

WILSON BOROUGH  
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY  
PENNSYLVANIA  
September 9, 2024

The first meeting of September of the Council of The Borough of Wilson was held in the Guy B. Tomaino Public Safety Building at 2040 Hay Terrace, Easton, PA. Council President John Burke called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Roll call followed.

PRESENT:

Susan Allen	John Burke	Jeffrey Bracken	Michael Figueroa
Shaun Gable	Charles Wacik	Russell Lipari	

ABSENT:

Scott Palinkas                      Kimberlee Muzac

Also present were Solicitor Stanley Margle, Borough Manager Jill Garcia, and Police Chief Christian Meehan.

READING OF THE MINUTES:

A motion by Mr. Wacik to approve the minutes from the August 26, 2024, meeting. Second by Mr. Figueroa. A roll call vote followed. Yes votes cast by Ms. Allen, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Burke, Mr. Figueroa, Ms. Gable, Mr. Lipari and Mr. Wacik. Motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

GUEST:

Attorney Charles Courtney of McNees Law, Mr. Donald Haas of Bogia Engineering, Mr. Andrew Terell of Scannell Properties and Mr. Ian Preston of KCI Technologies appeared before Council to present the development details for the property located at 1525 Wood Ave Easton, PA known as Easton Commerce Park. Mr. Burke explained to Council and the public what the procedures would be for the preliminary/final plan approval presentation. Once the presentation is complete, Solicitor Margle advised he and Ms. Monica Wall, Borough Engineer, will ask questions, next will be Council members followed by Residents and Taxpayers.

Attorney Charlie Courtney of McNees Law advised a 1 million square foot building is proposed which will clean up blight and environmental conditions and put the vacant piece of land in the Borough to good economic use.

Mr. Donald Haas of Bogia Engineering advised a majority of the building will sit in the Borough of Wilson and only 71,000 square feet of the 1 million square foot building will be in the City of Easton. There will be no improvements in Palmer Township. The site has contaminants, and the cleanup cost is estimated to be in excess of \$5 million. In addition, a stream relocation will occur. The existing stream runs through the site underground for approximately 300 feet. There are also blockages which prevent the fish from the Bushkill Creek to go upstream. The stream will be relocated outside of the area of contaminants and daylight, allowing the fish the opportunity to go upstream. Wetland benches will also be added to assist with any flood mitigation. A trail connection will be provided between the Karl Stirner Arts trail in the City of Easton, which will wrap around the north end of the site connecting it to Hackett Park. The trail will allow a bus stop at the eastern side of 13<sup>th</sup> Street. The trail will be connected by sidewalk to the warehouse itself.

Mr. Haas referenced the comment letter from T&M Engineering. The developer will comply with all recommendations, except for the 5 waivers requested. The 5 waivers requested are:

1. **Section 153.13D(2)(a)** - After approval of the preliminary plan, the final plan for the entire subdivision or land development or a final plan for a section or stage of development which has been prepared in accordance with the approved preliminary plan shall be submitted by the subdivider to the borough. A waiver is requested from this section of the ordinance as the applicant is requesting preliminary and final approval simultaneously.
2. **Section 153-32A** - Driveway widths shall be designed to properly and safely serve the function for which they are intended. Such driveways shall not be less than 10 feet wide or greater than 30 feet wide. A waiver is requested from this part of the ordinance to allow for a wider driveway for safe truck maneuvers.
3. **Section 153-42 & 153-43** - The minimum improvements required for all subdivisions and land developments which shall be provided and installed by the subdivider as a condition for final approval of any plan shall be set forth in this article... are set forth in Table II. •sidewalks. A waiver is requested to not require sidewalks along the existing street frontage. ~~as~~ A sidewalk/path connection from the new building to the existing walking trail in Easton is ~~provided~~ proposed.

