department of Public Works to confirm the appropriate size and location of refuse collection on-site, and update the billing accounts to reflect the new use.
5. The Planning Bureau recommends improvements to the surface parking lot at 1122 Green Street, including the removal of impervious surface and installation of new plantings in the corners of the parking lot which vehicles cannot access, and the removal of the barbed wire atop the parking lot fence.
6. The Planning Bureau recommends that the Applicant utilize the small garage on the property at 1210 Green Street for secured bike parking for residents of the building; the Planning Bureau would further recommend the installation of publicly-accessible bike racks underneath either of the two building awnings on Cumberland Street.

The case was represented by Michael Lam with 1122 Green Holdings (the contract purchaser and developer), 3436 Union Street #201, Flushing, NY 11354; and Bo Mangum with Landmark Commercial Realty (the realtor), 425 North 21st Street, Lemoyne, PA 17011 (aka "the Applicants").

Commissioner Alsberry asked the Applicants whether the conditions in the case report were acceptable; the Applicants confirmed that they were, but inquired as to the inclusion of the condition regarding bicycle parking and storage. Mr. Knight clarified that the recommendation was related to the small garage on the surface parking lot property at 1210 Green Street and that it was unlikely the building could be used for vehicular parking due to its configuration. He noted that providing indoor bike parking would allow future residents to securely store their bikes and that it would encourage more tenants to travel via bike. The Applicants stated that the condition would be acceptable if it were necessary for approval.

Commissioner Green inquired as to the proposed rents for the project; the Applicants stated that they intended to lease one-bedroom apartments for approximately \$800 and two-bedroom apartments for approximately \$1,000.

Commissioner Marek referenced the floor plans and asked whether the Applicants could clarify the intended development of the principal parcel, as well as the associated parking lot area. The Applicants noted that there was another accessory parking lot at the corner of Penn Street and Sassafras Street (note: the address for this is 1114 Penn Street), which could also provide parking for residents and guests. Mr. Knight confirmed that this was the case. The Applicants stated that

there were approximately 32 parking spaces at the lot at 1210 Green Street, and about eight parking spaces at the other lot at 1114 Penn Street.

Commissioner Marek asked whether the Applicants had provided a plan of the parking lots or proposed improvements to the lots. The Applicants stated that the parking lots were previously lined by the Salvation Army and that they had not developed any new proposals for the design; they noted that there was sufficient parking to meet the requirements of the Zoning Code.

The Applicants noted that the principal building was approximately 155 feet long by 43 feet wide and noted that the 25 units were proposed based on the configuration of the floor plates. They noted that they had conducted a walk-through with Codes Bureau staff and discussed options for laying out units. They stated the bank financing required that 25 units be established at the proposed rental rates. They further noted that building code egress issues required the establishment of two-story, loft-style arrangements with a bedroom on the upper portion and a living room and kitchen down below. The Applicants further noted that the height of the basketball court space also accommodated the two-story, loft-style unit within that space.

The Applicants also noted that the property had been listed on the market for approximately five years, and that the parking lot had been marked in the last few years to be in compliance with zoning regulations. Commissioner Marek stated that without a site plan, she couldn't confirm whether the parking was in conformance. Mr. Knight stated that he had conducted a site visit and confirmed that there were 31 spaces in the larger accessory parking lot, and that it appeared that there was more space for additional spaces. Commissioner O'Toole asked noted that the proposed 25 units would require 30 spaces; Mr. Knight confirmed that was the case.

Commissioner Alsberry asked whether there was anyone from the public that was for or against the project; he stated that members of the public would have one opportunity to express their opinion on the project and that there would not be any back-and-forth communication with the Applicants. Mrs. Rusty Diamond (262 Herr Street, Harrisburg, PA) stated that she appreciated the residential aspect of the project, but that she was concerned about the proposed commercial component due to the parking situation in the neighborhood; she asked that a decision not be made until that component was better understood.

Mr. Donald Yearsley (1109 Penn Street, Harrisburg, PA) stated that he was unsure about whether the parking lot at 1114 Penn Street was included and how it would be managed going forward. He stated that he was not sure that guests of apartment tenants would have a place to park and would take existing on-street spaces. He stated that existing residents' visitors would not have a place to park on the street either. Mr. Yearsley noted that he had previously been in the subject property and that he felt 25 units was too dense for the existing floor area.

Mrs. Karen Balaban (110 Cumberland Street, Harrisburg, PA) stated that she was not in favor of or opposed to the proposal, but wanted to know whether the accessory parking lot met all of the design guideline requirements. She noted that she had spent a lot of time in the building in a variety of capacities. She stated that she was glad that the building wouldn't remain vacant, but also felt that the proposal was too dense. She asked why multifamily housing and single-family dwellings

weren't being provided in the neighborhood. Mrs. Balaban also stated that she was concerned that even with dedicated off-street parking, residents and guests would take the on-street spaces instead.

