

BOROUGH OF CONSHOHOCKEN BOROUGH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING

Wednesday, November 6, 2024

PUBLIC MEETING

PRESENT: Tina Sokolowski, Council President
Kathleen Kingsley, Council Vice-President
Anita Barton, Senior Council Member
Alan Chmielewski, Council Member
Stacy Ellam, Council Member
Ralph Frey, Council Member
Adrian Serna, Council Member
Yaniv Aronson, Mayor

ALSO PRESENT: Stephanie Cecco, Borough Manager
Michael E. Peters, Borough Solicitor

CALL TO ORDER

The Public Meeting of the Conshohocken Borough Council duly advertised, was held at the Conshohocken Borough Hall, 400 Fayette Street, Conshohocken, PA. Tina Sokolowski, Borough Council President, called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ms. Sokolowski announced that Borough Council held a Special FY 2025 Budget Presentation Meeting at 6:00pm immediately prior to this Work Session.

PRESENTATIONS

a.) Conshohocken Baseball and Softball League Presentation, Phil Doherty, President

Phil Doherty, President of the Conshohocken Baseball and Softball League, provided a brief history of the league. He discussed the organization's five (5) year plan to develop and allocate resources. He discussed new partnerships and reviewed short- and long-term goals of the organization.

LAND USE MATTERS, PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ORDINANCES

a.) Public Hearing on an amendment to the group home provisions of the Zoning Ordinance

Mr. Peters opened the public hearing on an amendment to the group home provisions of the Zoning Ordinance. He stated that the amendment proposes to eliminate certain internal inconsistencies that exist in the Zoning Ordinance regarding group homes. Mr. Peters explained that, in certain sections of the code, group homes are permitted by special exception and that other code sections recognize the rights of handicapped persons as defined by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 and as amended by Fair Housing Act of 1988. Mr. Peters stated that the proposed amendment would give protected individuals the right to occupy a dwelling unit, without the need to comply with the special exception requirement.

There was no public comment.

The hearing was closed, and the matter was continued on the record to the November 20, 2024 public meeting for consideration of adoption by Borough Council.

b.) Consider a Preliminary/Final Land Development Application for 127 East Elm Street: Cooper Winery LLC, Christina Pieri

Mark Danek, attorney for the applicant, provided a brief overview of the project, which includes an outdoor wine garden, restaurant, and pickleball courts. He explained that the applicant is proposing to install a butterfly garden and park benches to be dedicated to the Borough for park and recreation use as part of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) requirement. He reviewed the architectural renderings and the floor plan for the restaurant. Mr. Danek shared that an underground basin is being proposed to address stormwater management. He discussed the various variances and special exceptions granted by the Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. Danek shared that the applicant has leased 65 off-street parking spaces at the adjacent SORA office building and garage at 124 East Elm Street.

Tim Davis, engineer for the applicant, presented a noise assessment for pickleball. Ms. Pieri stated that the project would comply with the noise ordinance and that she is exploring noise mitigation practices developed specifically for pickleball courts.

Mr. Serna inquired about lighting on the site. Ms. Pieri responded that pedestrian lighting would be provided along public streets and internal pedestrian circulation routes. She added that lighting fixtures would be located and oriented so as not to affect adjoining residential areas.

Ms. Pieri provided an overview of proposed access to the Schuylkill River Trail. Mr. Danek explained that the applicant has offered a fee-in-lieu to the Borough to complete work related to extending the sidewalk within the west side of the Ash Street right-of-way to provide direct access to the Schuylkill River Trail.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

a.) Conduct an interview for reappointment to Borough Boards and Commissions

Ms. Sokolowski introduced Richard Kosich who was present to interview for reappointment to the EAC. Mr. Kosich shared that he would like to continue working on EAC initiatives to help promote environmental education and sustainability. He discussed the EAC's plans for the 2025 Greenfest and provided a status update on the Local Climate Action Plan (LCAP).

MANAGER MATTERS

a.) Consider approving Resolution 2024-28 extending temporary parking regulations specifically a stop sign at West 1st and Maple and a handicap parking space in the area of 10 East 6th Avenue

Ms. Cecco stated that Borough Administration received no complaints regarding the temporary parking regulations and therefore, is requesting that Council consider extending the parking regulations for an additional 90 days. Mr. Chmielewski stated that he has received positive feedback from the residents of Maple Street regarding the stop sign.

Mr. Chmielewski made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-28 extending temporary parking regulations specifically a stop sign at West 1st and Maple and a handicap parking space in the area of 10 East 6th Avenue, seconded by Mr. Serna. The motion carried 7-0.

b.) Consider approving Resolution 2024-29 authorizing the submission of the Main Street Matters District Development Grant

Ms. Cecco shared that the Borough plans to submit a Main Street Matters District Development grant application in the amount of \$1 million dollars to be used for the construction of the Veterans Memorial Plaza at Second Avenue. She stated that a grant match in the amount of \$769,893.13 is required, which is budgeted for in the FY2025 proposed budget.

Ms. Kingsley made a motion to approve Resolution 2024-29 authorizing the submission of the Main Street Matters District Development Grant from the Commonwealth Financing Authority to be utilized for the construction of a pedestrian park and memorial plaza, seconded by Ms. Ellam. The motion carried 7-0.

c.) Consider accepting the resignation of a Planning Commission member

Ms. Cecco shared that Elizabeth MacNeal has moved out of the Borough and can no longer serve as a member of the Planning Commission.

