

STATED MEETING - CITY COUNCIL – OCTOBER 13, 2015

A meeting of the Lancaster City Council was held on Tuesday, October 13, 2015 in Council Chambers, 120 North Duke Street, (Rear Annex) Lancaster, PA, at 7:30 p.m., with President Graupera presiding.

The Council led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present – Mr. Reichenbach, Ms. Sorace, Mr. Soto, Ms. Williams, and President Graupera
– 5

Excused - Mr. Roschel, Ms. Wilson - 2

The minutes of the meeting of Council for September 22, 2015 were approved by a roll-call vote.

President Graupera announced that on October 5, 2015, following the Council Committee meetings, Council members met in executive session with Mayor Gray to discuss a real estate matter.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Tom Hooper, 226 East Orange Street, expressed concern about the proliferation of satellite dishes on the facades of City buildings. Satellite dishes detract from the historical charm and architectural beauty of the City. He noted that Lancaster has one of the largest nationally recognized historic districts in the country.

He called on Council members to pass an ordinance requiring that all satellite dishes be removed from the fronts of buildings and be placed on rear roofs or in back yards where they are not visible from the street.

Councilwoman Sorace commented that she had such a dish on her home. When she discontinued the service, she was told the company would not remove the dish. Rather it was left to her to do so.

She wondered aloud how many satellite dishes now on the fronts of homes are actually in use? And whether the City can require their removal. She noted Boston and other cities have addressed this issue.

Tom Heist, 28 S. Lime Street, expressed concern about plans to construct a six-level parking garage on the south side of Mifflin Street, attached to the existing East King Street garage. He provided photos to Council members showing the area, existing garage and renderings of the planned garage.

He contended the planned garage will be a detriment to the neighborhood. He said it has no place in one of the city's oldest residential areas. The garage would prompt homeowners to sell their homes, opening the neighborhood to low-cost apartments. He said they have been striving for eight-10 years to improve the area.

Mr. Heist said neighborhood residents will continue to fight the planned garage. He contended there are places, such as the Shand parking lots across from the Fulton Theater, which are better suited for a garage.

Christine Kauffman, 40 South Lime Street, told Council members that she moved to that neighborhood because of its historic character and its diversity. However, if the parking garage is built, she said she and many of her neighbors will sell their homes and move.

She expressed concern about safety and quality of life. When she moved there 14 years ago, there were nightly problems with drug dealing and other crime. The neighborhood is much improved, but she fears it will deteriorate sharply with construction of the garage. It will be just 10 feet from her back yard and tower over it. Anyone could look into her back yard, jump into her back yard, or throw things into her back yard after the garage is built. Bright lights from the garage will shine through the night, detracting from her quality of life.

Craig Smith, 15 South Lime Street, said he moved to Lancaster seven years ago after coming to the City on a business trip and falling in love with the City. Although the existing garage is in a business district, the south side of Mifflin Street is a residential historic district. The Lancaster Parking Authority should be made to comply with the same standards of design and scale as the historic district. Instead, they plan a monolithic structure, which he believes is unattractive and unneeded.

Suzu Hoover, 204 East King Street, presented packets of information to Council members. The information cited three studies which Ms. Hoover contended contradict the presumption that the additional garage is needed. She noted that new construction in a historical area must be consistent or complementary with existing architecture. She cited a conceptual review of the garage plan by the Historical Architectural Review Board that found it incompatible with the area. And further, she noted that the principles of Smart Growth give City officials the responsibility of allowing growth that protects the City's unique heritage.

Asked to comment by President Graupera, Randy Patterson, the City director of Economic Development & Neighborhood Revitalization, said there have been no formal plans submitted for the garage. Once submitted, the plans will be reviewed by the Historical Architectural Review Board and the Planning Commission. He did not know when City Council will be briefed on the project. That will come after the plans are submitted, he said.

Councilman Reichenbach added that neighbors can contact the City Clerk to learn when Historical Architectural Review Board and Planning Commission meetings are scheduled.

REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE – Mr. Reichenbach, speaking on behalf of the absent Ms. Wilson, said the committee met October 5 and discussed Bill No. 14-2015, which allows a third handicapped parking space in the 700 block of High Street. During the meeting, it was requested that residents of the block be notified of the request for the third space and the pending legislation. To do so, the City Clerk sent 62 letters to residents.

The second issue before the committee was a presentation by members of the Pilot Club of Lancaster on Project Lifesaver. That program provides electronic transmitter bracelets for people with cognitive disorders, such as dementia, Alzheimer's or autism, to be found by police officers if they wander off. Some 3,000 people have been located using the devices without any loss of life. The presentation will lead to discussions with the City Police Bureau about adoption of Project Lifesaver in Lancaster.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE – No report.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION – No report.