Mr. Jonathan Hendrickson (1108 Penn Street, Harrisburg, PA) noted that the building had a unique layout and thanked the Applicants for the interesting redevelopment proposal; he stated that it would be a positive to have the property put back on the tax rolls. He stated that he was concerned the proposal didn't fit in with the zoning regulations; he stated that a medium density proposal would allow the project to fit in with the surrounding neighborhood. Mr. Hendrickson stated that if the commissioners granted a Variance for a use, it should be for a community-focused use. He stated that putting the property back on the tax rolls was not as important as maintaining the character of the neighborhood; he stated that he was concerned people might leave if the project was approved. He stated that while he valued the tax contribution of the subject property, the contribution of the surrounding properties should be weighed more, and that the proposal would negatively affect those tax values. Mr. Hendrickson also stated that he was concerned the Applicant did not proactively engage the organizations that represent the neighborhood; he stated that it was hard to believe or trust that the project would be a benefit to the neighborhood when it wasn't discussed with the community.

Mr. Robert Shoaff (1511 Green Street, Harrisburg, PA) asked the commissioners to consider the residents' requests for more engagement and their concerns about parking; he also stated that affordability should be considered in relation to the housing affordability study that had recently been completed [note: referenced citywide housing affordability plan was finalized in July 2018]. He stated that the residents' issues were valid and that the impact of the parking and housing should be discussed in an open and public process. He noted that two of the previous applicants were from outside of the city, and suggested that they reach out directly to the community as the best way to engage the public.

Ms. Eileen Norman (1926 Penn Street, Harrisburg, PA) stated that she was a residential real estate agent in the area and that her clients, many of whom were younger and had downtown jobs, were constantly requesting the types of units that the Applicant was proposing. She noted that there was a lack of such units in the city at the price point proposed by the Applicants, particularly nicer units with more modern amenities. She stated that she was not aware of any other residential projects that had even one off-street parking space per unit, noting that the current proposal included about 31 spaces in the main parking lot and additional parking in another lot. Ms. Norman noted that she often walked blocks to a parking space from her home and that she didn't understand how the current proposal would be bad for parking in the neighborhood considering all the off-street parking it included. She also noted that there was a gymnasium in the building that used to host sports events which generated more traffic and parking than the proposed 25 units. She reiterated that there was a dearth in the city of the types of units being proposed for the property. Ms. Norman further noted the building was unique in that it had an elevator and ADA ramp which meant that some of the units in the project could be ADA accessible, which was difficult to find in the city.

Mrs. Genevieve Fitzgibbon (1111 Green Street, Harrisburg, PA) stated that she had lived in her building since 2004, and that she was excited to hear that someone was willing to invest in the property. She stated that she wasn't for or against the project and came to the meeting hoping to learn more. She expressed concern about the impact on on-street parking in the neighborhood, but

noted that having more than one parking space per unit seemed like a positive aspect, but stated that she thought most of the one-bedroom units in the neighborhood had more than one person living in them. Mrs. Fitzgibbon noted that the ADA access seemed good, but that the Applicants had stated the most of the units had stairways in them, and thus while the building may be ADA-accessible, the units may not.

Mr. Richard Thompson (1101 Penn Street, Harrisburg, PA) stated that he recognized the need for rental housing, rental affordability, and density because he didn't like urban sprawl. He noted that the neighborhood had a high number of owner-occupied dwellings, which tended to be better maintained than those which were owned by landlords. He asked whether it would be possible to have the units sold as condos as opposed to rented as apartments.

Ms. Janet Foreman (931 North Front Street, Harrisburg, PA) noted that she recently moved to her current address but had previously lived at 910 Green Street for 15 years. She inquired as to the square footage of the typical apartment in the proposal. She noted that she had a background in health care and thus her initial concern was whether the building and the units would be ADA accessible.

Ms. Sandra Wood (258 Cumberland Street, Harrisburg, PA) stated that she was a new resident to the neighborhood and that she moved to the area because it was quiet and because it was relatively easy to find a parking space. She stated that she had similar concerns to those expressed by other residents.

Mr. Hans Landenberger (1111 Penn Street, Harrisburg, PA) stated that he had similar concerns regarding the impact on on-street parking, and noted that the small lot at the corner of Penn Street and Sayford Street had been used more by residents since the Salvation Army had relocated. He noted that a reserved commercial use concerned him because of its potential impact on the parking situation; he specifically noted that if it became a gym then people would drive long distances

Commissioner Alsberry stated that the Planning Commission always asked applicants whether they had engaged any neighborhood groups if there were active ones in the area, and noted that it did not appear that the Applicants had done that in this instance. He noted that there was a neighborhood group that represented the area in which the project was being proposed.

Commissioner Alsberry asked whether the Planning Bureau staff wanted to address public comment about the size of the units; Mr. Knight referred the question to the Applicants. The Applicants noted that Mr. Lam had been investing in property in Harrisburg since 1995, and discussed some of the investments he had made in Midtown Harrisburg, although they stated that he wasn't a major developer. They noted that they had secured a contract to purchase at the end of January and had recently scheduled an upcoming meeting with the Midtown Alliance [note: I believe this is a reference to the Midtown Action Council, which represents this area] to discuss the project; they also stated that they had contacted other organizations, but had not received responses. They stated that they understood the concerns from neighborhood residents.

The Applicants noted that the current zoning only permitted the by-right establishment of four units, which would each be approximately 4,500 square feet, which would not be marketable. They noted that there was a housing shortage in the city and particularly the midtown area.

