

AVONDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL MEETING
JULY 18, 2023
7:00 PM

Council Members Present: President, Paul Morgan, Vice President Stephanie Reichert, Council members Mike Essmaker, Janet Watts and Lucas Ortiz. Mayor Susan Rzuclidlo, Solicitor Kim Venzie, Engineer Tom Wilkes, Treasurer Joan McVaugh, Administrator Sharon Norris and 16 members of the public were in attendance as well as a Court Reporter.

Call to Order – President Paul Morgan called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and announced the meeting is being recorded. The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment – There was no public comment.

BUSINESS:

Consideration of Ordinance 2023-278. Mr. Morgan turned the meeting over to Solicitor Venzie. Ms. Venzie opened the Public Hearing and explained the highlights from the ordinance which if enacted would amend Chapter 430 of the Borough Code, to replace Article VI R3 residential district in order to update area and bulk regulations and to update design requirements for townhouse developments, and to amend the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (Chapter 375 of the Borough Code), in order to replace Section 375-32 to amend and expand provisions related to recreational areas, open space and fee in lieu provisions. She outlined the exhibits and began the discussion by reviewing the comments from the Chester County Planning Commission. The Council expressed some concerns and asked questions of the Solicitor. Mr. Mark Kaplan, Esquire, representing Wilkinson Builders who are looking to build a townhouse community at the quarry, participated in this discussion. It was noted that Borough representatives and property owner representatives have been working together over the course of many months to update this ordinance to the satisfaction of both parties. There were many questions regarding environmental standards.

After a lengthy discussion, Council member Mike Essmaker made a motion to continue this discussion until after the Conditional Use public hearing this evening. Vice President Stephanie Reichert seconded the motion. Mr. Morgan called for the vote which passed 5-0.

Ms. Venzie opened the Conditional Use Public Hearing and outlined the process and rules of order. She invited any member of the public to request to become a party to the plan and explained what that meant. The following residents and property owners requested and received party status:
Jerry F. Poe, 603 Popular Street.
Constance Artwell – 401 Third Church Street
Julia Coleman – 409 E. Third Street

Ms. Venzie outlined the exhibits to this hearing and explained that this plan seeks conditional use approval pursuant to proposed Section 430-26.B of the Borough Zoning Ordinance, and such other related relief as may be required, to permit construction of a Townhouse Gross Density Development in compliance with the provisions of proposed Section 430-27.1 of the Borough Zoning Ordinance upon property located near the intersection of Church Avenue and East Third Street and northwest of Baltimore Pike in the Borough (Chester County Tax Parcel Nos. 4-1-199.1, 4-1-200, 4-1-201, 4-1-202, 4-1-203, 4-1-204, 4-1-208, 4-1-209, 4-1-211, 4-1-212, 4-1-213, 4-1-215, 4-1-216, 4-2-13.1, 4-4-2.1) Solicitor Venzie noted that the applicant engineer, Justin Brewer, would present the plan, and he and Mr. Kaplan would answer any questions the Council may have. After that, any members of the public wishing to speak will be invited to do so. Mr. Brewer and Bill Romanelli representing Wilkinson Homes were sworn in. They discussed the overall plan for the project including stormwater, water and sewer, parking and building the project in phases beginning with the area closest to the Baltimore Pike entrance. The plan proposes 179 total units with 2.89 parking spaces per unit. Currently, there is no commercial component to this plan. After answering questions from the Council, public comment was taken from the following people:

Jerry Poe asked about a Traffic Impact Study on Church Street. PennDOT will require one for Baltimore Pike.

Bob Cleveland, 101 Garner Drive, asked about springs in that area.

Julia Coleman commented on narrow streets, springs, and existing problems with flooding after rains.

Marianne Archwell, speaking on behalf of Anthony Tsaganos, her father, who owns 81 Baltimore Pike discussed the number of cars that currently cut through his shopping center to get from Church to Baltimore Pike and vice versa.

Oscar Garcia, 72 Baltimore Pike, commented on traffic, frequent accidents, alleviating water runoff and how will State Street and Pennsylvania Avenue handle the increased amount of traffic.

After a five (5) minute recess, the Hearing continued with Mr. Romanelli touching on sewer capacity, routing traffic through the proposed neighborhood and answered questions from the Council. Mr. Morgan called for a motion to continue the hearing to Thursday, August 3rd at 7 PM. Mr. Morgan called for the vote. The motion carried 5-0.

Solicitor Venzie reopened the Zoning Ordinance Amendment public hearing. The Council voted 5-0 to continue the hearing to August 3rd at 7 PM. They agreed to hold the ordinance amendment public hearing first and the Conditional Use hearing second.

ENGINEER'S REPORT – Borough Engineer Tom Wilkes briefly reviewed his report and discussed his research on the 2017 State Street Bridge repair and how that repair could be connected to the recent water main break near that bridge. During the repair, a large stormwater pipe was found to be laying right over the water pipe.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Morgan called for a motion. Mr. Essmaker made a motion to approve the July 5, 2023 minutes as presented. Ms. Reichert seconded the motion. The motion carried 5-0.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Essmaker made a motion to approve the June 2023 Treasurer's report. Ms. Reichert seconded the motion. Mr. Morgan called for the vote. The motion carried 5-0.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Morgan made the following announcement:

- 1) The next Borough Council meeting is Thursday, August 3, 2023 at 7:00 PM beginning with an Executive Session at 6 PM.

Public Comment – Mr. Poe commented on the difference in the way his plan was treated compared to the Wilkinson plan.

Adjournment – On a motion by Mr. Essmaker, seconded by Mr. Morgan, the meeting adjourned at approximately 10:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Norris

Sharon Norris, Secretary