

January 20, 2015
Planning Commission Minutes
Borough of Gettysburg

Planning Director Scott Dellett called to order the Tuesday, January 20, 2015 meeting of the Gettysburg Borough Planning Commission at 7:05 PM at the Borough Building, 59 East High Street. Those in attendance were: Commission Members Rad Schultz, Sarah Kipp and Mike Shestok; and Management Assistant Karen Mesher. Others in attendance were: Gary Shaffer of Shaffer Design Associates PC and Megan Shreve of South Central Community Action Programs (SCCAP), both representing the 153 North Stratton Street application before the Zoning Hearing Board. Commission Members Dominic Picarelli and Martin Jolin; and Borough Engineer Chad Clabaugh were absent.

Reorganization

Mr. Dellett called for nominations for Chairman. Ms. Kipp nominated Mr. Schultz; Mr. Shestok seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations. Mr. Schultz will serve as the Chair. He assumed running the meeting.

Mr. Shestok nominated Ms. Kipp for the position of Vice Chairman. Mr. Schultz seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations. Ms. Kipp will serve as Vice Chair.

Mr. Shestok nominated Mr. Picarelli for the position of Secretary. Ms. Kipp seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations. Mr. Picarelli will serve as Secretary.

Agenda and Minutes

The meeting agenda was accepted as published. Ms. Kipp moved to approve the November 17, 2014 minutes as presented. Mr. Schultz seconded and the motion was approved with one abstention.

Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

There were no comments for items not on the meeting agenda.

New Application

A. ZHB-15-01 South Central Community Action Programs, Inc., 153 North Stratton Street, Variance Request

Applicant requests the grant of a variance from Section 27-804A (6), Lot Requirements, Rear Yard. The property is located in the ROR Residential Office Redevelopment and Streetscape Enhancement Overlay districts. The Planning Commission is requested to review this application and forward a recommendation to the Zoning Hearing Board pursuant to Section 27-1703 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Dellett presented the background information on the application as depicted in his Planning Commission memorandum dated January 13, 2015:

BACKGROUND

1. **Description:** Applicant requests the grant of a variance from Section 27-804A (6), Lot Requirements, Rear Yard. The property is located in the ROR Residential Office Redevelopment Zoning District. The Planning Commission is requested to review this application and forward a recommendation to the Zoning Hearing Board pursuant to Section 27-1703 of the Borough Zoning Ordinance.
2. **Submission Date:** The application was submitted to the Planning Department on December 18, 2014.
3. **Public Hearing Date:** The Borough Zoning Hearing Board will hold a public hearing on the variance request on Wednesday, January 28, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers.

STANDARDS FOR ZONING HEARING BOARD ACTION ON VARIANCE

Section 27-1704.A of the Borough Zoning Ordinance and Section 910.2 of the state Municipalities Planning Code (“MPC”) establish five criteria in granting a variance. The Zoning Hearing Board may grant a variance, provided that all of the following findings are made where relevant in a given case:

- That there are unique physical circumstances or conditions, including irregularity, narrowness, or shallowness of lot size or shape, or exceptional topographical or other physical conditions peculiar to the particular property and that the unnecessary hardship is due to such conditions and not the circumstances or conditions generally created by the provisions of this chapter in the neighborhood or district in which the property is located.
- That, because of such physical circumstances or conditions, there is no possibility that the property can be developed in strict conformity with the provisions of this chapter and that the authorization of a variance is therefore necessary to enable the reasonable use of the property.
- That such unnecessary hardship has not been created by the appellant.
- That the variance, if authorized, will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood or district in which the property is located, nor substantially or permanently impair the appropriate use or development of adjacent property, nor be detrimental to the public welfare.
- That the variance, if authorized, will represent the minimum variance that will afford relief and will represent the least modification possible of the regulation in issue.

In granting any variance, the Board may attach such reasonable conditions and safeguards as it may deem necessary to implement the purposes of the MPC and Borough Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Dellett said that based on the five criteria, the Planning Commission is asked to make a recommendation to the Zoning Hearing Board, who ultimately makes the decision.

Mr. Shaffer and Ms. Shreve represented the property located at 153 North Stratton Street, and gave a brief presentation. The buildings on this site, consist of the main office building, two mobile buildings, an existing two-story garage, and two storage sheds. The buildings serve as the offices for Gettysburg staff and social services, which assists families in their efforts to move out of poverty. The owner desires to attach to an existing auxiliary structure, that is currently used for their food pantry and is located in the 30-foot-rear-yard setback (which is determined to be the rear yard due to it being opposite of the alley; but the front of the building actually faces the alley). The agency needs additional space, and is seeking to infill between the main building and the garage. The variance would allow the buildings to be connected with little visual impact from Water Street. The remainder of the block is used primarily for industrial purposes.