The Applicants referenced the proposed commercial space, noting that most of the square footage would be devoted to residential use and that they would identify a specific commercial use upon the completion of a feasibility study. They stated that if they were not approved for 25 units, then the project likely would not move forward because they would not get financing. The Applicants noted that Ms. Mangum had marketed the building for five years, and that none of the approximately 100 developers she had spoken with were interested in the property. They also noted that property would likely remain vacant if a project of the type currently being proposed was not approved, which would impose additional costs to the Salvation Army to secure and maintain the building.

The Applicants stated that the bank financing requirements could largely be satisfied by the approval of 25 units, and that they could consider options for the proposed commercial space that would have minimal impacts on the community. They noted that a neighborhood gym for residents within walking distance may be an option, as well as a “cloud kitchen” [note: this seems to be a community-kitchen that could be shared by individuals or businesses] in which an on-street space could be reserved for delivery drivers. The Applicants stated that the proposed units were approximately 500-700 square feet each and that they couldn’t establish larger units in the same price range of approximately \$800; they noted that if there were fewer units, then all the units would be less affordable.

The Applicants noted that they were a little unsure of providing bike parking because they wanted to keep everything as parking spaces to accommodate as many vehicles as possible. They noted that the primary parking lot was gated and that residents would need a remote for gate access; they noted that unauthorized parking in the various lots owned by Mr. Lam was difficult to police.

The Applicants reiterated that the zoning only permitted the establishment of four units by right, and stated that if the building was demolished, seven new, 20-foot-wide lots with four-unit buildings housing approximately 28 families total could be constructed. Mr. Knight stated that the Applicants’ calculations regarding the number of permitted units was not correct.

Commissioner Alsberry asked whether any of the commissioners had questions regarding the project. Commissioner Monnier referenced comments from the public regarding the loft-style design of the units, and noted that several of the units were one-story and thus could be made ADA-accessible. The Applicants confirmed that there would be seven of those units. Commissioner Marek asked whether the Applicants was intending on having any of the units be ADA-compliant. The Applicants responded that the final floor plans were dependent on a walk-through with the Codes Bureau to determine building requirements, and that it would be possible to design some of the units to be ADA-compliant.

Commissioner Monnier asked Planning Bureau staff for clarification on whether the recommended bicycle parking could be installed; Mr. Knight clarified that his intention was for the small brick building at 1210 Green Street to be utilized as secure bicycle parking. Commissioner Monnier

noted that a partial solution to some of the concerns about vehicular parking would be residents using bicycles to make shorter, more local trips. The Applicants stated that it was more realistic to put bicycle parking in the gated lot at 1210 Green Street, as opposed to the smaller parking lot at 1114 Penn Street.

Commissioner O'Toole referenced the public's inquiries regarding the proposed commercial space and asked what other types of uses the Applicants were considering. They noted that they hadn't fully considered what commercial uses might work best on-site, and noted that Mr. Lam owned ten retail stores on North 3rd Street, several of which had been vacant for years, demonstrating the difficulty in signing commercial leases, which was why they had not specified a particular use for the space. They noted that the space was approximately 2,000 square feet with men's and women's bathroom, which might work well for a small gym. Commissioner Monnier noted that the existing gymnasium in the building would be redeveloped into residential units.

Commissioner Green stated that she appreciated the idea of the building being repurposed and that she felt an apartment building was a reasonable proposal, but that she felt each of the units was fairly small despite the affordable rent and inquired about the rent per square foot. The Applicants stated that they had not calculated that metric, but that the units may appear small due to the smaller size of the drawings in the plan sets. Commissioner Marek noted that even with a loft-style arrangement, 500 square feet was fairly small for an apartment. The Applicants noted that the primary consideration in the size of the units was the arrangement and location of the windows and the building code requirements that there be a window in each bedroom and living room. They noted that the property was in an historic district and thus they did not want to change the exterior appearance or fenestration because it would impose additional conditions from HARB, per conversations with the Historic Preservation Specialist.

Commissioner Alsberry stated that he felt more information was needed, including the proposed parking configuration, specifics on the layout of the units, and answers to some of the questions raised by the public. He stated that he felt the case should be heard at the next Planning Commission meeting on April 1st, and asked the other commissioners their opinions on the application.

Commissioner Monnier inquired as to what other additional information was being requested by the commissioners.

Commissioner Marek noted that one of the conditions in the Planning Bureau's case report was that a Land Development Plan application be filed, and that the specifics of the project related to the floor plan, site plans, and parking configuration would be presented at that time for the commissioners' input on those aspects. She stated that the current proposal was related to the proposed use and that the commissioners should focus on that aspect. She noted that the Planning Commission had reviewed many of these types of residential projects throughout the city and that they often considered what was permitted by right, the current use, and the proposed use. Commissioner Marek noted that four units would be permitted by right, which would likely not be financially feasible, particularly given the floor plan. She noted that this would support a different use than what would be permitted by right. She noted that the current use was as a community center, and that while it would be great to find another similar use, the inability to sell the property

over five years justified consideration of other proposals. Commissioner Marek stated that a residential project made sense given the residential character of the neighborhood, but that the next consideration would be the density and whether it made sense for the building and the neighborhood, and whether the justification met the Variance requirements. She stated that there was a financial hardship, but noted that she was unsure of whether the number of units was the minimum needed to alleviate the hardship.

