

**North Wales Borough Planning Commission Meeting
December 5, 2018 Meeting Minutes**

Commission members present were Gregory J. D'Angelo, Linda McAdoo and Mark Tarlecki; Lillian Higgins and Peter Myers were absent. Borough Manager Christine Hart, Assistant Borough Manager/Zoning Officer Alan Guzzardo, and Margaret Dobbs Donnelly, Senior Planner Montgomery County Planning Commission, were also in attendance.

There were three people in the audience.

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Tarlecki at 7:03 P.M.

1. Public Comment – There was no public comment.
2. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mrs. McAdoo, seconded by Mr. D'Angelo to approve the minutes of the July 5, 2018 Planning Commission meeting. The motion passed 3-0.

3. Consideration: Preliminary/Final Subdivision Plan Review – SD-18-02 – 690-700 East Walnut Street, 2-Lot Subdivision

Present for the applicant: John Koutsouros, P.E., Carroll Engineering Corporation

Mr. Koutsouros reviewed the proposed subdivision of the two properties situate 690 and 700 East Walnut Street. Lot #1 has a commercial building and 17 parking spaces; Lot #2 has a multifamily building and 8 parking spaces.

Christine Hart asked about future plans for the commercial property and reminded Mr. Koutsouros that any future land development would be a separate process.

The Borough Engineer's letter dated November 29, 2018 was reviewed. The requested waivers from the SALDO were discussed and it was noted that the Borough Engineer had no objection to these waivers being granted. The need for an agreement to designate parking areas between the commercial property (Lot #1) and the residential property (Lot #2) was discussed.

MCPC's letter dated November 14, 2018 was reviewed. Mrs. Donnelly noted that each lot has sufficient parking and that any future land development for Lot #1 would be under the TOD District.

A motion was made by Mrs. McAdoo, seconded by Mr. D'Angelo, to recommend that North Wales Borough Council approve the plans as currently submitted and the requested waivers from the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance as follows:

- a. Section 184-33.(C).(1).(a) through (l)
- b. Section 184-33.(C).(2).(d)
- c. Section 184-33.C(2).(g)

and to further recommend that North Wales Borough Council:

- a. Request the Borough Solicitor to look at a mandated shared parking agreement and/or advise on whether or not it can be imposed as a contingency to approval of the two lot subdivision.
- b. Encourage the installation of sidewalks for the 690-700 East Walnut Street property.

The motion passed 3-0.

4. Consideration: Zoning Hearing Board Application Review – Z-18-02 – 707 Church Street, In-Law Suite Addition

Vice-Chair Tarlecki announced that this item had been withdrawn from the agenda at the request of the applicant.

5. Discussion: North Wales Area Library Parking Expansion

Present for the applicant: Gregory Landis, NWAL Board Member

Mr. Landis began the discussion by noting this was an informal review to receive Planning Commission comments before the Library decides if they wish to proceed with the proposed parking expansion. The current Library building was renovated in 2008 and 20 parking spaces and 2 handicapped parking spaces are presently provided. As shown on the Sketch Plan dated 12/4/18, the proposal is to add a total of 18 additional spaces, 7 would be added to the existing parking area at the rear of the Library and 11 would be in what is now the grass area in the 200 block of Washington Avenue. Zoning relief would be needed for these 11 spaces because of the legal right-of-way. Retaining walls would be built for both new parking areas. He stated there are no existing drainage issues and any parking expansion would still be within the impervious surface ratio.

Mrs. McAdoo stated she had serious concerns about the proposed “pull-in” parking proposed on Washington Avenue, believing that this would create a “commercial” look, and have a negative impact on the residential neighborhood.

Mr. D’Angelo asked if the Library had met with the neighbors about this parking proposal and Mr. Landis replied they had not.

Possible alternatives to allow the 11 parking spaces were then discussed. Mrs. Donnelly stated that Washington Avenue was a Borough street and perhaps a legal arrangement could be considered such as the possibility of a municipal parking lot or some other real estate agreement.

