

**ALLENTOWN CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

**PUBLIC MEETING JULY 12, 2022**

**MINUTES**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Christian Brown, Chairman  
Anthony Toth  
Jeff Glazier  
Kelli Holzman  
Mark Buchvalt

**CITY STAFF PRESENT:**

Robert Gates, Acting Planning Director  
Melissa Velez, Zoning Supervisor  
Nelson Varughese, Public Works  
Brandon Jones, Assistant Planner  
Meredith Keller, Historic Preservation Planning Officer  
Jesus Sadiua, Senior Planner  
David Petrik, City Engineer

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

David Lear, Lehigh Engineering  
Erich Schock, Fitzpatrick Lentz & Bubba  
Ms. Cleveland, 213 N. Penn Street  
John, 3 Dimensional Fabrication LLC  
Phillip, 3 Dimensional Fabrication LLC  
Mr. Cooper, Objector  
Chris McClean, Fitzpatrick Lentz & Bubba  
John Palumbo, 401 N. Front Street  
Davis Wilson, Civitas Engineering  
Carlos, Architect  
Darian Colbert, Community Leader  
John W., 101 Ridge Ave.  
Sandra, Lincoln Leadership

## **MINUTES**

Minutes of the public meeting of June 14, 2022.

Tabled for further discussion.

## **STREET VACATIONS**

**Utica Street from the western property line of 16 W. Tilghman Street (Parcel E) to 1 West Allen Street, 22-3(V), requested by Lehigh Engineering Associates, Inc.**

David Lear: I believe this is a paper street. It is currently not maintained, and we are just looking to vacate it in order to develop Lot 8 on Riverside Drive.

Chris Brown: For the record, the Lehigh Valley Planning Commissions review was focused on the wrong location.

Anthony Toth: Why are you here at this point?

David: We are in the middle of consolidating Lot 8 with some additional properties that were being purchased so Lot 8 is being expanded to one track. We are just cleaning up the Utica Street area.

Mark Buckvalt Motions. Jeff Glazier Seconds Motion is Approved.

**North Penn Street from West Chew to Oak Street, 22-4(V), requested by Fitzpatrick Lentz & Bubba on behalf of Sacred Heart Hospital of Allentown.**

Erich Schock: This is adjacent to the parking deck that serves Sacred Heart. The goal is to provide more parking for the clinic and access to the parking deck from the clinic facility so instead of there being an entrance at North Penn Street there will be a driveway that comes across, perpendicular to North Penn Street to gain access to the parking facility.

Kelli Holtzman: Do you have any idea of how many people walk to the facility?

Erich: The majority do walk but just to give an idea if you have 100,000 visits and you divide it by the weekdays, you are talking 50 visits an hour. So, if ten cars an hour show up and people are staying longer than an hour 21 spaces, just isn't sufficient.

Mark Buckvalt: In the city review letter, there were two conditions, and I was wondering your thoughts on those? One of those talks about maintaining pedestrian access and this looks a bit challenging based on your renderings.

Erich Schock: There are pre-existing stairs to the back of the clinic property, at the end of the retaining wall.

Anthony Toth: One of the objectors in the report was the Traffic Control Superintendent so I want to get his opinion, if we may.

Nelson: The reason I objected it was because it reduces access for the residents on Penn Street.

Jeff Glazier: The elevation on Penn Street changes from south to north and the south end of the street is lower than the north so if pedestrian access is shifted more towards the south, there may not be a clearance issue as opposed to where you're showing your renderings now, which is more to the north.

Chris: So, if what you're trying to do goes through, will this eliminate all other access points to the parking garage?

Erich: The only parking is at the bottom of Chew Street for staff.

Chris: 207 N. Penn Street seems to be the only one with off-street parking in that batch of 8 properties. It puts them in mid-block, so I feel like their situation is equal in terms of distance to another public roadways. Whereas the others do not currently and probably will never have off street parking because they are pretty much landlocked.

Ms. Cleavland: I've seen a lot of accidents and the parking is tight on Penn Street.

Chris: If this section of Penn Street was closed between the parking garage and the existing facility, would it be better or worse?

Ms. Cleavland: The streets are narrow, and it would be a struggle.

Chris: What they are proposing would reduce the amount of volume on your section of Penn Street.

Anthony: Nelson what's your opinion on cut through traffic?

Nelson: Right now, there might be some cross through traffic on 10th Street but that could be reduced with their proposal.

Chris: So, would you like to table this for now.

Erich: I will withdraw and just refile.

Withdrawn.