Commissioner Marek asked whether the Applicants had considered converting the proposed commercial space to a residential unit or restructuring the floor layout to incorporate that space into other previously-proposed units. The Applicants stated that they would like to do that. Commissioner Marek noted that if the commercial space was removed, it would obviate some of the other related concerns such as the parking and potential future uses. She stated that the off-street parking provided might not meet the requirements of a future commercial use such as a fitness center.

Commissioner Monnier noted that one of the conditions in the Planning Bureau's case report was to replace the commercial use with residential space; he noted that using the space to reconfigure some of the other units may allow larger units and more diversity in the apartment offerings. Commissioner Marek agreed. The Applicants stated that the lower level did not have egress windows otherwise they would have proposed all one-floor units instead of the duplex; they stated that if the Codes Bureau would waive building code regulations to allow them to use the basement space residentially, the project would be more financially feasible with larger, nicer units at a similar cost. The Applicants stated that the basement windows were about a foot too small to be considered as viable egress, and thus window wells would need to be dug out of the adjacent sidewalks to permit residential use of the space.

Commissioner O'Toole stated that he wanted to approve the project because otherwise the property may still be vacant ten years from now, but that he felt the project was a bit too dense. He stated that he didn't think the Planning Commission could approve the project at the current meeting given the information provided and the feedback from the public. He suggested that the Applicants develop a new proposal with fewer units.

Commissioner Alsberry noted that a member of the public had asked whether developing condos would make the project too expensive. The Applicants confirmed that it would increase the cost of each unit significantly, but that it would not change the number of units that would be necessary to make the project financially-feasible. They noted that they had provided a pro forma which outlined the costs and revenues expected as part of the projecting, noting that the project was not likely to create a substantial return even with \$2,000 a month income included for the proposed commercial space.

Commissioner Monnier stated that the condominium market in the city was not robust and stated that this was a prime location for renters who had just moved to the city and wanted to live in midtown to be within walking distance to a lot of attractions and amenities. He stated that more units would likely be built in midtown in the future since it was a popular neighborhood, and that if the project wasn't approved, it would be a missed opportunity. He stated that while everyone might not feel it was the best project, it was the one that seemed to be most financially-viable.

Commissioner Green stated that her concern was less about the number of units and more about the size of the units at the proposed price point. She stated that she felt the units were too small. Commissioner Green asked the Applicants whether they intended to apply for the City's LERTA program to receive a tax abatement. The Applicants confirmed that they were planning on applying for the LERTA program, which would provide a bit of a financial buffer over the first ten years of the project. They stated that the units were not as small as they appeared in the plans and that each was proposed to have full-sized refrigerators, dishwashers, and other appliances in addition to space for chairs, TVs, and walk-in closets. The Applicants noted that "tiny living" was a current trend, but that those units were approximately 160 square feet, reiterating that their proposed units were much larger. They stated that they could provide a virtual tour of the units. Commissioner Green stated that if the Applicants were able to provide more information regarding the design and layout, and to present such information to the community at a public meeting, she would feel better about the proposal. She confirmed that she was not against the project.

Commissioner Alsberry reiterated that he didn't think the Planning Commission would approve the project at the current meeting, but that if the Applicants were able to engage the public and address some of the concerns, it would be viewed more favorably by the commissioners. The Applicants stated that they would try to schedule a meeting with the community, but that if the proposal would not get approved as submitted, then it might not be possible to move forward.

Commissioner O'Toole noted that the Planning Commission had reviewed projects in the past in which the first presentation was not viewed favorably, particularly by neighborhood residents, but that after reconsideration and discussion with the community, a better project supported by the community was eventually developed. The Applicants stated that they would try to provide the requested information and to meet with the public to discuss the project.

Commissioner Alsberry asked the Planning Bureau staff how the project would move forward; Mr. Knight stated that the commissioners would have to vote to continue the application until the next meeting, and that the Applicant would need to submit a continuance request for the March 16th Zoning Hearing Board meeting. He stated that he would be willing to meet with Applicants to discuss some of the issues raised during the meeting, and that the Applicants indicated their willingness to meet with one of the neighborhood associations that covered the subject property.

Commissioner Green moved, and Commissioner Monnier seconded the motion, to Table the request until the April 1st Planning Commission meeting. The motion was adopted by a unanimous vote (6-0).

5 Lot Consolidation & Subdivision for 833 & 1001 Paxton Street and 917 South Front Street, zoned Industrial (IND), filed by Randy Good with Pennsy Supply, Inc., to consolidate four tracts into a single parcel, and then subdivide that lot into two separate parcels.

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

1. The Applicant will reconstruct the sidewalks across 833 & 1001 Paxton Street to bring them into conformance with the Property Maintenance Code and ADA regulations, including the removal of the curb cut directly in front of the building at 1001 Paxton Street, which will ensure an accessible and safe connection for pedestrians to and from a future Paxton Creek Greenway.
2. The Applicant will work with the City on establishing a 50-foot easement along the property to be addressed as 1001 Paxton Street, as it is a key link in the future Paxton Creek Greenway.

The case was represented by John Murphy with Alpha Consulting Engineers, Inc. (the project engineer), 115 Limekiln Road, New Cumberland, PA 17070 (aka “the Applicant”).