FINANCE COMMITTEE – Councilwoman Sorace reported that on October 5, her committee discussed reimbursement of Council members for expenses related to attending public events. Council members are frequently invited to banquets, receptions and other events, but pay out of their own funds to attend the events in their official role. No proposals were made to provide funding. Instead, Council members may ask organizers to allow them to attend on a complimentary or reduced rate.

Ms. Sorace also made a motion to approve a quarterly budget transfer in the amount of \$40,531.76 for workers compensation costs for the third quarter of 2015. The motion was seconded by Ms. Williams.

The legislative budget transfer was unanimously approved by a roll-call vote.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING COMMITTEE – No report.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – Ms. Williams made a motion to accept the nomination of Aimee Johnsonbaugh as secretary to the Board of Health, for an unspecified term; Crystal Weaver to the Downtown Investment District Authority board, for a term of January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2019; and the reappointment of Barbara Wilson to the Lancaster City Housing Authority, for a term of November 21, 2015 to November 21, 20120.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Soto and approved by a unanimous roll-call vote.

President Graupera also announced that during the Council work session on October 5 that there was a discussion of the Lancaster County Commissioners' decision to revise the county prison's ethics policy to eliminate a specific protection for gays and lesbians from discrimination. The change in policy puts the County position at odds with the City's Human Relations Ordinance.

President Graupera said the discussion concerned keeping Council members' apprised of actions of the City Human Relations Commission regarding the issue. He further noted that Mayor Gray was to have met with the commissioners to discuss the issue. Council is awaiting a report from the mayor on that meeting.

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

City Council considered the following applications and recommendations from the Historical Commission and the Historical Architectural Review Board for improvements to properties within the Historic District and Heritage Conservation District:

1. Samuel Torres & Denise Perez, owners of 714 Beaver Street, propose installation of vinyl siding on a frame rowhouse. (Recommended for approval by the Historical Commission.)
2. The Mix at Arbor Place, equitable owner, Redevelopment Authority of the City of Lancaster, owner of 519-521 Locust Street, propose demolition of paired brick houses to create outdoor recreational space. (Recommended for approval by the Historical Commission.)
3. MDMD LLC, owner of 327-329 North Queen Street, proposes construction of a four-story infill addition along the building's north elevation. (Recommended for approval by the Historical Commission.)
4. Barley Snyder Attorneys at Law, owner of 126 East King Street, requests installation of a new, projecting commercial sign on the building façade. (Recommended for approval by the Historical Architectural Review Board.)
5. Robert & Nancy Shenk, owners of 218 East Grant Street, request replacement of solid, wooden door panels in a former garage door opening with four new, four-lite wooden door panels. (Recommended for approval by the Historical Architectural Review Board.)
6. George Centini & Gary Hufford, owners of 125 South Duke Street, request replacement of a glass panel with a new, operable, wooden entry door within the existing door frame. (Recommended for approval by the Historical Architectural Review Board.)

Ms. Sorace moved to accept the recommendations. Mr. Reichenbach seconded the motion.

City Council voted to approve the applications by a unanimous roll-call vote.

ORDINANCES FOR FIRST READING

Council Bill No. 14-2015, (the title) was read by the City Clerk as follows:

An ordinance of the Council of the City of Lancaster enacted pursuant to the authority set forth in Section 285-130.E. of the Code of the City of Lancaster, Chapter 285, Vehicles and Traffic; establishing a temporary exception from the handicapped parking space limitation set forth in Section 285-130.B to permit three (3) handicapped parking spaces on the north side of the 700 block of High Street; and provide that this ordinance shall expire upon the expiration of two years after its effective date unless reenacted by Council.

Ms. Williams related that there are the maximum number of handicapped parking spaces on the block permitted under the City ordinance. This bill creates a temporary exception to the ordinance for the block and allows a third handicapped space for a handicapped individual.

Mr. Reichenbach commented that the exception exists for only two years. The individual who requested the third handicapped space will have to reappear before Council in two years for the ordinance to be renewed.

President Graupera noted that letters had been sent to 62 residents of the block to notify them of the proposed legislation. Further, he said the bill will be before Council for a vote at the next Council meeting, on October 27.

ORDINANCES FOR FINAL PASSAGE

Administration Bill No. 12-2015, (the title) was read by the City Clerk as follows:

An ordinance accepting the offer of dedication of the extension of and connection of Liberty Street and College Avenue in the City of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and placing the same on the official city map and declaring it open to public use and abandoning a portion of the existing Liberty Street right-of-way and removing it from the official city map.

Ms. Sorace made a motion to approve the bill. Mr. Reichenbach seconded the motion.

Mr. Sorace said the project was first publically reported in 2012, but it has been in the planning stages for many more years. It will open an extension of the street between College Avenue and Thomas Armstrong Boulevard. Passage of the ordinance is the final step before taking down the barricades and allowing people to drive on the road.

City Council approved Bill No. 12-2015 by a unanimous roll-call vote.

