



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

MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 16, 2015

Call to Order

Charles Coleman (President) called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

Present: Charles Coleman (President-D), Bernie Campbell (VP-ED), Dave Meas (Secretary/Treasurer-ED), Jim Adams (ED), Jim Hong (D), Brian Hoffa (SSB Council), Lisa Gantner (SSB Council), Sam Loth (CDS) and Bob Ludgate (LEC).
Guests: Darlene Troutman, Allyson Jones and Heather Dautrich (Residents of Krick Avenue).
Note: ED-Economic, D-Design, P-Promotion.

PA DOT Online Transportation Twelve Year Plan Meeting

- BOSS 2020 registered to participate in this State-wide meeting online by conference call.
- The computer was set up and logged into the video-conference call. Bernie Campbell monitored the meeting activities while the BOSS Committee conducted its own meeting business.
- The State requested questions from the various participants. BOSS 2020 asked about its \$2 Million Dollar Revitalization Commitment to clearing the U.S. 422 bottleneck on Penn Avenue and whether the community can expect funding support for the remainder of the project from PennDOT?
- Transcripts of the meeting will be available shortly and questions will be followed up by PennDOT.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Bernie Campbell to approve the Meeting Minutes of March 17, 2015. **Second by Dave Meas.** Motion passed.

Approval of Treasurer's Report

- Dave Meas reported that as of March 31, 2015 there is a balance of \$3,098.07 in the General Fund.
- There are still 6 companies that have not remitted for their Restaurant Placemat advertising. This represents approximately \$600 in revenue to BOSS 2020 yet to be received.
- BOSS 2020 has received the invoice from Rieck's Printing for the Restaurant Placemats. This invoice totals \$545. BOSS will wait about 10-14 days for the remainder of payments to be received and then remit to both Rieck's and Lucille with one check.
- Bernie Campbell mentioned that another fund raising activity we could tap is the 'Dining Nite Out' where a percentage of the proceeds are donated to the Non-profit. Bernie will research this option locally.

- Jim Adams asked about the recent activities of the Planter Project. He is concerned that planters may not be receiving the attention that they deserve. Dave Meas explained that all planters are now privately owned and cared for except the two planters that BOSS 2020 donated to the Borough.
- Lisa Gantner said that she has volunteered to care for these two planters and is planning a trip to the nursery for spring flowers shortly. Jim asked the Committee if we could reimburse Lisa for her costs?
- **Motion by Bernie Campbell** to reimburse Lisa Gantner for her costs associated with caring for the two Borough-owned planters. **Second by Dave Meas.** Motion passed.
- **Motion by Bernie Campbell** to approve the Treasurer's Report as submitted. **Second by Brian Hoffa.** Motion passed.

Committee-of-the-Whole

SSB Revitalization Plan - Phase 2 Construction Project

Senator Argall - Meeting with Mountain Home Road Multi-modal Companies

- Bob Ludgate reported on general strategies to engage the several oil and gas companies doing business along Mountain Home Road within and just beyond SSB boundaries.
- Bob said that SSB is unique in that it has a Federally designated 'industrial' multimodal connector (Mountain Home Road and Columbia Avenue) which connects several larger oil and gas companies with their terminals and the Federal Interstate Highway System. Companies such as Amerigas, Sunoco and others receive raw products via pipelines and rail sidings. The companies refine and create finished products such as gasahol and propane gas, then load their products onto tanker trucks to be transported from the terminals, through downtown Sinking Spring, to roads that lead to nearby Interstate highway interchanges.
- The BOSS 2020 Committee referred to this Multimodal Connector "*FHWA Industrial Intermodal Connector, PA 10L*" in its Multimodal Transportation Fund grant application to the PA Commonwealth Finance Authority (CFA) grant application in the 2014 Round 1 of the grant program. This was the application that was submitted through DCED.
- Bob reminded the Committee that Bill Fontana, Director of the PA Downtown Center made a reference to special transportation improvement districts known as TRIDS (Transportation Related Improvement Districts) which are used to generate economic development.
- At the recent meeting which Senator Argall and his staff organized for Tamaqua, Hamburg and Sinking Spring, the Senator requested that SSB provide him with contact information on the oil and gas companies. We have done so. The Senator said he would plan a meeting between the companies, his office and SSB/BOSS representatives to discuss various ways in which the groups could cooperate on the downtown revitalization work in the borough.
- The Committee asked Bob and/or Sam to work with Senator Argall's office to schedule this meeting.