Ms. Shreve said that the Food Pantry services approximately 1,200 families. They also operate the “gleaning project”, where 183,000 pounds of fruit and vegetables are picked for delivery to low income families in the entire county. Appropriate storage is needed to facilitate this project. Mrs. Shreve explained that a larger space is needed to expand the Food Pantry and to create more storage space. The variance, allowing both building to be connected, would create this space without destroying any green space.

Mr. Shestok asked if the changes met the approval of the Borough Engineer and Borough Code Enforcement Officer. Mr. Dellett replied that the applicant is only seeking a variance; when the agency applies for a building permit, then it would be reviewed by both the Borough Engineer and the Code Enforcement Officer.

Mr. Picarelli made a **motion** to recommend that the Zoning Hearing Board grant a variance to the South Central Community Action Programs, Inc., from the Borough of Gettysburg Ordinance, Part 8A, Section 804A (6), Lot Requirements, Rear Yard regarding the property located at 153 North Stratton Street, which is located in the ROR Residential Office Redevelopment and Streetscape Enhancement Overlay districts.

Ms. Kipp seconded the **motion**. The motion was approved, 3-to-0.

Planning Director’s Report

A. Joint Comprehensive Plan Update – Steering Committee

Mr. Dellett said the meeting of the Central Adams County Joint Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee that was held on January 6, 2015 at the Adams County Agricultural and Natural Resources Center on Old Harrisburg Road. The objective of

the Steering Committee is to update the Comprehensive Plan, which the Borough has not been updated since 1996. Mr. Dellett explained that the Municipality's Planning Code governs how land is used in the Borough and throughout the state; and it also governs how the Planning Commission and Zoning Hearing Board operates. He said that Gettysburg Borough partnered with Cumberland and Straban Townships to develop a joint plan, which is one year and four months into development. The plan is being prepared by the Adams County Office of Planning and Development. Mr. Dellett pointed out that Ms. Kipp is part of that Committee. She is joined by David Rice, Gary Shaffer, Judy Butterfield, and Tammy Myers representing the Borough. He said that the Committee discussed two components relative to the character areas in Central Adams County: the Agricultural and Natural Component (current conditions of Agricultural properties), and the Downtown and Economic Development Component (target proposals for reinvestment and redevelopment. The Steering Committee will hold their next meeting on February 3rd.

Ms. Kipp said that she was very interested in how certain areas are considered for redevelopment. Mr. Schultz asked if the recent change in the Planning Director's position in the Adams County Office of Planning and Development created any "blips" in planning process at the county level. Mr. Dellett said that Assistant Director, Andrew Merkel, has managed the Comprehensive Plan in a capable manner with the support of capable staff, currently focusing on utility placement relative to development. Ms. Sherri Clayton from Franklin County has now assumed the role as Adams County Planning Director. Mr. Schultz asked how many committee members represent the townships. Mr. Dellett said that there are six members from Cumberland and three members from Straban. Mr. Shestok asked if there is an "end target date" for the Joint Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Dellett stated that the committee is considering land-use policies and implementation procedures as part of drafting the Joint Comprehensive Plan. The plan will incorporate short, intermediate and long-term recommendations. He explained that the finished plan will have to be adopted by all governing bodies, and that the Adams County Planning Office has prepared other regional plans for other areas of the county.

B. Zoning Ordinance Amendment – Section 13 Parking, Loading and Unloading

Mr. Dellett said that Council has directed staff to draft an ordinance regarding loading and unloading by businesses relative to parking in the Borough. The Zoning Hearing Board requested that the Borough give some relief to businesses regarding parking space requirements in the Borough. He explained that if there are currently no stated requirements, then the applicant must appear before the Zoning Hearing Board to get some relief on parking. He stated that there should be a standard for every possible use, and if not, have a "catch-all" provision. The current fee for an application before the Zoning Hearing Board is \$750.00. Mr. Dellett said that there is a need to rethink parking requirements as it relates to development, and consider if there are enough parking spaces for the different business uses within the Borough. He stated that there is a definite need for parking in the Steinwehr / Baltimore Street corridor.

Mr. Schultz asked if the Borough will evaluate the need. Mr. Dellett said that a review of the ordinance and of those in other municipalities would aid staff in addressing how parking should be required for some business uses. He noted that the “loading language” requirements may not be applicable for smaller-scale businesses; and that buildings would not be demolished to create needed parking spaces.

Other Business

There was no new business.

Mr. Shestok made the **motion** to adjourn, and it was seconded by Ms. Kipp. The motion was approved 3-to-0. The meeting adjourned at 8 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen M. Mesher
Borough Management Assistant