RESOLUTIONS

Council Resolution No. 50-2015, (the title) was read by the City Clerk a follows:

A resolution of the Council of the City of Lancaster recognizing Project Lifesaver, a program which helps find people with various cognitive conditions who tend to wander, and urging the City of Lancaster Bureau of Police to become a participating agency in the program for the safety of City residents.

Mr. Reichenbach made a motion to approve the resolution. Mr. Soto seconded the motion.

Ms. Williams said the resolution was about a program which assists people with Alzheimer's, dementia, autism, Down's syndrome and other disorders which may leave their homes and become lost. The Pilot Club of Lancaster is responsible for the program, which Council feels is valuable for people who suffer from these illnesses.

Mr. Reichenbach thanked Pilot Club members in the audience. From his own experience in human services, he said he has seen the devastating effects of these illnesses. Mr. Reichenbach said he appreciated the tremendous amount of work the club has done to make the program available. Instead of coming to the City and asking what can be done, the club recognized and acted to fill a need and came with an implementable program.

Yvette Wood, 3 Millwood Court, thanked President Graupera, Councilman Soto, Councilwoman Wilson and Mayor Gray for coming to the Neighbors United peace rally on Saturday. She said their presence made a difference.

Ms. Wood said she had been inundated with phone calls from people wanting to know how they can become involved in efforts to stop violence in the City.

City Council approved Resolution No. 50-2015 by a unanimous roll-call vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Joseph (inaudible) read a letter decrying violence, child abuse, sexual assault, human trafficking and animal abuse. He called on City Council, the mayor and City police to find a way to end violence in the City.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

President Graupera reported on efforts to install historical signs at the recently renamed Mayor Janice Stork Corridor Park. Consulting Historian Randolph Harris is working with Public Works Director Charlotte Katzenmoyer to install three signs in the park. Signs at the Lemon Street and Harrisburg Avenue ends of the park will have information about the history of the railroad, beginning in the 1820s, including use of the railroad line by fleeing slaves as part of the Underground Railroad. A sign panel at the James Street overpass will describe the development of the City around the railroad cut, including the angled construction of buildings.

The signs will also include information on the abandonment of the rail line and community efforts to redevelop the corridor into a park.

Mr. Harris is preparing the text and graphics. He is enlisting the help of LancasterHistory.org and the Lancaster Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society. He is also working to identify possible funders.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Ms. Sorace reported that at the October 5 committee meeting, Council also reviewed a salary study prepared by the City Clerk. The study and a survey were done because salaries for the Mayor and City Council have not been increased since 2005. The study looked at salaries for these positions in comparable cities in Pennsylvania and the Mid-Atlantic region. Council will discuss the study again at its November 2 committee meeting.

She further noted that City Council members cannot vote to increase their own salaries. If action is taken, the salary changes would affect future Council members, beginning in 2018. Also being considered is establishment of a policy to review these salaries every four years.

In addition, Ms. Sorace informed Council members and the audience that there will be a Chestnut Hill neighborhood meeting on October 20. Public Works Director Charlotte Katzenmoyer will brief neighborhood residents on plans for the Chestnut Street bikeway. She encouraged everyone interested in bicycling or in developments in the neighborhood to attend the meeting.

Mr. Soto thanked representatives of Neighbors United for inviting him to the Saturday peace rally. He said he believes it takes a community to make a community; whether to flourish or fail. Violence nationwide has gotten much attention recently. He called on citizens of the City

to do their duty to speak up about violence. The police and mayor can only do so much. An end to violence requires citizens to speak up and be part of the solution.

President Graupera also thanked Neighbors United, then cited the recent news about a 13-year-old boy who was caught with a loaded handgun at 3 a.m. That is an example of parental neglect, a form of child abuse, he said. He called for parental involvement as part of the solution to violence.

Mr. Reichenbach said he was in Canada last weekend. At the border at Niagara Falls, he said his daughter noticed that on the American side of the border the officers were armed. On the Canadian side, they were not.

He said it is time that as a society we have a national conversation about guns and gun safety. Half of the people in the country seem to blame the proliferation of guns for gun violence, while the other half believes we need more guns to protect themselves. People are afraid to discuss the issue for fear being labeled a gun-lover or gun-hater. That situation implicitly allows 13-year-olds to have guns and encourages gun-suicides by teens.

He said other countries with lower rates of gun violence also have people with mental illness. It's not violence in popular music, because music has become worldwide. It's not movies. American movies are watched around the world. It's America's fascination with guns. The fact that a 13-year-old can have a loaded gun is insanity, he said. And there are thousands of guns in this City.

He noted the fact that he has to take a driver safety course to get a drivers' license, get insurance and register his car, but does not have to get training or insurance to have a gun and does not have to register it. He asked if we want to live in a country where everyone is armed. And, he stated that he believes the majority of people in the country will support reasonable regulation without altering the Second Amendment.

President Graupera adjourned the meeting at 8:33 p.m.

John E. Graupera, president

Attest:

Bernard W. Harris Jr., City Clerk