Phase 2 Construction Schedule

- Bob Ludgate reported that the required final engineering designs for the Phase 2 roadways and more are nearing completion and will be sent to PennDOT for final approval shortly. He also reported that the Berks Redevelopment Authority has begun the process of acquiring the necessary properties to clear for the new roadways.
- Bob said that the process agreed upon between PennDOT and the Borough that calls for PennDOT to realign intersection corners of Penn, Columbia and Cacoosing Avenues and move the traffic signals to their new locations is still on track. The Borough will build the approach roads to the newly aligned intersection simultaneously in 2016.
- Brian Hoffa asked about a possible combination 'letting' of the PennDOT and Borough projects in order for Bids to be called for together. Brian suggested that whichever construction company is chosen to construct the PennDOT project will most likely be able to provide the most cost effective Bid for the Borough project as well because mobilization costs could be combined.

- Bob added that the cost of repaving materials are currently at significant lows because of the low price of crude oil. This *could* result in large savings for the Penn Avenue 'Betterment' project on PennDOT's part. BOSS 2020 should pay close attention to possible budget surpluses.
- Sam Loth asked how the Committee could use this possible PennDOT windfall to the borough's advantage? Bob suggested that BOSS needs to advocate its need for funding and technical support for the Phase 4 Intersection project at Penn/Shillington/Mull Avenues and that the local MPO (RATS) Committee is the local funding mechanism for designated PennDOT transportation projects. Bob said that the BOSS revitalization project overall is now a multi-agency funded project with funding from Both DCED and PennDOT plus the Berks County and local borough funds.
- Sam asked what needs to be accomplished in order for RATS to consider the BOSS Phase 4 project for the 2017-2019 TIP (Transportation Improvement Plan)? Bob said that the first step is to complete an estimate of the total costs for the Phase 4 project.
- Sam reminded the Committee that the Borough Council has already requested and approved LEC to complete an estimate of the Phase 3 'retail street' construction.
- The Committee feels that it is necessary to have an estimate of the costs to complete Phase 4 of the BOSS Revitalization Plan in order to request that RATS place the project on the 2017-2019 TIP. In order to conduct the work to complete an estimate, the Borough Council will have to approve spending the money with LEC to do the work on the estimate.
- The Committee asked Bob to determine the LEC cost of completing a full estimate for Phase 4 construction. **The Committee wants LEC and/or a BOSS representative to request that Council give approval to LEC at the Council's April 25th Workshop Meeting to create the estimate.**
- **Motion by Dave Meas** to request that SSB Council approve work by LEC to complete a total cost estimate of the BOSS **Phase 4** Revitalization Project. The purpose of this estimate is to provide the BOSS Committee the tool it needs to convince the RATS Committee to place the early portions (planning & engineering) of the **Phase 4** project on the TIP for 2017-2019. **Second by Jim Adams.** Motion passed unanimously.

Phase 3 Strategies to Fund this segment of the BOSS Revitalization Plan

- The Committee discussed the many facets of completing the Phase 3 'Retail Street' including the need to work with and negotiate with the various owners of the properties within the Phase 3 right-of-way.
- There are several large commercial property owners whose parcels cross over and include the land needed to build the through street. There are also more than a dozen residential property owners on both the Columbia Avenue/Krick Avenue and Shillington Road sides of the proposed retail street.
- In recent months some commercial property owners have signaled their interest in working with the Borough and BOSS 2020 to support and aide the retail street's construction. This is very encouraging however there is much to be determined at this juncture.
- The BOSS 2020 Committee agrees unanimously that the retail street should be constructed over one continuous period, perhaps in segments but NOT in phases that would leave the new street disconnected and unusable.
- The BOSS Committee has been given the task by Borough Council of assembling the funding for Phase 3. Therefore, the BOSS Committee will request from Council at its April 25th Workshop Meeting that Council Resolve to approve BOSS 2020's writing a new application for grant funding to the 2015 round of MTF Program funding.
- **Motion by Bernie Campbell** to Request from SS Borough Council a Resolution to approve the filing of a Multi-Modal Transportation Fund grant application to the PA Department of Community & Economic Development and PennDOT (if applicable) for the 2015 Round of funding. This application will be due in June 2015 with a tentative decision schedule in September 2015. **Second by Dave Meas.** Motion passed unanimously.

BOSS 2020 Interaction with Borough Residents and Stakeholders

Guests Heather Daucher, Darlene Troutman and Allyson Jones, all residents of Krick Avenue in the Borough requested to speak.