4. **Section 10.b(12)(a)** - Retention Basins and/or detention basins which are designed with earth fill dams shall incorporate the following minimum standards: the height of the dam shall not exceed fifteen feet, unless approved by waiver of the Borough. A waiver is requested as height of the berm exceeds 15 feet on both basin A and basin B.
5. **Section 153-26E** - where a proposed subdivision abuts an existing street which has a narrow width, improper alignment or other deficiency, the Borough may require dedication, reservation or easement for additional right-of-way within the property limits of said proposed subdivision to correct the existing deficiency in accordance with Borough requirements. Based on the Street Classification map in the Borough's Comprehensive Plan, Wood Avenue is classified as a secondary street. The required cartway is 36 feet, the existing cartway width varies from 21.8 feet to 23.8 feet. Based on the Street Classification map in the Borough's Comprehensive Plan, Hackett Avenue is classified as a local street. The required cartway is 34 feet and the existing cartway width 21.3 feet. A waiver is requested from providing the required cartway width for both Wood Avenue and Hackett Avenue since they are both PennDOT roads and PennDOT will dictate if any improvements are required along Hackett and Wood Avenue.

Mr. Lipari asked Ms. Wall if she had any concern with the 5 waivers? Ms. Wall advised as long as they have a Geotechnical Engineer involved in design and construction, she has no concerns with the 5 waivers.

A motion to approve all 5 waivers contingent upon all recommendations made by the Borough Engineer was made by Mr. Lipari. Seconded by Mr. Bracken. A roll call vote followed. Yes votes cast by Ms. Allen, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Burke, Mr. Figueroa, Ms. Gable, Mr. Lipari and Mr. Wacik. Motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

Mr. Ian Preston, Traffic Engineer of KCI Technologies reviewed the Traffic study. There was a transportation impact study conducted at the site which has been through two rounds of revisions and a Scoping Application, which the Borough Engineer was involved with. The transportation impact for the site covers two proposed site access driveways; one on Wood Ave. and the other on Hackett Ave., both PennDOT owned roadways. There are 10 study intersections beyond the site access driveways that are included in the study. They are spread throughout the City of Easton, Wilson Borough, and Palmer Township, which are all located in PennDOT district 5. The proposed building is a 1 million square foot high cube fulfillment center warehouse layout. Compared to more traditional warehouses, the proposed warehouse is updated and will produce less traffic than older traditional smaller warehouse layouts. The Traffic impact study shows the site will generate approximately 1800 daily trips, equating to approximately 900 vehicles, as each vehicle produces a trip entering and exiting. The study covered two peak hour time periods; weekday morning and weekday afternoon. The site will generate approximately 160 peak hour trips. 250 of the 1800 daily trips are anticipated to be semi-trailers. The Borough Engineer's comments will be addressed in the final traffic study revision but, Mr. Preston does not anticipate any significant changes to the recommendations. KCI Technologies is concurrent with the recommendations from PennDOT. The first recommendation is at Wood Ave. approaching the Route 22 interchange. Regarding the existing left turn lane, there will be feasible improvements to extend the portion of the left turn lane. The second recommendation is at Wood and Hackett Avenues, a right turn lane will be installed; one right turn lane from Wood Ave. to Hackett Ave. and one right turn lane from Hackett Ave. to Wood Ave.

Ms. Gable asked how many employees are anticipated?

Mr. Preston advised about 300.

Ms. Gable asked when coming from Wood Ave. to make a left on Hackett Ave., will there not be a separate left lane but, the design will widen the shoulder for cars to go around?

Mr. Preston concurred.

Ms. Gable asked when traveling down Hackett Ave there will be a right turn lane?

Mr. Preston concurred.

Ms. Gable asked if there will be a weigh station?

Mr. Preston advised there may be some onsite.

Mr. Bracken asked how much traffic was created from the Silk Mill project versus the traffic created by this project?

Solicitor Margle advised that it is typical due diligence for the applicant and the traffic engineer to look at any recent traffic studies that have been done at neighboring developments and compare.

Mr. Bracken also pointed out that the parking lot next to the Dixie building in the Borough has been used to store tractor trailers there, 300-400 hundred a week, noting that a majority of them drive down 13<sup>th</sup> Street. Mr. Bracken feels it is going to be very similar to the traffic the Borough already has.

#### COMMENTS BY RESIDENTS AND TAXPAYERS:

Mr. Burke advised Mr. Frank Pintabone, Easton City Councilman and Mr. Michael Brett, Palmer Township Commissioner asked if they may ask the developers questions prior to the start of the meeting. Mr. Burke advised them to approach. Mr. Pintabone stated their questions are for Borough Council and not for the developers. Mr. Margle advised that it would not be appropriate for this area of the agenda.

Ms. Grace Hurd of 1803 Fairview Ave. asked Mr. Preston; When the developers looked at the traffic study of the employees, was it considered whether they were hired in Wilson, Palmer and Easton or outside the area? Mr. Preston stated when the study the sourcing of the employees, where they are located is not part of the study or a requirement.