Ms. Ellam made a motion to accept the resignation of Elizabeth MacNeal from the Planning Commission, seconded by Mr. Frey. The motion carried 7-0.

d.) Consider approving change order no. 3 for the 2024 Liquid Fuels Road Program

Ms. Cecco stated that the no cost change order reflects adjustments to the scope of work being performed by Scott Building Corporation. She explained that additional work is necessary in order to balance original plan quantities to equal actual field measured quantities.

Ms. Barton made a motion to approve change order no. 3 for the 2024 Liquid Fuels Road Program which is necessary to balance original plan quantities to equal actual field measured quantities, seconded by Mr. Frey. The motion carried 7-0.

e.) Consider approving payment certificate no. 4 for the 2024 Liquid Fuels Road Program

Ms. Cecco stated that this would be the final payment made to the contractor for this project.

Mr. Serna made a motion to approve payment certificate no. 4 (final) for the 2024 Liquid Fuels Road Program in the amount of \$44,608.36, seconded by Ms. Kingsley. The motion carried 7-0.

f.) Consider approving a request of the Friends of Conshohocken Parks to utilize non-profit funds for donations and contributions

Ms. Cecco explained that the Friends of Conshohocken Parks is requesting Council's approval to utilize non-profit funds for the following donations and contributions: \$500.00 for a large paver in support of the

Batting Cage project; \$1,000.00 for the Borough welcome sign project; \$1,000.00 to purchase directional signage for the A-Field Track.

Mr. Serna made a motion to approve the request of the Friends of Conshohocken Parks to utilize non-profit funds for the following donations and contributions: \$500.00 for a large paver in support of the Batting Cage project; \$1,000.00 for the Borough welcome sign project; \$1,000.00 to purchase directional signage for the A-Field Track, seconded by Ms. Barton. The motion carried 7-0.

- g.) Consider approving an Assignment, Assumption, Consent and Release Agreement between the Borough of Conshohocken, the Montgomery County Redevelopment Authority and the Greater Conshohocken Economic Development Corporation**

Ms. Cecco stated that Montgomery County Redevelopment Authority (RDA) holds and administers a grant fund that is utilized by the Greater Conshohocken Economic Development Corporation (GCEDC) for a loan program for new and existing businesses within the Borough. She explained that the GCEDC and the RDA have agreed to transfer the Revolving Loan Fund from the RDA to the GCEDC. She briefly discussed the GCEDC balance sheet as of October 2024. Ms. Cecco asked Council to consider authorizing execution of the Loan Transfer, Assignment, and Assumption Agreement and an Assignment, Assumption, Consent and Release Agreement between the Borough of Conshohocken, the RDA and the GCEDC. Council discussed the importance of communicating information about the GCEDC so that business owners are aware of the loan program.

Mr. Chmielewski made a motion to approve a Loan Transfer, Assignment, and Assumption Agreement and an Assignment, Assumption, Consent and Release Agreement between the Borough of Conshohocken, the Montgomery County Redevelopment Authority and the Greater Conshohocken Economic Development Corporation subject to final review and approval by the Borough Solicitor and Borough Manager, seconded by Ms. Kingsley. The motion carried 7-0.

- h.) Consider approving change order no. 2 for the Sutcliffe Park Trail Reconstruction Project**

Ms. Cecco explained that a change order is required because a tree needs to be removed to allow for the proposed trail and the stormwater management BMP located under it. Ms. Cecco stated that, if approved, change order no. 2 would increase the contract amount by \$5,000.00.

Mr. Barton made a motion to approve change order no. 2 for the Sutcliffe Park Trail Reconstruction Project in the amount of \$5,000.00, seconded by Ms. Ellam. The motion carried 7-0.

- i.) Consider approving payment certificate no. 4 for the Sutcliffe Park Trail Reconstruction Project**

Mr. Frey made a motion to approve payment certificate no. 4 for the Sutcliffe Park Trail Reconstruction Project in the amount of \$339,100.94 upon receipt of the completed certified payrolls, seconded by Ms. Ellam. The motion carried 7-0.

DEPARTMENT MATTERS

- a.) Presentation on temporary one-way traffic regulations on East Second Avenue, Z. Raymond Sokolowski, Executive Director of Operations**

Ray Sokolowski was present to discuss a proposed temporary one-way traffic pattern regulation on East Second Avenue. Mr. Sokolowski discussed that unloading/loading areas on East Second Avenue are creating a hazardous situation where accidents are more likely to happen. He explained that double parking obstructs traffic flow, reduces visibility for other drivers, and forces vehicles to maneuver around the double-parked vehicle, significantly increasing the risk of collisions with pedestrians and other vehicles. Mr. Sokolowski recommended that Borough Council consider establishing temporary traffic restrictions on East Second Avenue in the eastbound direction from Fayette Street towards Harry Street.

LEGAL MATTERS

There were no legal matters.

COUNCIL MEMBER AND MAYOR MATTERS

- a.) Consider approving the 2025 Conshohocken Arts Festival and Car Show (Mayor Aronson)**

Mayor Aronson discussed event details for the 2025 Conshohocken Arts Festival and Car Show.

Mr. Serna made a motion to approve the 2025 Conshohocken Arts Festival and Car Show on June 7, 2025 with a rain date of June 14, 2025, seconded by Ms. Barton. The motion carried 7-0.

Mayor Aronson shared that the Fire Department held a smoke detector give-a-way event. He shared photographs from the Halloween Parade and discussed Police presence on Halloween.

Ms. Barton recognized the Public Services Department for all their hard work with leaf collection.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Billy Sharp, 427 East 10th Avenue, asked Council to consider exploring the possibility of creating a skate park within the community.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:19 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Cecco,
Borough Secretary