

**Borough of Pitman
Combined Planning/Zoning Board Meeting
Council Chambers
Minutes of August 21, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Aspras called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

ATTENDANCE:

Chairman Aspras, Mayor Razze, Mr. Slenkamp, Mr. Owen, Mr. Romick, Mr. Franchi, Mr. Austin

ADVISORS PRESENT:

Solicitor: Mr. Dasti, Engineer/Planner: Tim Kernan, Historic Commission: Walt Madison, Zoning Officer: Roy Duffield

ABSENT MEMBERS:

Mrs. Stech, Council President Fitzpatrick, Mr. Ryder, Mrs. Kelley, Mr. Fijalkowski, Mr. Scutt

APPROVAL OF JULY, 2023 MINUTES

Motion made by Mr. Romick, second by Mr. Franchi to approve the July minutes.

Roll call:

Chairman Aspras: **YES**

Mayor Razze: **YES**

Mr. Slenkamp: **ABSTAIN**

Mr. Owen: **YES**

Mr. Romick: **YES**

Mr. Franchi: **YES**

Mr. Austin: **YES**

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None

HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION:

Mr. Dasti swore in Walt Madison, Chairman of the Borough of Pitman Historic Preservation Commission.

Mr. Madison advised that at the August 10 meeting, the Commission reviewed 6 applications. Five of the applications were approved, one was denied without prejudice.

Mr. Madison presented the following Historic Preservation Commission applications for approval:

Application No. 2023-26
Kelly Crone
Milk-Lavender Breast Feeding Boutique
48 S Broadway
Block 2 Lot 1

Paint, awning, light fixtures
front window decal

Application No 2023-27
Nathan Vettese/Lori Brennan
130 1st Ave
Block 12 Lot 32

Fence

Application No. 2023-28
Alan S Hamilton
39 West Ave.
Block 7 Lot 19

Repair porch, windows, gable & paint

Application No. 2023-29
Denise Richmond
18 Pitman Ave.
Block 74 Lot 10

Replace door

Application No. 2023-31
Ryan Lavendor
112 West Ave
Block 188 Lot 7

Rail and spindles on porch

Mr. Madison reiterated that the 5 above listed application were approved by the Historic Preservation Commission.

Motion made by Mr. Slenkamp, seconded by Mr. Owen to approve Historic Preservation Applications 2023-26, 2023-27, 2023-28, 2023-29 and 2023-31.

Roll call:

Chairman Aspras: **YES**

Mayor Razzo: **YES**

Mr. Slenkamp: **YES**

Mr. Owen: **YES**

Mr. Romick: **YES**

Mr. Franchi: **YES**

Mr. Austin: **YES**

Mr. Madison advised that the Historic Preservation Commission denied Application No. 2023-30 without prejudice. The application is for roof repair and painting. The Applicant is Grove 185 LLC, 185 Northwest Ave., Block 18 Lot 16. The Applicant was not in attendance at the Historic Preservation Commission meeting on August 10, and the Commission denied the Application because the members did not have enough information to approve the application. The Application was for a paint color, and the

Commission was not sure how to proceed, given the significant structural issues with the building. Solicitor Dasti asked if the application otherwise meets HPC guidelines – Mr. Madison confirmed it does. Solicitor Dasti asked what was missing from the application, and Mr. Madison advised information on the trim, back door, and other structural issues.

Applicant Kathleen Foglio was in attendance and was sworn in by Solicitor Dasti. Ms. Foglio advised she applied only for what she plans to do now. The most important matter right now is the roof. After the roof is replaced, they will move on to the rest of the structure. Ms. Foglio acknowledged there is a lot of work to do on the building.

After lengthy discussion on the application, Mr. Franchi moved to amend the application to request only the replacement of the roof. Solicitor Dasti recommended to the Board that they approve only the roof repair, with the condition of approval that the applicant goes back to the Historic Preservation Commission with any additional improvements. Ms. Foglio agreed to those conditions.

Motion by Franchi to approve Application No. 2023-30 for the replacement/repair of the roof only, with the property owner re-applying to the Historic Preservation Commission for additional improvements. Second by Mr. Owen.

Roll call:

Chairman Aspras: **YES**

Mayor Razze: **YES**

Mr. Slenkamp: **YES**

Mr. Owen: **YES**

Mr. Romick: **YES**

Mr. Franchi: **YES**

Mr. Austin: **YES**

Chairman Aspras advised that the next item on the agenda is the application of Timothy & Elizabeth Campbell, 67 Arbutus Avenue, Block 113, Lot 1 for variance approval for a fence.

Solicitor Dasti swore in the Applicant, Timothy Campbell.

Mr. Campbell described his property and his application for a privacy fence on his property, which is across from the train tracks.

Chairman Aspras asked why Mr. Campbell cannot do a 4 foot fence, which would comply with Borough ordinance. Mr. Campbell explained that Montgomery Avenue is a busy street and he has had items stolen from his yard. A six foot fence would prevent theft. Mr. Campbell advised he wants the six foot fence for privacy and safety.

Lengthy discussion on Mr. Campbell's property, which is located on a corner lot, the requirements per ordinance and the proposed height and length of the fence.