Ms. Gina DeLauretis of 2413 Front St. asked if all the traffic will be coming off Route 22? Mr. Preston advised there are two different distribution and will be a marginal impact to the intersection at 25<sup>th</sup> Street and Route 22 and 13<sup>th</sup> St. Ms. DeLaurentis asked if Wood Ave is State Road? Mr. Burke advised it is a State Road.

Mr. Casey DeLauretis of 2413 Front St. offered concerns with the development of the warehouse. He is fearful that the developer is not taking all factors into consideration and will leave the Borough with a mess. Mr. Preston advised they are going above and beyond by reviewing all factors.

Mr. Mark McCarty of 2339 2<sup>nd</sup> St. asked what is going to be the provision of delayed green at the intersection of Northampton St. and Wood St? Mr. Preston advised there are no phasing changes at this time and this has not been required by the Borough Engineer or PennDOT.

Mr. Pintabone reacted to a motion made by Council and stated that he has a question for Borough Council regarding the project before the vote is taken. Solicitor Margle questioned whether Mr. Pintabone's intentions were to impact or influence the vote? Mr. Pintabone stated he was not trying to impact the vote any more than Mr. Margle was during the meeting. Mr. Pintabone advised the City of Easton's Planning Commission tabled the vote until their November meeting because they did not get the answers they needed. Mr. Pintabone asked in the interest of professional courtesy to table Council's vote and sit with the City of Easton and Palmer Township and discuss the project together before the Borough's final vote.

Mr. Bracken stated he does not recall anytime that a project being completed in the City of Easton which impacted Wilson Borough was discussed with the Borough before the project was started.

Solicitor Margle advised it was now time where Council must take the steps to move forward. The opportunity for questions was given. There will also be a comment period at the end of the meeting.

Mayor Barrett stated the main complaint is a lot of the traffic will be in Easton, yet The City of Easton has 270-280 apartments being built in Easton. Two parking decks in the City of Easton have been taken down. Bacon Fest in 2023 had 74,000 attendants over a two-day period which produced more traffic coming through Wilson Borough.

Mr. Michael Brett, Palmer Township Supervisor asked for Council to consider tabling the vote.

Solicitor Margle advised the Borough is under time constraints to act upon this plan and without extensions the plan gets deemed approval. Deemed approval will not be conditioned upon the Borough Engineer's recommendations.

A motion to approve the plan as presented contingent upon the applicant's compliance with the Borough Engineer's review letters was made by Ms. Gable. Seconded by Ms. Allen. Yes votes cast by Ms. Allen, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Burke, Mr. Figueroa, Ms. Gable, Mr. Lipari and Mr. Wacik. Motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

#### COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS:

NONE

#### COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT:

Mr. Burke reported to Council that there have been several break-ins over the last two weeks including Fisk Field and the Pool Concession Stand.

#### COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR:

Mayor Barrett expressed his concerns about the recent break ins and asked if residents would like to help to please donate or volunteer to the Wilson Borough Youth Associations.

Mayor Barrett advised approximately two weeks ago a resident accidentally discharged a gun in his home. Three officers; Sargeant Shull, Officer Esterly and Officer Miller conducted great police work and diffused the situation. Mayor Barrett and Chief Meehan discussed presenting an award to the three Officers.

#### COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE BOROUGH MANAGER:

NONE

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES:

GENERAL GOVERNMENT:

Mr. Burke advised he will appoint a new Chairperson in an upcoming meeting.

PROTECTION TO PERSONS & PROPERTY

POLICE:

Ms. Gable asked if there are any updates on the new Police building? Solicitor Margle advised he would give an update in Caucus.

FIRE:

NONE

PUBLIC WORKS:

Mr. Bracken thanked Public Works for cleaning up the mess at Fisk Field.

PARKS:

Mr. Lipari advised the Pickle Ball and Tennis Courts have been resurfaced and are now settling, however, someone took it upon themselves to drive over the newly refurbished surfaces. Thankfully the damage was not irreversible. Mr. Lipari would like residents to know the Borough is working diligently on having activities for all ages groups in the community.

CODE COMMITTEE:

NONE

CELEBRATION COMMITTEE:

Bingo at the Bandshell will be held on Saturday September 21, 2024. This is a fundraiser for the Celebration Committee and will be a cash bingo.