Commissioner Alsberry asked the Applicant whether the conditions in the case report were acceptable; the Applicant confirmed that they were. Commissioner Alsberry asked whether the Applicant had anything to add to the case report. The Applicant stated that the overall goal was to establish a 2.7-acre lot for sale and reuse.

Commissioner Monnier noted that he worked directly across the street from the subject properties and that he used the sidewalk adjacent to the property; he confirmed that it was in terrible shape. He stated that he was hopeful that the sale of the property would result in a greater variety of commercial businesses in the corridor, and that he was happy to see an easement for the Paxton Creek project included in the conditions of approval. He stated that he thought it was a great plan.

Commissioner Marek concurred that the proposal was straightforward and made a lot of sense regarding future development in the corridor.

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

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

6 Preliminary/Final Lot Consolidation, Subdivision & Land Development Plan for 632-648 Woodbine Street, zoned Residential Medium-Density (RM), zoned Residential Medium-Density (RM), filed by Jamien Harvey with the Camp Curtin YMCA, to consolidate and re-subdivide the eight lots into four lots on which four separate single-family units will be constructed 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 coordinate with the City Engineer to ensure that any new sidewalk infrastructure on the block surrounding the project site will be constructed to meet ADA requirements.
2. The Applicant will coordinate with the City Arborist regarding the planting of any new trees, on-site or in the surrounding rights-of-way, as part of this project.

The case was represented by Jamien Harvey with the Camp Curtin YMCA (the contract purchaser and owner), 2135 North 6th Street, Harrisburg, PA 17110; and Daniel Wise with RJ Fisher & Associates (the project engineer), 1546 Bridge Street, New Cumberland, PA 17070 (aka “the Applicants”).

Commissioner Alsberry asked the Applicants whether the conditions in the case report were acceptable; the Applicants confirmed that they were. Commissioner Alsberry asked whether the Applicants had anything to add to the case report. The Applicants noted that they had brought site and elevation plan sets to present to the commissioners. They noted that the property was a vacant lot surrounded by four rights-of-way in varying condition. The Applicants confirmed that there would be four total homes and that each would have three bedrooms and their own parking pad, and would be constructed in a similar style to the homes constructed across the street by Habitat for Humanity.

The Applicants stated that they were partners with Capital Region Water (CRW) and coordinating on various projects in addition to the current proposal, including the adjacent Big Green Block stormwater management project. They noted that they would tie the stormwater management system into the existing stormwater detention basin at the Camp Curtin YMCA. They noted that they would be reconstructing sidewalks along Woodbine Street and Jefferson Street, and installing right-of-way landscaping along Woodbine Street.

Commissioner Alsberry stated that he thought it was an incredible project and noted that he had been on the Camp Curtin YMCA Board of Directors in the past. He stated that he appreciated the work the current leadership had done.

Commissioner O’Toole noted that he was on the Board of Directors and would thus be recusing himself from the case review. He noted that the current proposal would likely be the first phase of a larger residential development initiative. The Applicants stated that the current conditions of the neighborhood were unacceptable and that affordable housing was a major need for the community; they further stated that their goals were to meet these needs as well as possible.

Commissioner Monnier asked how close the project site was to the Camp Curtin United Methodist Church. Mr. Knight confirmed that the project site was a block to the east. Commissioner Monnier noted that the vacant church needed to find a viable future use and suggested that the Applicants may want to consider different housing models for that space.

Commissioner Green stated that it was a great project and that affordable housing was a major need both in the neighborhood and in the city overall, and that she appreciated that the development involved townhomes and not apartments.

Commissioner Marek concurred with Commissioner Green and stated that she appreciated the size and configuration of the residential units, noting that the proposed housing was crucial to the improvement of the neighborhood. She stated that she had no objection to the project as submitted and appreciated that the Applicants were working with other entities such as CRW to ensure the project was as comprehensive as possible.

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

Commissioner Green moved, and Commissioner Reed seconded the motion, to Approve the request with Staff Conditions. The motion was adopted by a unanimous vote (5-0; Commissioner O'Toole recused himself).

7 Street Vacation for Schuylkill Street, filed by Jonathan Hudson with the Hudson Companies, in order to vacate the portion of Schuylkill Street from North 7th Street to the railroad tracks to the east owned by Norfolk Southern Corporation, to effectuate the consolidation and development of the site for a property that will host State office workers.

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

1. Per Capital Region Water's comments, the Applicant will execute an easement agreement with the authority to allow access to and maintenance of the existing sewer line running along the right-of-way.
2. As the vacated right-of-way will provide ingress to and egress from one of the accessory parking lots on site, the Applicant will reconstruct the entrance to the new parking lot per the City Engineer's comments.

The case was represented by Jonathan Hudson, Eric Hunter, Jack Williams with the Hudson Companies (the contract purchaser and developer), 2450 Shenango Valley Freeway, Hermitage, PA 16148; Daniel Wise with RJ Fisher & Associates (the project engineer), 1546 Bridge Street, New Cumberland, PA 17070; and Tim Johnson with KCI Technologies, Inc. (the traffic engineer), 5001 Louise Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055 (aka "the Applicants").