- Ms. Daucher is the owner of 6 Krick Avenue. She said that her and her neighbors residing on Krick Avenue have been aware of the revitalization plan for over 5 years and that she has been "living in limbo" wondering when she would no longer be able to reside there because of the road project. She expressed frustration at not being notified of the current Phase 2 project's status. She now wonders if she will have to wait another 5 years for the Borough to move forward on Phase 3 of the project? She believes that she and her neighbors deserve to be kept informed since their futures are directly impacted by the revitalization projects.
- Ms. Troutman has resided at 4 Krick Avenue for over 70 years. She is 88 years young! She expressed dismay and fear that her property may be taken 'literally' out from under her and doesn't know what to do! An appraiser has visited her premises and has inspected the entire property. She doesn't understand the process and has not been advised as to the outcome of the appraisal.
- Ms. Jones also resides on Krick Avenue and has not received any notices or information on the project at all.
- All three guests agree that they feel left 'in the dark' and can't get a clear answer from anyone they have been directed to speak with.
- Various BOSS 2020 Committee members concurred with the Krick Avenue residents saying that they too are frustrated by the pace of progress on the overall project. Committee members point out the difficulty in finding the necessary funding to accomplish the revitalization changes that are planned.
- Bob Ludgate suggested with respect that the property owners could help the BOSS Committee and themselves by supporting funding in the 2017-2019 TIP for planning and engineering of Phase 4 of the Revitalization Plan. The sooner funding is allocated, the faster the construction can occur.
- Sam Loth believes that there must be something more that local authorities can do to help fellow residents learn about the process and what to expect. He asked the Committee to be proactive and sympathetic to the circumstances. He wondered if a meeting between Krick Avenue residents and appropriate representatives would be beneficial?
- Brian Hoffa, Lisa Gantner and Bob Ludgate all explained in different ways that the process is complex and that no one party is able to 'direct' a specific outcome. For example, the maps that were used to illustrate the changes now must be completed to specifications and sent to PennDOT for final approval. This takes some time and therefore we can't 'know' the actual final roadbed until that approval occurs.
- Nevertheless, the BOSS Committee does feel that with a little effort the various levels of authority should be able to do better at informing stakeholders that are directly impacted by the projects.
- The Committee asked Bob Ludgate to contact Ken Pick of the Redevelopment Authority to learn if there are information packets that could be distributed that explain how the process works and what residents can expect in the way of support.

Alcon 'Sinking Spring' Park

- Sam Loth explained that during the past few months he has tried to communicate with both Rick Patterson, President and Pete Bliudzius, (Alcon Executive & BOSS Member) of the Alcon Corporation to arrange a meeting to update Alcon on the status of the revitalization.
- For example, employees of Alcon will be impacted by construction over the next two years or so and BOSS wants to work with the company to mitigate that impact as much as possible.
- Sam has not been able to get a response from our two BOSS contacts and when calling the company, the front desk is not cooperative. He requested that someone from the Executive Committee make contact.
- Dave Meas and Chuck Coleman will pick a day next week (April 20-24) and together they will visit the front desk of the company to inquire about connecting with Rick and/or Peter.

- They will see about scheduling a meeting to discuss the construction and to update Alcon on the status of the park project in the CBD which Alcon expressed interest in sponsoring in the past.

Old Business

- Jim Adams requested that Sam Loth complete a mailing prior to the May 21st BOSS meeting to business and property owners along Penn Avenue inviting them to participate in the Facade Improvement Grant Program.
- Sam will do so. Sam updated the Committee saying that three active facade projects will begin improvements shortly and that there is a forth project visit scheduled for April 21st.
- Jim urged Sam to contact the Berks Realtors Association to move forward on the "Smart Growth" grant award submission to the National Realtors headquarters.

New Business

- Bernie Campbell will look into a 'Dining Night Out' as a fundraiser for BOSS 2020.
- Brian Hoffa announced a Borough Arbor Day event on Saturday, April 25th from 8:00 AM to 12: Noon at the Borough's Canon memorial. The Borough will plant an evergreen to be used henceforth as a 'holiday tree'. The Borough will have 50 saplings to give away to families for planting. Bob Ludgate asked Brian to contact Robert Hughes to make him aware of the event and long term use of the evergreen for the borough's holiday acknowledgements. This as a courtesy to Mr. Hughes for helping the Borough with a holiday tree during the 2014 Season.
- Bob Ludgate showed drafts of a letter that will be distributed to businesses, nearby municipalities and more raising awareness about the Phase 2 construction and the Borough's \$2 Million dollar commitment to improving the traffic flow for all of western Berks County.

Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Next Meeting: Thursday, May 21, 2015 at 7:00 PM
Borough Council Chambers, Sinking Spring