The regular monthly meeting of the Borough Council of Lewisburg, Union County, Pennsylvania, was held on Tuesday, July 17, 2012 in the Council Chambers, 55 South Fifth Street. Present: Council President Bergonia; Councilmembers Baker, Casimir, Cox, Mahon and Robinson; Mayor Wagner; Manager/Treasurer Smith; Solicitor Lyons; and Secretary Garrison. Absent: Councilmembers Morris and Strosser. Also present: Chief Paul Yost, Thomas Sauers, Matt Sauers, Martha Barrick, Kristen Koconis and Tom Egan.

CALL TO ORDER: Council President Bergonia called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM, followed by the pledge of allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion was made by Councilmember Mahon, seconded by Councilmember Baker, to approve the minutes of the regular Council meeting held June 19, 2012. Motion was unanimously approved.

Council President Bergonia adjourned the regular order of business to conduct a public hearing on a conditional use for the property known as 623 St. Louis Street. He called the public hearing to order at 7:05 PM.

Matt Sauers, Central Keystone COG/Zoning Officer for the Borough indicated he received an application for a conditional use from Delmar Bender for a rooming house at 623 St. Louis Street. The application was filed on June 5th; this conditional use hearing was advertised on July 3rd and July 10th; the property was posted on July 9th, and the proof of publication is with the Borough. Everyone should have a copy of Section 360-21D, which begins with the conversion of a single family dwelling to a rooming or lodging house. You should have a copy of Jim Emery’s letter dated July 17th, which identified the items required for the conditional use. As you can see the property meets the following criteria: 1) Unit conforms to the light, ventilation and occupancy limitations defined in Chapter 4 of the 2009 IPMC; 2) Unit has four bedrooms with floor area more than 70 sq. ft. per person; 3) Unit meets all fire safety requirements; and 4) Unit complies with all development, performance and protection standards listed in Sections 360-31 and 360-32 of the Lewisburg Zoning Ordinance. You will see in Jim Emery’s letter: 5) Unit does not comply with the off-street parking requirements listed in Section 360-26 of the Lewisburg Zoning Ordinance, specifically there are only two parking spaces in the garage off of Bell Alley. Mr. Sauers indicated the table in the Zoning Ordinance, specifically 360-26B reads, rooming or lodging houses must have one rental space per bedroom. At best, this property has two parking spaces in the garage and one in a driveway off of Bell Alley, so there is one deficiency with regard to the conditions that are required. The applicant is not here, but the applicant’s representative is here and that is Martha Barrick. Councilmember Mahon questioned how many parking spaces are currently available. Mr. Sauers said it appears there are three available and four are required. Councilmember Casimir asked if Mrs. Barrick disputes the number of parking spaces. Mrs. Barrick said no; her intent is to have people renting legitimately. She stressed she knows there are four to eight kids in every one of those houses in that immediate area and she wants to do this right. She realizes there are only three parking spaces. Councilmember Casimir said off-site parking is something the Zoning Ordinance allows for and if you were to get a lease or some proof from some adjoining property owner of a fourth parking site that would be good. He stressed Council wants to encourage this type of lawful conversion. He asked if Mrs. Barrick felt that was a possibility. Mrs. Barrick said she doesn’t know that; the area is already overcrowded with all the other houses operating under the pretext of three unrelated. The only place she can envision is a municipal parking lot. There was much discussion regarding parking in the immediate area of 623 St. Louis Street. Councilmember Casimir indicated the ordinance reads that the parking space should be located within 200 ft. of the parcel. He questioned if MPL #2 is further than 200 ft. Mrs. Barrick said she doesn’t think so. Councilmember Casimir said if they got one of these reserved parking spaces in MPL #2 that just might be a solution. Manager Smith explained these spaces can be rented at a cost of $35/month for eleven months. He further explained that when Pam Mabus was Zoning Officer, we justified two parking spaces in Kevin Gardner’s lot on Hayes Alley for Zelda’s and that was within the 200 ft. Councilmember Casimir asked if he needs to wait until after the public hearing to make a motion. Solicitor Lyons said yes. Councilmember Casimir commented he intends on making a motion when we come out of the hearing to allow this conditional use based upon this fourth parking space being obtained.

Council President Bergonia asked if there is anyone in the public that would like to speak. No one wished to speak. Council President Bergonia declared the public hearing closed at 7:15 PM. He reconvened to the regular order of business.