The Fall Fest will be held October 10 – 13, 2024 at Meuser Park.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Ms. Garcia stated that the Borough Engineers are waiting for a grant round to open to assist in paying for a new comprehensive plan.

Ms. Garcia advised a new Chairperson must be appointed.

CODE DEPARTMENT/ZONING/LAND DEVELOPMENT:

NONE

ATTORNEY:

Solicitor Margle gave a brief update on the Dixie building as it ties in with the three political subdivisions that are required to act upon the TIF application. Those subdivisions are The Wilson Area School District, Wilson Bough and Northampton County Council. The Wilson Area School District and Wilson Borough Council voted positively in favor of adopting the TIF. Wilson Borough Council then repealed the previously adopted LERTA. Solicitor Margle advised Northampton County Council President, Northampton County Executive Lamont McClure and Northampton County Solicitor Rudas of the action taken by Wilson Borough relative to the adoption of the TIF and repeal of the LERTA.

Solicitor Margle advised the next Northampton County Council meeting is September 11, 2024, and recommends two Councilman attend the meeting. Mr. Burke advised he will be attending as well as Mr. Bracken and Mayor Barrett.

MECAB:

NONE

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Bracken asked Solicitor Margle if he had any updates on Mr. Palinkas' lack of attendance at Council Meetings, for the past few weeks? Solicitor Margle reported that he has spoken to Mr. Palinkas and Mr. Palinkas has advised that he has had a variety of circumstances arise every other Monday which did not allow him to attend.

Mr. Bracken advised Mr. Palinkas has missed three months of meetings.

NEW BUSINESS:

NONE

ORDINANCES:

NONE

RESOLUTIONS:

NONE

BILLS AND ACCOUNTS:

Bills were in the amount of \$328,936.24 A motion to approve was made by Mr. Wacik. Seconded by Mr. Lipari A roll call vote followed. Yes votes cast by Ms. Allen, Mr. Bracken, Mr. Burke, Mr. Figueroa, Ms. Gable, Mr. Lipari, and Mr. Wacik. Motion passed with a 7-0 vote.

PRESENTATION OF MATTERS BY RESIDENTS AND TAXPAYERS:

Ms. Hope Hurd of 1803 Fairview Ave. commented on political flyers at the Strausser Community Center and said that the Community Center is a polling place and this is not permitted. Ms. Garcia advised the Community Center was rented for an event and is only a polling place at election time. The signs were placed for the event and removed immediately after.

Ms. Kaloud Assran of Majestic Autotrader at 1639 Washington St. advised there are new tenants at 1643 Washington St., and they have no business license, no zoning permits and are creating issues with customers driving the wrong way on the street. Ms. Jones advised the pictures and videos have been sent to the Code Officer and Zoning Officer.

Mr. Mark McCarty of 2339 2<sup>nd</sup> St. expressed his concerns about immigrants. He asked Council to prevent issues with immigrants from happening in the Borough. Mayor Barrett advised that Northampton County is a sanctuary County, and he would need to take this issue to the County level.

Ms. Grace Hurd of 1803 Fairview Ave. asked if there is a lawful way to remove Mr. Scott Palinkas from Council? Solitor Margle stated he has researched this and unfortunately not, the law needs to be changed.

Ms. Gina DeLauretis of 2413 Front St. advised she has a neighbor that is harboring stray cats. Ms. Garcia advised the Borough is aware of the situation and it is being looked into. Ms. DeLauretis also expressed concern with traffic at Balata and Front Streets when the middle school lets out. Chief Meehan will speak to her.

Mr. Alex Simons of 1435 Spring Garden St. stated that he is an Easton Resident but extensively uses Wilson businesses and his concern with the warehouse is about the intersections at 16<sup>th</sup> St., 17<sup>th</sup> St., and Wood Ave. Mr. Burke advised that PennDOT is looking to expand that area.

CAUCUS:

A motion to go into a Caucus made by Mr. Wacik. Seconded by Ms. Allen. Council agreed unanimously.

Entered: 8:58 pm

Exited: 9:13 pm

The Caucus was held to discuss personnel matters and real estate issues. No action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Wacik made a Motion to adjourn at 9:25. Seconded by Mr. Burke and Council concurred.

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STEPHANIE N. JONES  
CLERK/TREASURER