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

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

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

8 Lot Consolidation & Land Development Plan for 2427-2601 North 7th Street, zoned Industrial (IND), filed by Jonathan Hudson with the Hudson Companies, to consolidate the lots into a single parcel on which an approximately 129,000-square-foot office building will be constructed with associated access and site improvements; the building will be leased to the PA State Department of Human Services and the Office of Administration.

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

1. The Applicant will address the City Engineer's comments regarding the construction of at-grade sidewalks and driveways for access points along the portion of the project fronting North 7th Street, and the establishment of a safe, ADA-compliant crossing from the parking lot at Radnor Street Park.
2. The Applicant will coordinate with the City Engineer regarding appropriate signage, markings, and improvements to North 7th Street and major intersecting streets as necessary.
3. The Applicant will continue their coordination with CRW regarding the installation of stormwater management infrastructure on-site and any connections to the existing stormsewer network.
4. The Applicant will continue coordination with the City Arborist regarding the planting of any new trees, on-site or in the surrounding rights-of-way, as part of this project.
5. The Applicant will continue coordination efforts with the City Engineer's Office regarding the removal and disposition of the solar array on-site.
6. The Applicant will install three sets of bike racks: one in each of the two secured parking lots for employees, and one in the publicly-accessible parking lot in front of the building. The Planning Bureau recommends a minimum of five racks at each location and would further recommend that these be located close to the entrances and be sheltered from the elements as much as possible.

The case was represented by Jonathan Hudson, Eric Hunter, Jack Williams with the Hudson Companies (the contract purchaser and developer), 2450 Shenango Valley Freeway, Hermitage, PA 16148; Daniel Wise with RJ Fisher & Associates (the project engineer), 1546 Bridge Street, New Cumberland, PA 17070; and Tim Johnson with KCI Technologies, Inc. (the traffic engineer), 5001 Louise Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055 (aka "the Applicants").

Commissioner Alsberry asked the Applicants whether the conditions in the case report were acceptable; the Applicants confirmed that they were, and stated that all the conditions were reasonable, feasible, and beneficial to the project. Commissioner Alsberry asked whether the Applicants had anything to add to the case report.

The Applicants made a presentation using poster boards that featured the existing and proposed site plans, elevation plans, and building renderings. They noted the proximity of the existing building on-site to the accessory surface parking lot and solar array, and noted that the property was 96% impervious surface coverage under the existing conditions. The Applicants noted that the proposed project would have a smaller building footprint and that the majority of the property would feature three parking lots, with separation between the small publicly-accessible lot and the two larger employee parking lots; they also noted that there was a shared parking agreement for the small lot across the street in Radnor Park. They noted that entrances to the employee parking lots would be aligned with Radnor Street and Schuylkill Street to the west of North 7th Street.

The Applicants noted that there would be a truck loading dock and a trash enclosure towards the rear of the building. They discussed the landscaping plan and noted that there would be trees planted around the perimeter of the site, including street trees along North 7th Street, as well as trees planted in the parking lot islands.

The Applicants discussed the building's appearance, noting that they had designed the building to reflect the massing and architecture of the residential buildings in the surrounding neighborhood with a more modern aesthetic and modern materials. They discussed how the proposed brick, concrete, and stone aspects would be modern reflections of the architectural elements of the surrounding neighborhood.

The Applicants noted that they were the general contractor, developer, and owner of the property and that they would be leasing the property to the State's Department of Human Services and the Office of Administration. They noted that the proposal would significantly decrease the amount of impervious surface on-site. They noted that they held a public meeting with residents from the neighborhood on February 24th at the Camp Curtin YMCA, and that they planned an upcoming meeting with local contractors and DBE businesses on March 18th as well.

The Applicants noted that they were working with the City to transfer the existing solar panel array on-site for future use in a municipal project; they noted that they didn't have a use for them on-site. They further discussed efforts to utilize green building standards and infrastructure on-site, including the installation of 20 charging stations on-site for electric vehicles, the construction of a white roof to reduce energy consumption and the urban heat island effect, and window tinting to reduce energy loss.

The Applicants noted that engagement with local contractors was not a requirement as it would be with a federal or State development project, but that they wanted to ensure the project provided the greatest benefit possible to the community. They also noted that approximately 15-20 non-State workers employed by the developer would be paid "enhanced prevailing wage" and that they would be seeking local residents for those jobs.

Commissioner Alsberry stated that he was glad to hear that the Applicants would have a robust local hiring process. He also stated that he appreciated that the Applicants were coordinating with the City to transfer the solar panels on-site, so that they would not have to be demolished. He asked the City Solicitor if he knew what the City's plans for the solar panels were. Mr. Grover noted that removal of the solar panels was challenging and that the City's Sustainability Coordinator was currently developing a plan for their reuse; he noted that the City was proposing to temporarily store them on City Island until a permanent home could be found, possibly on land near the City's incinerator. The Applicants noted that if the City could not take the solar panels, they would transfer them to the demolition contractor, who would resell them; they confirmed that they would not send them to a landfill.

Commissioner Monnier stated that he was happy to hear that the building would be constructed by a private entity, so that it would be placed back on the tax rolls, and that the project would bring more employees into the city. He expressed disappointment about the amount of parking being provided, but appreciated the installation of trees on-site and noted that the City Arborist could suggest the best species for the site. Commissioner Monnier stated that the project fit into the Comprehensive Plan goals and might be the catalyst for an eventual bridge connecting Division Street and Industrial Road. The Applicants noted that they had coordinated with the City Arborist and had been instructed not to utilize certain species.

