

MINUTES
Stroudsburg Borough Council Workshop Meeting
Tuesday, May 31, 2016 at 7 p.m.

1. Call Meeting to Order/Roll Call: Council President Boyd Weiss called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Borough Manager Cathryn Thomas called roll. Present were President Weiss, Vice-President James Smith, Mayor Tarah Probst, Council Members Joanne Kochanski, Matt Abell, Mark Connors and Patrick Maurath. Absent were Council Member Ken Lang and Solicitor Joe McDonald.

2. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Mr. Connors feels there is a degree of ambiguity in regards to Borough Council holding workshops that he is not going to argue about tonight but requested clarification for the future.

Old Business

3. Discussion on Proposed Rite Aid Development: Kate Durso was present on behalf of the developer to give a brief description of the project. The proposal is to consolidate a number of tracts of land between Main and McConnell Streets to relocate the Rite Aid currently in the ShopRite shopping center to a free-standing site with a drive-through, which requires acquiring several properties, including one owned by the Borough. The proposal has been submitted in the form of a land development plan to the Borough and comments have been received from the Borough Engineer. An appearance has been made before the Planning Commission and submission has been made to the Zoning Hearing Board for some relief primarily related to points of access along McConnell and Main Streets that require permitting from PennDOT.

Ms. Durso went on to say in previous meetings the Borough has expressed the need for the front of the building to be along Main Street, asked for a more decorative building design, a significant amount of landscaping, decorative street lighting, benches and fake windows along the back of the building. Ms. Durso stated Rite Aid has agreed to all the Borough's requests except for the front of the building facing Main Street. Rite Aid feels the entrance must be on McConnell due to the fact that the existing traffic going to the Rite Aid goes that way and because they do not want the entrance to face the cemetery on Main Street. Rite Aid is prepared to pull the project if the Borough requires the store to front Main Street. Mayor Probst thanked Ms. Durso for the concessions Rite Aid has made, feels the building will fit in perfectly and hopes this development will force ShopRite to clean up their property.

Ms. Durso also feels this development will benefit the Borough once the building is assessed as commercial which would increase the tax base and because the store will employ approximately 35 people.

Council Member Smith asked if Rite Aid would consider a mural on the back of the building instead of fake windows and consider installing a bike rack. Ms. Durso feels the bike rack is a good idea but the material on the back of the building is not conducive for painting a mural.

Mayor Probst expressed the need for a guarantee to build if the Borough agrees to the sale of the property. Ms. Durso stated that could be a condition of the bid. Project Developer Burt Schaerer expressed his confusion as to why the sale of this access property is an issue all of the sudden. There were meetings held years ago with Borough representatives to get a feel of what the issues were. It had been articulated to him at that time that if

they could assemble all the properties needed for development they could partner with the Borough on the project. Attorney Bill Cramer suggested giving the Borough the assurance to build if they agree to sell the property.

Mr. Connors is still not convinced this location is well suited for a Rite Aid and suggested other options which Ms. Durso explained are either too small or will not work due to time constraints.

Numerous downtown property and business owners including Rich Berkowitz, Bill and Jane Parkinson, Martha Loomis, Barry Lynch, Scott St. Louis and Ed Henning all voiced their approval for the proposed project and feel this redevelopment will only have positive effects on the Borough.

After much discussion President Weiss thanked everyone for their comments and Ms. Thomas stated the consideration to sell the property would be on the next council meeting agenda.

4. Adjournment: Motion by Mr. Smith, second by Mrs. Kochanski, to adjourn at 7:58 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Approved:

Boyd Weiss, President of Council

Attest:

Cathryn Thomas, Borough Manager/Secretary