

Borough of Malvern

Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes

January 15, 2015

Approved Minutes

A regular session of the Planning Commission was held on Thursday, January 15, 2015 at the Malvern Municipal Building. Members present included: Tom Burns, Dana Carosella, Amy Finkbiner, and Chris Mongeau.

Also present: Neil Lovekin, Assistant Borough Manager

Vice Chairperson Finkbiner called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

Minutes of December 18, 2014 approved as corrected.

130 Woodland Avenue

The Borough currently owns 130 Woodland Avenue and is considering selling it. 130 Woodland Avenue is a 10,000 square foot parcel and is zoned R4. The minimum requirement for a single family home is 7000 square feet. The lot is approximately 60 x 170 feet.

Public Comment

Danny Fruchter, 234 Channing Avenue

Mr. Fruchter asked if the Borough needed the money from the sale of the property. He would support the sale if the Borough needs the money. He believes, however, that the Borough has 3 million dollars in the bank and should hold on to the property. His comments included: the seller would have more control at a later date; the current investment environment is not good; land values have gone up; land is appreciating faster than other investments; the use of the land as a park. Mr. Fruchter noted that the only downside is the loss of the taxes to the Borough.

Neil Lovekin explained that the sale of the Woodland property would help offset the purchase of the Herzog property.

Cassandra Doughty, Woodland Avenue

Ms. Doughty asked if there were other properties that could be sold. She noted that "we've been hit with a lot of development already. This is "hard to swallow." New construction will take away from the historic feel of the neighborhood.

Eric Beauregard, 153 Woodland Avenue

Mr. Beauregard agreed with Ms. Doughty's remarks. He stated that the homes recently built on Woodland Avenue did not meet the developers promises. "The neighborhood is apprehensive." Mr. Mongeau explained that the alley plan changed because the neighbors objected to the plan as presented. This was handled by Borough Council decision, not the Planning Commission.

Jim Becker, 131 Woodland Avenue

Mr. Becker does not want to see the property sold if it's not necessary. Congestion in Malvern is already a problem especially parking by train commuters. He asked what the sale process would be. Mr. Mongeau stated that Borough Council will conduct the sale. Mr. Knies described the process as: public meeting to solicit community input (tonight); Planning Commission recommendation to Borough

Council; appraisal of property; sealed bids; and sale to highest responsible bidder. Mr. Becker asked if they would publish the appraised value.

Amy Finkbiner asked which property should be the priority – Herzak or Woodland.

The development of the Woodland property into a park was discussed. Mr. Knies noted that the Planning Commission had 30 days to make a recommendation to Borough Council. That formal recommendation will be made at the February 5th meeting.

Mr. Fruchter stated that two parks were better than one. He recommended that the neighbors organize, do a neighborhood survey, find an engineer, and make a proposal to the Planning Commission for the development of a park on the Woodland property. “We don’t want it, doesn’t fly.”

Ms. Doughty asked if they had to be concerned about the lost revenue to the Borough. Tom Burns explained that this would include calculation of the value of the property, structure value and real-estate taxes.

Amy Finkbiner will compile a list of other Borough owned properties.

Chris Mongeau noted that an investment needs to be made in Burke Park.

Planning Commission member training and the progress on the Walkability Study was discussed before the meeting was adjourned at 8:15pm.

Recorded by
Marty Laney