Commissioner Green stated that she was glad to see the project moving forward and that the property would be privately-owned; she inquired as to the length of the lease. The Applicants responded that it would be a twenty-year lease with a ten-year extension for an overall thirty-year timeframe; they noted that over the past thirty years, they had constructed and leased office space to the State on about forty projects and that they anticipated the State's presence at the property would extend past thirty years. Mr. Grover noted that the State Attorney General only approved leases for up to thirty years. Commissioner Green asked whether there was an option to buy; the Applicants confirmed there was not.

Commissioner O'Toole stated that he was disappointed when the previous owner (D&H Distributing) announced they were leaving the City, and was encouraged when he heard about the proposed redevelopment of the site. He also stated that he was happy to see an out-of-town developer propose new construction in the city, noting that the former Zoning Code often discouraged outside developers from pursuing projects in the city.

Commissioner Reed inquired as to how many employees would be working in the building; the Applicants stated that there would be approximately 850 State employees on-site.

Commissioner Marek also stated that she was happy to hear the property would be privately-owned and inquired regarding the floor area of the current building the proposed building. The Applicants stated that the current building was approximately 88,000 square feet and that the proposed building footprint was approximately 43,000 square feet, although the overall floor area was approximately 130,000 square feet. They noted that the existing building extended from the sidewalk along North 7th Street to the rear of the property along the railroad tracks, and stated that the smaller footprint permitted more green space and additional parking in front of the building.

Commissioner Marek stated that she felt the overall building layout and design seemed appropriate but expressed concerns with the amount of parking on-site; she stated that she felt the number of parking was unnecessary related to the number of employees and the parking required by the Zoning Code. The Applicants noted that the State RFP included several stipulations, including provision of a 120,000-square-foot building, 1,000 parking spaces, and other specifications. They noted that the State's review of the RFP responses was predicated on whether submissions were meeting the stipulations. They noted that Mr. Knight had expressed similar concerns about the amount of parking included and that they presented those concerns to the State, noting how much unnecessary parking was required. The Applicants noted that the State had told them that if they wouldn't provide the parking, they would cancel their contract for the development. They responded that they were legally bound to provide the proposed parking.

Commissioner Marek stated that the City should be allowed to have a voice in how much parking was provided on-site. Mr. Knight confirmed that he had expressed the same opinions to the Applicants. Mr. Grover noted that the State was unlikely to change their position, noting that the bidding process for the project had been expanded to include all of Dauphin and Cumberland Counties and thus that the State was likely to select a different location out of the city if the project was not approved as per their stipulations. He stated that he thought the State may have longer-term plans which included expansion of the office space, but that he had no proof of that belief.

Mr. Knight noted that the parking regulations in the Zoning Code were only minimums and that so long as those were being met, there was no enforcement to require an Applicant to provide only a maximum number of parking spaces. Mr. Grover noted that the proposal did reduce the amount of impervious surface on-site; the Applicants confirmed that the site plan reduced the impervious surface from 96% of the site to 76% of the site. They stated that they agreed the amount of parking was excessive, but reiterated they were legally bound to provide the proposed amount of parking.

Commissioner Marek stated that her frustration was directed towards the State and asked whether there were options for reducing the impact of the parking lots, such as installing pervious paving or promoting multimodal transportation. Mr. Knight noted that if the impervious surface coverage of a property were reduced as part of a development, then the project may be exempt from meeting stormwater management requirements, although Applicants were permitted to incorporate green infrastructure if they wanted. He noted that CRW was still reviewing the project, and that they may be working with the Applicants on incorporating such elements. Mr. Grover noted that CRW would be imposing a stormwater management fee in June 2020 and that proposals such as the current project would need to consider their development plans in light of the amount of impervious surface they were proposing.

Commissioner Marek stated that she felt the State was being hypocritical in touting the green elements of a new development while at the same time requiring such an excessive amount of on-site parking. She stated that she wanted to see more alternatives for on-site development. The Applicants stated that they had used that same reasoning in their discussion with the State government regarding the reduction in on-street parking.

The Applicants confirmed that they were installing linear infiltration basins along the east side of the property, which would catch most of the runoff from the parking lots.

Commissioner Marek asked the Applicants to describe the multimodalism transportation elements of the proposal. The Applicants stated that they would be installing bicycle racks in the north and south parking lots and adjacent to the small visitors' parking lot in front of the building. They noted that there was a nearby bus stop on 6th Street and that proximity to CAT bus stops was also a stipulation in the project RFP. The Applicants stated that they would be discussing the incorporation of a bus stop adjacent to the project site, but that it would require coordination with CAT to see whether routes could be modified to serve the project site. They noted that there would not be a large amount of visitor traffic, but that they were planning on following engineering recommendations to identify options for incorporating such infrastructure.

Commissioner Alsberry noted that the closest CAT bus stop was in the nearby Uptown Plaza Mall; the Applicants confirmed that was the case. Mr. Knight noted that the project site was located along one of the corridors included in CAT's bus stop optimization study, which might result in relocated, consolidated, or upgraded stops, and stated that the Applicant's planning should coordinate with CAT on that initiative.