Councilmember Casimir made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Cox, to approve Conditional Use Application 2012-01, for the property at 623 St. Louis Street, conditional upon the applicant showing proof to the Zoning Officer that they have acquired the fourth required parking space, via contract and/or agreement, which should indicate the period of time this arrangement is in effect, noting that this could include a municipal parking place in MPL #2 regardless of the exact distance from the parcel. ON THE QUESTION: Council President Bergonia asked if there is a time limit for this fourth parking space. Solicitor Lyons explained the conversion cannot be made until all the requirements are
Kristen Koconis, 140 South Second Street, explained she had concerns about the third parking space that was discussed, which refers to a tiny alley; does this property owner own that entire alley way all the way to the next house. Mrs. Barrick said yes. Manager Smith pointed out that when the Shefsky's lived there, they always parked their car right by their house, between the two houses. Chief Yost said he remembers that and just wanted clarification because if they park at the end in the back, they will stop others from accessing the back of their properties, which would mean a loss of another six parking spaces. (Chief Yost created a drawing to explain his concerns based on numerous calls the Police have received.) Councilmember Baker asked for clarification about the parking space being talked about; is that space next to the dwelling considered a private driveway or an alley. Mrs. Barrick said people who own the house have always parked there and no one ever said it was an alley. Manager Smith stated the neighbors didn't have a problem with the property owner parking there, but they did have an issue when the property owner put up a gate. Mrs. Barrick said the problem is that there are four to eight people in every one of those houses, so they park all over the place; there isn't one house that is not a student rental. There was much discussion. Councilmember Casimir stated it now appears there really is a concern/question about this third parking space. Solicitor Lyons stated you can still do this by amending the motion conditional upon two spaces, i.e. either show that the extra space next to the dwelling is owned by the property owner, which would resolve the third space issue, or they simply have to provide proof of off-site parking for two spaces. Councilmember Casimir said he doesn't want to make these people have to come back again for another public hearing, so he would really like to take action tonight; we want to encourage this type of conversion. He said he will amend his motion from one additional parking space to either two off-site parking spaces or irrefutable proof that the property owner owns or controls the right of way next to the dwelling, making it a valid parking space.

Councilmember Casimir’s previous motion was amended – his entire motion is indicated below:

Councilmember Casimir made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Cox, to approve Conditional Use Application 2012-01 for the property at 623 St. Louis Street, conditional upon the applicant showing proof to the Zoning Officer that they have acquired the third and the fourth required parking space, via contract and/or agreement, which should indicate the period of time this arrangement is in effect, noting that this could include municipal permit parking places in MPL #2 (regardless of the exact distance from the parcel) or showing irrefutable proof that the property owner owns or controls the right of way next to the dwelling making the third parking space that has been discussed a valid parking space. Motion was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Kristen Koconis, 140 South Second Street, explained she was present as a result of work done (siding) to the carriage house at 201 South Front Street. When she purchased her home she realized the house would need a lot of changes to accommodate her family of four, and her planned family of five. She expected to invest in the property and was told by the real estate agent that they should expect that to be more costly and time consuming due to being in the HARB District. She was fine with that and happy to know that the HARB would hold our neighbors to similar standards thereby protecting her investment. Because adjacent properties can have a significant negative impact to the value of a home, shortly after making the purchase, she started the process to purchase two of the adjacent properties she felt would be harmful to the value of her home, specifically 202 South Second Street and 118 St. Catherine Street. Across from her home, 201 South Front Street, when they moved in was a very traditional carriage house; its appearance was similar to many of the carriage houses in town. They were surprised to see that this carriage house was sided with vinyl siding that appears to have wood ridges, which she was told was not up to HARB standards. She contacted the Borough numerous times regarding this issue. It was discovered that the owner of the property did not go through the normal channels, i.e. zoning and HARB, to get approval for the work. She was told the Borough would look into this and she would not be able to be involved in the process. Months later she became aware that HARB and Council retrospectively approved the changes to 201 South Front Street. She again contacted the Borough asking that this be re-reviewed. She explained she has met with Councilmember Casimir numerous times regarding these issues. She again requests Council re-review the decision as she feels the changes to 201 South Front Street have a significant negative impact on the value of her properties in that area. If this is not re-reviewed, she wants Council to provide the grounds that allows this to be ethically and legally justifiable. Councilmember Mahon stated her recollection is this was approved because the structure was found to be non-contributing. Councilmember Casimir said that is correct; HARB approved it with a split vote, which is unusual for HARB. During his preliminary investigation he found a "findings of facts" form that HARB works off of, and...
Tuesday, July 17, 2012