Manager Hart stated that the 11 parking spaces would mean the elimination of on-street parking on the other side of the street, which would affect that property owner. Mrs. McAdoo reiterated her concern that there was a very different visual look when comparing 3 or 4 vehicles parallel parked to “pull-in” parking of 11 vehicles.

Mrs. Donnelly made the following observations and suggestions:

- a. The proposed 18 parking spaces in a row may require a landscaped island, per the SALDO.
- b. Landscaping for the parking areas, including shade trees, should be considered. She suggested the Library look at the MCPC publication *Green Parking Lot Guidebook*.
- c. To encourage walkability, review the pedestrian connection and provide more bike racks.

Assistant Manager Guzzardo stated that zoning relief may be needed for the legal right-of-way and setback along Washington Avenue.

Mr. Landis thanked the Planning Commission and staff for their comments. He will review this with the Library Board at their December 6, 2018 meeting. If the Library wishes to proceed, Manager Hart suggested perhaps this matter could be scheduled at a future Council meeting for their review and comments.

6. Discussion: Proposed 2019 Work Plan

Mrs. Donnelly distributed the “North Wales Borough 2040 Comprehensive Plan 2018 Annual Review”.

- a. The 2018 accomplishment of adopting the North Wales Borough 2040 Comprehensive Plan was reviewed.
- b. 2019 Work Items:

Ordinance Amendments – Planning Commission, Borough staff, Council

- Conduct an audit of the Zoning and Subdivision and Land Development ordinances to identify necessary updates for clarification of intent, appropriateness of districts, and preservation or protection of existing community character.
 - Evaluate and expand the Transit Oriented Development overlay.
- Adopt renewable energy ordinances regulating alternative energy systems.

Capital Improvements – Borough staff and Council

- Pursue engineering plans and construction of the Center Street Connectivity Project.

Studies and Projects

Parks and Recreation, Shade Tree Commission, Borough staff

- Conduct a park access audit to identify opportunities and challenges to access at each of the parks.
- Formalize a park maintenance plan for all Borough parks.
 - Audit the location, species, and health of trees in parks, and make recommendations for tree replacement.

Borough Staff

- Create a future use plan for St. Luke’s Church. Christine said that this is being developed with the North Penn Art Alliance and should be ready for presentation to Council in January 2019.
- Conduct an audit of permit parking in the Borough and establish a fee-based annual parking permit program. It was suggested that this could be done in February or March 2019.
- Conduct a Borough-wide walkability audit to evaluate sidewalk and crosswalk conditions.
 - Pursue Safe Routes to School and Safe Routes to Transit programs.

- Notify property owners of overgrown vegetation impeding sidewalk access.

Resident Education

- Develop a “Guide to Borough Parks” document to provide residents with up-to-date information about the location and amenities of local parks, and to advertise annual events that occur at each park.
- Create educational materials for property owners on proper disposal for household waste, recycling, yard waste, e-waste, and household hazardous materials.
- Expand the rain barrel program for property owners.

This list was reviewed and discussed at some length. The Planning Commission determined that the zoning audit was the most important work item they should focus on in 2019, and priorities for Borough staff would be the ordinance audit and the second was the audit of permit parking. In 2019 the Planning Commission decided to meet from 6-7 P.M. each month in a workshop meeting, before the regularly scheduled 7 P.M. meeting, to work on the zoning ordinance update. Maggie asked that the members review the Zoning Ordinance and email their thoughts, suggestions, etc. by January 30th, one week before the February 6th P.C. meeting. Alan can answer any questions or clarifications. Maggie, Christine and Alan will meet to create a “zoning concerns” spreadsheet to serve as a guide for what will be discussed at the workshop meetings.

7. Planning Commission Terms

Manager Hart announced that Peter Meyers, whose term expires December 31, 2020, had resigned so there is a vacancy. The term of Lillian Higgins expires December 31, 2018 and she has indicated she will be seeking reappointment.

A motion was made by Mrs. McAdoo, seconded by Mr. D’Angelo, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 9:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Tarlecki, Vice-Chair