

MINUTES
BOROUGH COUNCIL WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 15, 2023

The Downingtown Borough Council met in work session on February 15, 2023, at the Municipal Government Center, 4 West Lancaster Avenue, Downingtown, PA. Members present: Vice-President Plaughter, Councilors Howard, Horstmann, Ferris and Helm and Jack Law of Borough staff.

Call to Order: 7:00 p.m. call to order with a moment of silence and the Pledge of Allegiance.

Trucks on Whiteland Avenue: Councilor Howard remarked on the continued concern regarding the truck traffic on Whiteland Avenue. Mr. Law suggested that a traffic study be done to update us on the concerns of weight limit, turning radiuses and road surface conditions. He also updated new improvements coming to abutting municipalities/townships.

Building Permits & New Business: Vice-President Plaughter suggested that each department head of the Borough update the Council, so everyone knows what's going on in the Borough before it's on Facebook or in the paper, keep everyone in the loop. It was suggested that Matt Bush oversee updating the Council with a brief summary of any new businesses in the Borough to keep Council updated since he's in contact with the Zoning Officer. It was also suggested to put that on the agenda as a standing line item.

Downtown Revitalization Plan: There was a lot of discussion regarding the downtown and what to do to revitalize the downtown: Organize a work session with businesses, grants are available for façade upkeep and improvement. It could be done in phases and to be discussed with Jeff Smith.

Borough Complex on Wallace Avenue: Mr. Law suggested taking a few Council members up at a time to the new complex so they could see the exact layout, Council chambers, storage space and look at the blueprints. Discussion in a future executive session of the options available after everyone has had the chance to see the space in person.

A request was made for the Historic Commission to have some storage space in the new complex.

Communication – Community and Council: There was discussion of how to communicate with the community: new neighbor packets to be given to new families in the Borough with updates on the Borough, a newsletter, website, etc. Also, Councilor Howard suggested having an option to send out a newsletter/information via hard copies through the mail for those who don't have internet access to keep everyone informed and an option of paperless/internet access for those who don't want a paper copy, all to be discussed with Jeff Smith.

Streetscapes and Trees- Discussion: Jack has been investigating solutions for stump cleanup/removal, keeping PECO in the loop since there's electrical wires below the stumps.

We've lost a lot of trees recently in Kerr Park. Discussion of possibly putting trees in large pots to be planted later in the park when they grow large enough to add to the streetscape. Mr. Ferris talked about Stroud's Water Research Center Preserve Restore Our Roots and the Borough being involved in a tree project. PECO also has a program that should be investigated. An arborist with Brandywine Urban Forest would be helpful in looking at what trees we have and what should be planted in the future.

Other Projects: Discussion as necessary: Request was made to look into having a stop sign at the four-way at Green Street and Pennsylvania Avenue/sidewalk. Jack responded that it was supposed to happen when the new Kardon Park project went in but that never happened. PennDOT to be involved. Councilor Helm suggested a Kerr Park and Green Street lit crosswalk warning would also help people slow down.

The Borough should be planning for some bridge repairs: Lancaster Avenue Bridge, Skelp Level Road and Boot Road Bridge in our adjoining municipalities. Jack gave some examples of other municipalities and townships adjoining us that are planning for future repairs, coordinating might be best for the traffic situation and trucks coming through the Borough.

For the Good of the Order: Councilor Helm suggested having some light pollution fixes that might be investigated and implemented, easy, inexpensive ones being mindful of the budget.

Councilor Helm also suggested we investigate ADA accessible sidewalks/ramps on Pennsylvania and Green Street. They don't meet current standards. Grant funding possibly available.

Adjournment:

Vice-President Plaugher asked for a motion to adjourn the work session. Councilor Howard made a motion and Councilor Horstmann seconded; motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Bailey

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