201A/B was listed as contributing; however, it was realized there was an error made as the description of contributing was for 207 South Second Street. Manager Smith explained the Secretary provides the historical background information from the State Historic Preservation documents using the parcel number and the property address; this particular parcel number reflects several properties, 207, 205, 203 and 201A/B. So when the information was pulled, the information actually reflected information for 207, which is why 207 South Front Street was shown in parentheses behind the parcel number. There was much discussion. Ms. Koconis said if this was done in the appropriate way, she doesn’t believe it would have been approved. Councilmember Casimir said he remembers clearly that he was told by our HARB representative that it was a non-contributing structure when Council voted on this. He took the position that if that information was incorrect, that would have been a reason to re-review, but it has been determined 201A/B is not a contributing structure. Manager Smith commented while reviewing documentation on the Historic District Registration he discovered 135 carriage house garages noted, but there are no addresses or properties given. Councilmember Casimir said one carriage house was specifically shown as non-contributing due to being converted to a residential use. Ms. Koconis said her interpretation is that for each of the contributing structures, if it has an appropriate carriage house behind it, it is listed and that makes it a contributing building as well. Councilmember Casimir pointed out that this carriage house does not have a house in front of it, but a vacant lot; he believes the building that was in front of it was destroyed during the 1972 flood and that would have been before the HARB. Council is dependent upon our committees and commissions to a large extent and it wasn’t a comfortable decision for HARB. He was looking for a reason, other than the passion of a homeowner, to justify going revisiting this, but he hasn’t found that yet. He, along with Councilmember Strosser, has started working on what would be necessary to expand and clarify the authority of our HARB because there have been six or seven deeply dissatisfying actions over the past several years. Solicitor Lyons stated obviously contributing/non-contributing is a criterion which HARB has been using in determining whether a property can or cannot do certain things. But, any property within the HARB District is going to be subject to complying with the Borough ordinance. This issue cannot be addressed tonight and there are other things that he needs to discuss with Council which he cannot do at this time. This issue needs further discussion and Ms. Koconis may not receive a decision, but simply a response. Councilmember Casimir indicated he will continue to follow-up with Ms. Koconis.

Council President Bergonia indicated Robert Lack had asked to be placed on the agenda this evening, but he is not present. Tom Sauers, Central Keystone COG, stated he has spent a large amount of money and energy on this issue of the ramp at 238 Market Street. There was much discussion. Mr. Sauers reported he treats everyone in this municipality the same, and updated Council on the many actions taken by the Central Keystone-COG.

POLICE COMMITTEE: Mayor Wagner announced that Chief Yost received recognition from the DCED for uniting the East Buffalo Police and the Lewisburg Police to create the Buffalo Valley Regional Police Department, specifically in an article found in the Governor’s Center for Local Government Services Newsletter. Chief Yost announced the BVRPD received a Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) Administrative Assistance Grant; it is a three year grant and the first year is 75% of project cost not to exceed $49,000; second year is 50% of project cost or not to exceed $33,000; and third year is 25% of project cost or not to exceed $16,666. Mayor Wagner said we should not forget to recognize our Borough Manager, who was instrumental in the organization of the BVRPD and the grants due to his budgetary experience, as well as the BVRPD Commissioners Cox, Mahon and Bergonia for all their hard work. She announced the Open House held at the Buffalo Valley Regional Police Department (BVRPD) on June 26th was a huge success. Chief Yost distributed and thoroughly reviewed his June 2012 monthly activity report, noting that the budget has been included because we are halfway through 2012. There was much discussion relative to the BVRPD budget. Chief Yost shared that some necessary communication upgrades have been made. Also, Corporal Burrows was able to find a company to purchase the shotguns and rifles, which will allow the purchase of six brand new rifles and six brand new shotguns, all exactly the same, which will aid training. After this is done, the intent is to do the same thing with the handguns. Chief Yost pointed out National Night Out is August 7th and we had a banner created; he respectfully requests Council waive the fee for placement of the National Night Out banner across Market Street.

Councilmember Mahon made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Casimir, to adopt Resolution No. 12-03, placement of National Night Out banner across State Highway (Market Street), which needs to be forwarded to PennDOT, and to approve waiving the Borough’s banner placement fee. Motion was unanimously approved.