Mr. Romick noted that this property is unique and should have some type of barrier on Montgomery Avenue. Solicitor Dasti noted that the Applicant must show hardship for the variance request and not unduly burden the zoning ordinance.

Mr. Owen acknowledged that security is an issue at this location, with a lot of pedestrian traffic.

Discussion on the sight triangle at the intersection. Chairman Aspras noted that the 36 inch height regulation for fences in front yards takes the sight triangle in to consideration. Mayor Razze noted that this fence is not in the sight triangle. Mayor Razze also noted that this property is unusual because of the railroad tracks.

Discussion on the purpose of the ordinance as written.

Engineer/Planner Kernan reviewed the types of hardship variances and advised that this application would meet the guidelines for a C 1 C bulk variance.

Mr. Austin asked Mr. Campbell if the fence will have spaces between the slats – Mr. Campbell advised it would not.

Chairman Aspras opened the meeting to the public for comments on this application. There being no comments from the public, Chairman Aspras closed the public comment on this application.

Motion made by Mr. Owen to approve the application for a C 1 C variance. Second by Mr. Franchi.

Roll call:

Chairman Aspras: **NO**

Mayor Razze: **YES**

Mr. Slenkamp: **YES**

Mr. Owen: **YES**

Mr. Romick: **YES**

Mr. Franchi: **YES**

Mr. Austin: **NO**

All members stated the reason for their yes votes.

Chairman Aspras advised his no vote is because approval would add to slowly changing the ordinance.

Mr. Austin advised his no vote is because of sight distance concerns.

Mr. Campbell inquired on how he proceeds now – Chairman Aspras explained the memorialization process and Zoning Officer Duffield directed Mr. Campbell to apply for a zoning permit for the fence based on this approval.

Chairman Aspras advised that the next item of business is the memorialization of two site plan waiver approvals.

Solicitor Dasti reviewed the approval resolution for Daniel Arkin, Planning Board Application 2023-16.

Motion made by Chairman Aspras, second by Mr. Romick to approve this resolution.

Chairman Aspras: **Yes**

Mayor Razze: **YES**

Mr. Owen: **YES**

Mr. Romick: **YES**

Mr. Franchi: **YES**

Mr. Austin: **YES**

Solicitor Dasti reviewed the approval resolution for Brandon Hedenberg, Planning Board Application 2023-15.

Motion made by Mr. Romick, second by Chairman Aspras to approve this resolution.

Chairman Aspras: **Yes**

Mayor Razze: **YES**

Mr. Owen: **YES**

Mr. Romick: **YES**

Mr. Franchi: **YES**

Mr. Austin: **YES**

Chairman Aspras asked Mayor Razze to comment on the status of the Sony property. Mayor Razze advised that Borough Council has done 1st read on the Ordinance that would allow the Borough to acquire the property, through various methods, including condemnation.

Chairman Aspras advised that Council President Fitzpatrick had asked the Planning Board to comment on potential uses for the property. Mayor Razze advised that on advice of the Borough Redevelopment Attorney, that type of discussion would be a bit premature right now.

ZONING OFFICER REPORT

Mr. Duffield stated that everyone should have a copy of his report. Mr. Duffield advised he would entertain any questions at this time, and he is available to Board members at any time in addition to the meeting.

Mr. Owen stated that the Borough Ordinance with regard to religious signs is constitutionally deficient. Religious signs cannot be limited to size when other signs of larger area are permitted. There must be a constitutional reason for the differences with regard to religious and political signs. Mr. Owen's comments are with regard to the Borough ordinance, not land use. Mr. Slenkamp questioned the application of this ordinance wording – Zoning Officer Duffield advised that churches are considered “religious institutions” and the zoning regulations are applied based on the regulations with regard to institutional signs. Mr. Owen recommends a review of this wording. Solicitor Dasti reiterated that the Borough can limit sign size, color, etc. but not content.

SITE PLAN COMMITTEE

No report.

SUBDIVISION COMMITTEE

No report.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Mr. Slenkamp advised that the Commission has not met since early June. The Commission did do some plantings at Alcyon Lake in June. Some of the plantings took, others did not and the Commission will address this with additional plantings in the Fall and Spring.

MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

No report.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Mr. Owen advised that in the “Best of Gloucester County” voting, there were 13 winners in categories for Pitman, including the 4th of July Parade and non-profit Angels Community Outreach.

COUNCIL REPORT

Mayor Razze reported that 1st reading was done on the Sony ordinance. In addition, 1st reading was done on a parking ordinance to make some changes, including timed parking changes in front of the Post Office and some changes to parking availability on Pitman Avenue.

The Borough 911 Ceremony will be held on September 11 at 5:30.

OTHER OLD OR NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Aspras noted that he has had preliminary discussions with Engineer/Planner Kernan on pricing on updating the Borough ordinance.

Mayor Razze advised that at a Department Head meeting, the deteriorating condition of the Wawa property was discussed. The Borough made contact with the right person and the property was promptly cleaned up. In addition, the Borough has made contact with an individual who has some interest in the property.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Aspras motioned, seconded by Mr. Romick to adjourn at 8:05 pm.

All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Abdill
Recording Secretary