**900 Block of N. Lumber and Refwal Street from Clay Street to dead end, 22-5(V), requested by 3 Dimensional Fabrication LLC.**

Phillip: We're looking to vacate this street because there's just a lot of unnecessary activity that goes on. There are cars left where the truck entrances are located, and we have a lot of motorists that do not know it is a dead end forcing them to make a difficult turn around.

Mr. Cooper: I don't understand how it would affect anything by vacating that portion of N. Refwal street.

Chris: I think we're going to move forward with the street vacation of Lumber Street and withdraw the application on Refwal Street. Let's ask the applicants. Do you want to amend the application verbally and agree to withdraw the Refwal segment?

Chris: Let's formulate a motion that is predicated on a verbal agreement among the petitioners to withdraw their reference to Refwal Street and therefore move forward with the appeal for a street vacation for North Lumber Street from Clay Street to dead end subject to any easements.

Jeff Motions. Kelli Seconds. Motion is approved.

## **LAND DEVELOPMENTS**

**401 N. Front Street, LMA-2022-00007, preliminary/final plan approval requested by 401 North Front Street, LLC.**

**Applicant proposes to construct a mixed-use building; 37,967 SF of retail & 324,272 SF of apartment space.**

**Conditional Approval.**

**Applicant requests waiver from Section § 355-11B (formerly 1385.11.B) of the Land Development Controls Ordinance which requires that the horizontal distance from either the toe or top of an excavation or fill slope line shall be five (5) feet or one-half (1/2) the vertical height of the fill or excavation from any adjoining property or easement line, whichever is greater of the City's Land Development and Subdivision Ordinance (SALDO).**

Chris Mclean: Turning to the July 8th.Review letter, we will comply with all the engineering comments. Comment five is a waiver request we have submitted for § 355-11B. In comment seven we have initiated the process through the City Property Review Committee to have them look at the proposed swap to get Lot C in the developer's name so that we can proceed with the configuration as presently proposed. We will comply with all the traffic comments. We are considering having parallel parking on the street to have some additional on-street parking for the neighborhoods. We also intend to comply with all zoning comments.

Chris: The prominent corner at North Front and Pump Place, is it your intention to just restore the original material that is there now?

Carlos: Correct.

Chris: What is the construction above the parking deck?

Calos: It's going to be wood.

Anthony: So, the proposed Pump Place realignment, is that no longer on the books?

Chris Mclean: Correct. We followed the city engineering recommendation.

Chris: Are we definitely going one-way on Pump Place?

Chris McLean: Yes

Chris: I think we need a buffer for the existing residents on the corner of the entrance off Liberty Street. A headlight buffer and some other considerations for that property.

Chris McLean: We can look into planters with evergreen shrubs.

Anthony: Who determines what goes and what stays? Did you have a professional structural engineer look at the areas that you plan to retain?

Carlos: Correct. We had a structural engineer come to this site, but we do not have a report.

Chris: Would someone like to make a motion to approve the waiver request from Section § 355-11B? Jeff Motions. Mark Seconds. Motion Approved.

Chris: We are looking for a motion to grant conditional/preliminary final plan approval based on the July 8th review letter, the July 12th Shade Tree review letter, the architectural presentation given today. Jeff Motions. Mark Seconds. Motion Approved.

**1401 E. Cedar Street, LMA-2022-00011, preliminary/final plan approval requested by Lincoln Leadership Academy Foundation, Inc.**

**Applicant proposes to construct a 24,000 SF middle school.**

Mark Buchvalt: Lincoln Leadership Academy Foundation is proposing a new middle school to be constructed where the existing parking lot is. This was to help mitigate stormwater, impervious and other types of impacts.

Joe J: This school is approximately 45,000 square feet and will hold approximately 500 students. Most of them will be coming out of the existing buildings to reduce the density of the three schools that are already there.

Jeff: Question on bus articulation. Where do the buses drop off now?

Joe: They come in on Cedar Street and go out on Clay Street. We are not changing the traffic pattern.

Mark: As some of the site improvements, we will be removing the large parking lot. We have some lighting that we will be adding to the project. Some limited landscaping. We will comply with all City comments in the comment letters.

Chris: Regard the comments of the Shade Tree Review letter dated July 22, 2022.

Mark: We do not feel that comment number seven in the traffic review is necessary based on a limited amount of traffic on Cedar Street and the amount of cross traffic from a pedestrian standpoint. We do have newly installed crosswalks signage.

Jeff: I think if the city can find a way to calm traffic on Maxwell Street everyone will be happy.

Anthony: I'll make a motion that we grant conditional/preliminary final approval with the accompanying letter from engineering and all discussion discussed today. Kelli Seconds.  
Motion Approved.

## **MEETING ADJOURN**