PLANNING COMMITTEE: Councilmember Casimir made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Strosser, to approve HARB applications a, b, c, d, e and f, as submitted and recommended by HARB. Motion was unanimously approved.
Tuesday, July 17, 2012

Councilmember Casimir pointed out Item b is for Subway’s ramp on the Third Street side of the building. Solicitor Lyons reminded everyone there is still a pending appeal.

a. Wen Qing Wu/434 Market Street/Signage. An application was submitted to and reviewed by HARB for signage. A motion was made by Ted Strosser, seconded by Steve Snook, to recommend approval of the placement of a sign, as shown in attachment, to the HARB application, said sign to be mounted in the sign board as discussed in detail during the meeting, sign will not have lighting, and said sign will occupy the same location as the previous tenant’s sign. Motion as unanimously approved.

b. Jeffrey Hoover/238 Market Street/Ramp. An application was submitted to and reviewed by HARB for a handicapped accessible ramp on the west side of building. A motion was made by Phoebe Faden, seconded by Mary Mastascusa, to recommend the following: if the existing ramp on the front of the building stays, the new ramp should be poured concrete with painted metal railings; however, if the old ramp is removed, HARB would like Option #2 on Page #3 of the drawing that was distributed, and this new ramp would have to be wood and painted and/or stained within one year. Motion as unanimously approved.

c. Elizabeth Guerrero/23 South Second Street/Fence. An application was submitted to and reviewed by HARB for a fence. A motion was made by Steve Snook, seconded by Elaine Wintjen, to recommend approval of a new fence as proposed in the HARB application under project description and per the attached drawings/photographs. Motion as unanimously approved.

d. Donna Slear (William Criswell)/44 Market Street/Fire Escape. An application was submitted to and reviewed by HARB for construction of a fire escape. A motion was made by Ted Strosser, seconded by Elaine Wintjen, to recommend approval of construction, removal of old non-original porch and replacement with better railings and handrails, as submitted in HARB application under project description and per the attached drawings/photographs. Motion as unanimously approved.

e. Bucknell University/103 University Avenue/Fence-Flag Pole. An application was submitted to and reviewed by HARB for a fence. A motion was made by Steve Snook, seconded by Elaine Wintjen, to recommend approval of the placement of a fence as submitted in the HARB application under project description and per the attached drawings. Motion as unanimously approved.

f. Mifflinburg Bank & Trust Company/500 Market Street/Sign-New Business. An application was submitted to and reviewed by HARB for signage for this new business. A motion was made by Phoebe Faden, seconded by Mary Mastascusa, to recommend approval of the entrance and window work to the building, as well as for a sign to be placed on the Fifth Street corner, hung parallel to Fifth Street, similar to the M&T Bank sign, at 6 ft. not 9 ft as proposed in the HARB application and as shown in the attached drawings/photograph. Motion was approved with one abstention. (Ted Strosser abstained.)

Councilmember Casimir made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Mahon, to allow the business known as Trebecca to use the Borough’s three globe light standard image to create the jewelry they created in prototype form, per their letter dated June 19th and as illustrated in their drawing that was attached to their letter. Motion was unanimously approved.

Councilmember Casimir made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Mahon, to approve the resignation of Kim Wheeler from the Traffic Advisory Committee effective immediately, with regret. Motion was unanimously approved.

Councilmember Casimir said he needs direction from Council with regard to the samples of the off-precinct signs. He met with Angelo Giunta, who represents the businesses off Market Street, held a meeting with the Planning Commission, and Council discussed this topic previously. The sign company indicated they make signs in cast aluminum, as well as cast bronze; the aluminum is lighter and cheaper. The signs can be six inches in height and can be tapered to a point, if that is what is wanted. He is willing to work on the language that will be needed in the Zoning Ordinance to allow this signage, if this is the direction Council wants to go. There was much discussion. Councilmember Casimir clarified this isn’t a service the Borough is providing, but a use that is allowed. There will be an application fee for the signage and the businesses will have to pay for the actual signs. Council will also need to decide if we want to charge a yearly fee for maintenance. It was the sense of Council that a 6” x 20” sign would work fine and that bronze is the preference. Councilmember Casimir indicated he would share this information with Mr. Giunta, and if Mr. Giunta agrees, he will start working on the Zoning Ordinance language.

Councilmember Casimir referred to the Planning Commission June 6th minutes; they reference Josh Steinhurst coming to the Planning Committee meeting and it says the Planning Committee, “agreed that dwelling units should not be permitted in accessory structures located on Borough alleys.” Councilmember Casimir indicated that isn’t accurate; the Planning Committee took the Commission’s advice under advisement, but didn’t make any kind of decision, hoping the Planning Commission continues to look at all possibilities for accessory dwelling units.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: Councilmember Baker made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Robinson, to approve the Confirmation of Assignment to Larson Design Group in the amount of $16,400 to design and administer the Bull Run Stream Bank Repair Project under FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. ON THE QUESTION: Manager Smith reported he received notification that $142,000 is available and this will start the process for the repair work. Motion was unanimously approved.
Tuesday, July 17, 2012

FINANCE COMMITTEE: Councilmember Casimir made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Robinson, to approve payment of bills from 06/16/12 through 07/13/12 in the amount of $446,512.27. Motion was unanimously approved.