Commissioner Alsberry asked whether there was anyone from the public that was for or against the project. Mr. Robert Shoaff (1511 Green Street, Harrisburg, PA) stated that he agreed with the comments from the commissioners and Planning Bureau staff regarding the provision of parking

on-site, and that he was happy to hear that the Applicants was coordinating with the City on the transfer of the solar panels on-site. He encouraged the Applicants to continue coordination with the community as the project moved forward.

Commissioner Alsberry noted that he was generally the biggest supporter of off-street parking and was thus happy to see that parking would not be an issue; he suggested that excessive parking might be leased to the Federal Courthouse building.

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

OTHER BUSINESS:

1 Comprehensive Plan Update

Mr. Knight noted that Wallace Montgomery had resumed work on the copyediting project, including addressing comments from workshops with the Planning Commission. He stated that the intention was to have the final draft document available to the commissioners towards the end of April, so that they could pass a motion at the May 6th meeting recommending a presentation to City Council towards the end of May that would kick-off the public review period mandated in the MPC. Mr. Knight stated that the intention would be to schedule the presentation to City Council on either May 12th or May 26th based on any final comments from the Planning Commission. He stated that the mandated review period would end during City Council's hiatus and that, depending on the amount of comments received from the public, it may be possible to schedule a formal vote on the document at the August HPC meeting.

Mr. Grover stated that he was confused as to why the document was being presented to the City Council twice, which was not an MPC requirement. Mr. Knight clarified that the first presentation would be to provide a process update, which was not a formal step in the required review process, and that it would kick-off the formal review period which was mandated by the MPC. He stated that City Council should be able to take a final vote by August or September. [At the end of the Other Business discussion, Mr. Grover stated the previous Comprehensive Plan consultant had served the City with litigation papers, to which the Administration intended to respond.]

2 Special HPC Meeting

Mr. Grover noted that the Planning Commission would need to hold a special meeting to review the revised Land Development Plan for the proposed Harrisburg University facility, due to the Applicant needing to issue bonds by the end of March and so that the facility could be complete in time for the Spring 2021 semester so that classes could be held in the new building. He noted that the facility no longer included a hotel, would be shorter, and had a new façade design; thus a special meeting would be required to allow the public to provide comment. Commissioner O'Toole stated that he hoped the new proposal would be an improvement on the previous design; Mr. Knight stated that he felt the new façade was a significant improvement on the former proposal.

Mr. Grover noted that if the proposal could not be reviewed by the end of March, it may create issues with getting the facility constructed on-time. Mr. Grover stated that the Mayor and the City

Council President had both been apprised of the special meeting requirements and were committed to working with the Applicant on the necessary review timeline.

Mr. Knight stated that there would only need to be four commissioners in attendance to establish a quorum, and that responses to a previous email solicitation from the Planning Bureau had indicated that Tuesday, March 10th would be the date most amenable to the commissioners' schedules. Mr. Grover noted that a legal ad would need to be published 24 hours in advance of the meeting, and thus a Tuesday night meeting date would require publication of a legal ad on Sunday; Mr. Knight noted that this would mean the legal ad would have to be submitted March 5th. The commissioners discussed times which would best accommodate everyone's schedules. Mr. Knight noted that he would have to draft minutes of the night's meeting in time for the upcoming Zoning Hearing Board meeting on Monday, March 16th, and suggested that a meeting later in the week might help ensure that could be accomplished. The Planning Commissioners discussed various options for the meeting date and eventually determined that Tuesday, March 10th would be the best option.

3 Density regulations

Mr. Grover stated that the Administration wanted to address the density regulations in the Zoning Code, noting that the zoning relief requested for the project at 440 Kelker Street had been denied by the Zoning Hearing Board for failing to provide evidence of a hardship. He noted that if a Zoning Code Amendment previously presented to the Planning Commission had been approved, then the project would have been permitted to move forward by right.

Mr. Grover stated that the Law Bureau had discussed the issue with the Mayor's Office and Planning Bureau staff and that they were considering proposing a modest revision from 1,200 square feet of lot area per dwelling unit to 900 square feet. Mr. Knight stated that he wasn't sure whether a firm number had been determined, but noted that previous reviews of the proposal to completely remove the density regulation had indicated that lower threshold would be more appealing to the Planning Commission and City Council than outright removal. He stated that lowering the threshold would be a step in the right direction by allowing more units, and thus more affordable units, to be constructed by right. Mr. Grover noted that the Planning Bureau would need to develop a rational justification for any proposed change.

Mr. Grover noted that if action was not taken on the issue, and proposals were denied by the Zoning Hearing Board, then future development opportunities in the city would be lost, particularly affordable housing developments. He stated that both the Mayor and the City Council President were committed to actively supporting affordable housing, and that steps would likely become in a piecemeal fashion through Zoning Code amendments related to density and allowable uses, such as short-term rentals. Commissioner Green noted that the City Council had discussed ways of incentivizing the construction of affordable housing units at their meeting the previous week.

ADJOURNMENT: 9:20 PM

Commissioner Marek moved, and Commissioner Green seconded the motion, to adjourn. The motion was adopted by a unanimous vote (6-0). The meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM.