



BOSS 2020 REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE
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SINKING SPRING BOROUGH
BOSS 2020 REVITALIZATION STEERING COMMITTEE
BUSINESS & COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 19, 2015

Call to Order

Charles Coleman (President) called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Present: Charles Coleman (President-D), Bernie Campbell (VP-ED), Dave Meas (Secretary/Treasurer-ED), Jim Adams (ED), Merlin Weaver (ED), Jim Hong (D), Brian Hoffa (SSB Council), Ken Pick (Berks Redevelopment), Thom Ludgate (LEC), Sam Loth (CDS), Paul and Kathy Miller (SS Historical Society), Richard and Danny Savoy (Guests).

Note: ED-Economic, D-Design, P-Promotion.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Bernie Campbell to approve the Meeting Minutes of February 19, 2015. **Second by Merlin Weaver.** Motion passed.

Approval of Treasurer's Report

- Dave Meas reported that as of March 18, 2015 there is a balance of \$3,102.07 in the General Fund. Deposits totaling \$1,890.00 were made for the Restaurant Placemat Fundraiser. Dave submitted an updated spread sheet. Two checks were written; One to Floyd Green Financial Services in Atlanta, GA for \$100 to file BOSS' 2014 Federal 990 Postcard Tax Return with the Federal Government and \$25 to Brian Hoffa to reimburse him for the fee he paid to the Chamber of Commerce while representing BOSS at the Chamber's Transportation Luncheon.
- Bernie Campbell said that next year he will work with Sam Loth to file the Form 990 locally thereby saving the \$100 fee. Bernie suggested that Sam contact FGFS to have them forward the Federal 'Brown Book' and other documents that FGFS is holding on behalf of BOSS' 501(c)(3) designation.

Motion by Bernie Campbell to approve the Treasurer's Report through March 18, 2015. **Second by Merlin Weaver.** Motion Passed.

Committee-of-the-Whole

3838 Penn Avenue - Joe Dell Property

Development Presentation by Richard Savoy RJSavoy99@yahoo.com

- Mr. Savoy introduced himself and his Son Danny as residents of Spring Township who have an interest in purchasing the former Joe Dell property at 3838 Penn Avenue. The property lies within the Borough Redevelopment Zone.
- Mr. Savoy has had some discussions with Mike Hart (SSB Code/Zoning Officer) regarding his ideas for the use of the property should he ultimately purchase it. Mr. Hart recommended that

Mr. Savoy attend the BOSS 2020 March 2015 Meeting to present his ideas and receive responses from the Committee.

- Mr. Savoy wishes to keep the property configuration and structures 'as is'. He would repair and upgrade the property to meet code requirements. His vision is to install prefabricated personal storage units in the rear portions of the existing buildings creating an 'Upscale Personal Storage' business; he would then sub-divide the remaining space facing Penn Avenue into several 'smaller' spaces to be marketed for retail use.
- Mr. Savoy stated that he did not believe that using the rear of the existing structures for personal storage would increase vehicle traffic substantially.
- Thom Ludgate asked Mr. Savoy if he had the property under agreement? A: No, not at this time.
- Mr. Ludgate stated to Mr. Savoy that the use he is proposing would require a Zoning Variance and that he would not be able to seek the Variance without an Agreement of Sale in place. Mr. Savoy acknowledged his understanding of this.
- Mr. Ludgate asked about access and environment within the proposed personal storage business? A: The storage facility would have limited access between 6:00 AM and 9:00 PM daily and the interior storage units would be climate controlled. The facility would not accommodate vehicle entry i.e. truck loading/unloading.
- Sam Loth asked if Mr. Savoy envisioned a multi-story storage facility? A: Single story only with no outdoor storage areas. Mr. Savoy owns and operates a storage facility in Spring Township which can accommodate any outdoor storage uses.
- Mr. Loth asked if Mr. Savoy has developed a business plan for his proposed use and if so, whether that plan included his concept for retail uses. A: No, there is no plan at this time.
- Mr. Savoy suggested that approximately 17,000 SF of the total space would be dedicated to retail use.
- Brian Hoffa said that the Borough Council is in the process of approving new ordinances for the realignment and construction of a new intersection at Penn/Columbia/Cacoosing and that the purpose of the Borough's investment in this project is to create momentum for higher uses in and around the project site including the Joe Dell property. He felt that Mr. Savoy's proposed use was somewhat contrary to the overall goals of the Borough.
- Chuck Coleman and Bernie Campbell asked whether Mr. Savoy had done any inspection or investigation work of the existing structures? A: Some preliminary walk-through views but no substantial review at this time.
- The Committee explained to Mr. Savoy that it was not empowered to accept or reject any proposals for uses of properties in the Borough and that approvals are conducted through the Borough Planning Commission. The Committee recommended Mr. Savoy continue to work with Mike Hart (SSB Codes). The Committee strongly suggested that a thorough inspection and investigation of the property structures be conducted to determine whether the proposed uses could be accommodated before any further action is taken. The Committee thanked Mr. Savoy for bringing his usage ideas before them and asked him to keep the Committee updated.

SS Area Historical Society

Discussion and Review of a Historic 'Repair & Maintenance' Grant Program of the National Trust

- Paul and Kathy Miller of the Historic Society discussed the "Louis J. Appell, Jr. Preservation Fund for Central Pennsylvania. This Fund is administering grants from the National Trust for Historic Preservation designed to encourage preservation at the local level by providing money for maintenance and upkeep of historic places. Funding between \$5,000 and \$15,000 is available as matching grants for bricks and mortar preservation and technical assistance.
- Sam Loth explained that he had received information on the grant program only days before the application window was due to close. Nevertheless, he forwarded the information to Paul and Kathy because it is very difficult to find any funding for this purpose and that the Historical Society might be able to apply for the grant funding in early 2016.
- Mr. Miller said that while researching the grant he learned that there may be a second round of funding to be awarded in October 2015. He said that there is a question of whether the Historical Society would have to join the National Trust to be eligible to apply for the grant.

- After some discussion the BOSS 2020 Committee directed Sam Loth to investigate the grant's parameters and requirements and report back to BOSS at its April 17th meeting for further action. Mr. Miller will also conduct research and will prepare some preliminary information on the project it would apply for should this become available.

BOSS 2020 Phase Two Revitalization Project

- Thom Ludgate reported that the Borough Council voted 5-2 at their February 25th Workshop Meeting to construct the Phase Two intersection at Penn/Columbia/Cacoosing Avenues. Council opted for the alternate 'Project 2' which is a slimmed down version of Phase Two that does not build the new Columbia Extension spur (no retail street entrance). This project requires the Redevelopment Authority to acquire only 5 full properties and 2 partial properties. Therefore the estimated total costs of acquiring properties, relocating owners and tenants, demolition and associated costs is \$3.4 Million dollars. Thom said that while the slimmed down version of Phase Two saves the Borough a total of \$1.3 Million dollars over 2015-2016, this strategy defers the building of the Columbia Avenue extension retail street to private developers.
- Mr. Ludgate explained that the Borough Council now considers the Revitalization Phase Two a Borough Construction Project which will be discussed at the monthly Workshop Meetings of Council. BOSS 2020 is tasked with continuing to research and develop new funding opportunities to lower the final cost of the project to the Borough and to continue working toward the remaining Phases Three and Four of the Revitalization.
- Ken Pick's Redevelopment office has already sent out 'general information notices' that notify owners and tenants of the properties to be acquired. An appraiser has also been dispatched to begin this work. The BOSS 2020 Committee will be kept updated as the process moves forward.

Phase Four Revitalization (Penn/Shillington/Mull Avenues Intersection)

- Sam Loth explained to the Committee that the Berks County Regional Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Transportation projects planned in cooperation with PennDOT is the "RATS" Committee or Regional Area Transportation Sub-committee. In order to have PennDOT consider funding and building a transportation project in Berks, the project must be listed on the RATS Transportation Improvement Plan or TIP.
- Sam reminded BOSS members that Phase Four of the Sinking Spring Revitalization Plan was on the RATS TIP but was removed in early 2014 because Alan Piper (RATS Administrator) attempted to get Phase Four funded through some unrestricted funds that had become available at that time. Those funds did not get allocated to the SSB Phase Four project; instead the Borough received a PennDOT MTF Grant award of \$783,805 for Phase Two.
- Sam said that it is imperative that the SSB Phase Four project get reinstated onto the RATS TIP and that the BOSS 2020 Committee was the group to do that. A strategy is needed to accomplish this goal in 2015.
- The Committee discussed this issue and established the following strategy:
 - > Sam Loth & Thom/Bob Ludgate will advocate.
 - > Insure that Alan Piper knows that SSB has 'committed' its own funds for construction.
 - > Work to obtain the support of State & Federal representatives for the project.
 - > Send the Phase Two Press Release out to the current distribution list.
 - > Update and expand the Press/Information distribution list.

BOSS 2020 Facade Improvement Grant Program

- 3705 Penn Avenue - Express Care & Lube
Business owner Steve Liptock and Property owner John Kishbaugh have submitted two applications for facade improvement work to this corner property.

> Application #1 requests a grant reimbursement for the eastern Mull Avenue facias of the building. Improvements include replacing two existing garage doors with two new aesthetically pleasing, high energy efficiency garage doors and painting the facade in two complimentary colors emphasizing the 'sign' bands below the roof lines. Two bids were received, the lower bids were \$3,933.75 for doors and \$1,000.00 for painting. Total project cost = \$4,933.75 with a 50% reimbursement grant amount request of \$2,466.88.

Motion by Dave Meas to approve the application for facade improvements totaling \$4,933.75 and to issue a reimbursement grant award of \$2,466.88 upon completion of the project and proof that all guidelines of the program have been met. **Second by Brian Hoffa.** Motion passed.

> Application #2 requests a grant reimbursement for the southern Penn Avenue facias of the building. Improvements include replacing three existing garage doors with three new aesthetically pleasing, high energy efficiency garage doors and painting the facade in two complimentary colors (same colors as application #1) emphasizing the sign bands below the roof lines. Two bids were received, the lower bids were \$5,733.00 for doors and \$1,560.00 for painting. Total project cost = \$7,293.00 with a 50% reimbursement grant amount request of \$3,646.50.

Motion by Dave Meas to approve the application for facade improvements totaling \$7,293.00 and to issue a reimbursement grant award of \$3,646.50 upon completion of the project and proof that all guidelines of the program have been met. **Second by Brian Hoffa.** Motion passed.

- Forrest Glass, owner of both twin houses at 3419-21 Penn Avenue has elected to contract for enhanced facade services with Kautter & Kelley Architects.
- Jim Hong, owner of the Toll House Shoppes at 4453 Penn Avenue is scheduling contractors for estimates of work to be done on the facade which faces Penn Avenue and also on the combined eastern facing facade and storefront improvements for the Shopping Center.

Old Business

BOSS 2020 Grant Program for Smart Growth Projects

- BOSS 2020 authorizes Sam Loth to work with Merlin Weaver and The Reading-Berks Association of Realtors to apply for a \$15,000 Smart Growth Grant through the National Association of Realtors. This application shall be submitted in the spring of 2015. The grant, if awarded, will be used for either a Borough Way-Finding Signage Project or a East/West/South Gateway Project.
- Sam Loth & Merlin Weaver are authorized to contact Durbin Developers, owners of the Spring Market Center, to establish a working relationship with the center.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

**Next Meeting: Thursday, April 16, 2015 @ 7:00 PM
Borough Council Chambers – Sinking Spring**