Councilmember Casimir pointed out it is very useful having a professional financial expert on the Finance Committee. Something as simple as requesting a Chart of Accounts, which Councilmember Baker did, will make it easier for the committee to track the various accounts the Borough uses.

MAYOR: Mayor Wagner announced the poetry path launch will be August 24th at 3 PM at the Campus Theatre and will be held in conjunction with the Bucknell Community Street Fair.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT: No report.

SOLICITOR: Solicitor Lyons indicated the need for an executive session to discuss a legal issue.

MANAGER: Manager Smith indicated we have been receiving Planning Commission minutes more regularly. Josh Steinhurst has also been attending our Planning Committee meetings, which has been good and fits into our process opening up communication with all our various boards, commissions and authorities. He stated Linda Sterling was unable to make tonight’s meeting, but hopes to be here in August. Mayor Wagner asked what group will be at Council’s next work session. Councilmember Casimir suggested that be discussed at the next Planning Committee meeting. Manager Smith updated Council on the Market Street Project noting that PennDOT hopes to wrap the project up in about two weeks, if the weather cooperates. He thanked all residents for their patience.

Councilmember Cox asked for an update on the Traffic Light Grant. Manager Smith said an educational meeting was held with Senator Yaw’s aide, Arnie Kriner, and Representative Keller and his aide, Darwin Swope, and both agreed to submit letters on the Borough’s behalf to PennDOT’s Secretary of Transportation, which they did.

OTHER COMMITTEES: Council President Bergonia stated, on behalf of the LARA, it appears the lawsuit over the bridge has been settled and they will be moving forward with clean-up. Mayor Wagner said the triathlon is coming up, she believes it is the second Saturday of August, and she and Council President Bergonia will be at the finish line. Councilmember Baker questioned if there was any news on LARA’s office location since they have to be out of their present location in August. Manager Smith said he spoke to Katie Davis a couple hours ago and they are investigating a couple of options. He said they are still considering the old warming building, and a suggestion was made about the white cottage/building owned by William Cameron, but not used, as a possible temporary location.

Mayor Wagner indicated Councilmember Morris has been out of town, so there is no report regarding the LDP.

Mayor Wagner reminded Council the Town and Gown Committee will not meet again until August.

Manager Smith said with regard to the LNC, Dan Greene has been asked by the State to speak at an annual conference representing the Elm Street Program and the successes he has had in this Borough. Work continues on our Flood Mitigation Grants, which Dan Greene has been basically supervising and/or overseeing. We are developing letters/paperwork to try to bind the property owners to this voluntary effort, as there has been some reluctance/wavering on the part of the owners recently due to appraisals on the properties. As you know, there is a required benefit/cost ratio and we were very close, meaning if the one individual who is wavering doesn’t participate, we would not be able to do any of these properties.

Councilmember Casimir reported the STC continues their work and everything is going smoothly. The property at 32 South Second Street had sidewalk panels that needed attention. Consideration was being given to removing two beautiful oak trees in front of the property; however, after conversations with the STC and the Manager, he is pleased to say that the sidewalk work turned out beautiful and the oak trees are still standing.

Council President Bergonia reported the CK-COG was successful in acquiring the code enforcement for the rental properties in South Williamsport.

Mayor Wagner said the community garden continues to be very successful; unfortunately she missed their 5:30 PM meeting today. She shared that she heard they are going to ask for a winter garden. Councilmember Casimir indicated he really wanted to see something at the community garden that clearly identifies that Bucknell is partnering on this. There was much discussion.
Tuesday, July 17, 2012

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

WRITTEN REPORTS: Councilmember Casimir made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Baker, to acknowledge receipt of the Budget Index; Parking Report, Zoning Officer Report, and Code Enforcement Officer Report. Motion was unanimously approved.

WORK SESSION: Council President Bergonia reported he does not believe there is a need for a work session on August 14th; however, should it be determined a work session is needed, the Manager will notify Council.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Councilmember Casimir made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Baker, to hold an executive session on a legal issue and a personnel issue. Motion was unanimously approved.

Council President Bergonia called for a five minute recess at 9:25 PM. Council returned at 9:30 PM.

Council entered executive session at 9:30 PM. Council returned at 9:55 PM.

Councilmember Casimir made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Cox, to retain the services of Janie Neff, PCC-CPCC, of Lewisburg, at a cost of $4,800 for staff training. Motion was approved, with one abstention; Councilmember Baker abstained from voting.

There being no further business, Councilmember Mahon made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Cox, to adjourn the meeting. Motion was unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 10:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Garrison
Borough Secretary