

## COLUMBIA BOROUGH COUNCIL – WORK SESSION

September 3, 2019 | 6:00 PM  
Paul W. Myers Council Chambers

### MINUTES

1. Council President Murphy called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Councilpersons Present: Council President Murphy, Councilperson Novak, Councilperson FitzGerald, Councilperson Kress Hartman, Councilperson Burgard. Mayor Lutz was also present.

Councilperson Williams arrived at 6:23 PM

Councilpersons Absent: Councilperson Berntheizel

Junior Councilperson Present: None

Council President announced the removal of Agenda Item 5.a. It will be placed on the September 10, 2019 Regular Borough Council Meeting Agenda.

2. A moment of silence was observed. Planning/Zoning Manager Jeff Helm led the Pledge to the Flag
3. Council President Murphy reiterated agenda change
4. Finance
  - a. Council President Murphy stated that members of Borough Council will meet with Cohen Law Group to discuss the Cable Franchise Agreement between Columbia Borough and Comcast. More information to follow.
  - b. Council President Murphy stated that the Finance Manager arranged for the Lancaster County Tax Collection Office personnel to attend the October 1, 2019 Borough Council Work Session to discuss the issue of Delinquent Tax Collection. Borough Manager Denlinger added that the Council and staff have a scheduled teleconference with Portnoff Law Associates to discuss the issue.
5. Public Safety
  - a. Columbia EMS (CQRS) Presentation regarding EMS Services: Removed
  - b. Councilperson Burgard stated that Mike Rhoads from Fire Police, Planning/Zoning Manager Jeff Helm, Code Compliance Manager Paul Paulsen, Mayor Lutz, Police Chief Brommer and Fire Chief Kemmerly meet to discuss and review the following three ordinances:  
  
Columbia Borough Code – Chapter 24: Fire Department.  
Columbia Borough Code – Chapter 27: Fire Inspector  
Columbia Borough Code – Chapter 31: Fire Police  
  
Regarding Fire Police activities, the group suggested creating a MOU with neighboring municipalities for Fire Police activities. The Borough Manager was directed to initiate MOU. Councilperson Burgard will forward a Fire Police Activity report to the Borough Manager.

Consideration of revisions to both Chapter 24: Fire Department and Chapter 31: Fire Police will be placed on the September 10, 2019 Regular Borough Council Meeting Agenda.

## 6. Legislation

- a. Councilperson Novak requested an update on Columbia Borough Code- Chapter 220; Article III, 220-28.1: Airport District Overlay. Planning Commission Chair, Mary Wickenheiser reported that at the August Planning Commission Meeting, the consensus from the committee was if the airport overlay is officially decommissioned, Borough Council should take action to repeal ordinance.
- b. Planning/Zoning Manager, Jeff Helm led a presentation on initial proposed revisions to the Columbia Borough Zoning Map. The proposed map revisions and documented list of justifications for the proposed changes were discussed by Borough Council and residents in attendance.

Resident Howard Stevens asked for clarification pertaining to a section of the "Linden St Gateway" section of the map. Planning/Zoning Manager Jeff Helm responded. Resident Heather Zink asked for clarification on specific proposed zoning changes and voiced her concern the difficulty establishing industry in the Borough and would like to see the Borough Zoning be more industry friendly. Councilperson Kress Hartman, Councilperson Novak and resident Frank Doutrich asked for clarifications pertaining to the 1200 Locust St- St. Johns Herr Estate Area. Planning/Zoning Manager Jeff Helm responded. Resident Tom Steiner voiced his opinion on the activities at Manor Street area near the former airport property. He offered alternatives to the proposed changes and provided Council with a handout (included in minutes).

Councilperson Novak directed Borough Manager to place Zoning Map revisions on the October 1, 2019 Borough Council Work Session.

Resident Roche FitzGerald asked if the Borough markets to potential developers. Borough Manager Denlinger and Mayor Lutz responded.

Resident Frank Doutrich asked Council to recall an issue that was present in a past meeting agenda pertaining to the Lancaster County Assessment Office and reassessment. Borough Manager Denlinger responded. He also voiced his concern with the excessive demolition in the Borough and its effect on the tax base. Mayor Lutz and Borough Manager Denlinger responded with the present process for demolition in the Borough. Resident Heather Zink asked if demolition process includes parts of building and brought a specific property to Council's attention. Resident Frank Doutrich also asked about the status of Colonial Metals, current construction projects and the high weeds at the lot on 4<sup>th</sup> and Locust Streets. Planning/Zoning Manager Jeff Helm and Borough Manager Denlinger responded.

Planning Commission President Wickenheiser spoke in reference to the current process for demolition. She stated that the Planning Commission presently decides demolition and has always done so in the past. The Planning Commission has approached Council in the past and would like to again request that the responsibility of demolition decisions be handled by Borough Council. Resident Frank Doutrich recommends that the Borough and School District work together on demolition decisions and asked for an update on the Locust Street property. Borough Manager Denlinger responded that Planning/Zoning Manager Jeff Helm is currently working with the developers.

Councilperson Novak requested that discussion of demolition be placed on the October 1, 2019 Work Session. And the Borough Manager is directed to work with the Solicitor to research the

status of the decommission of the airport and then initiate an ordinance to address airport overlay.

7. Community Development

- a. Borough Council discussed the proposed Special Event Alcohol Addendum and BYOB Restaurant Policy for the Columbia Market House. The Borough Solicitor reviewed the agreements and has no concerns as drafted. Borough Manager Denlinger was directed to place action on the September 10, 2019 Regular Borough Council Meeting Agenda.
- b. Borough Council discussed the Census 2020 Resolution 50 from the Board of County Commissioners. It was noted that Planning/Zoning Manager Jeff Helm actively participates on the County level, representing the Borough. The Borough Manager was directed to post the Census County flyer on the Borough Website.

Resident Frank Doutrich asked Council how often they meet with attorney per month. He also clarified that his concern with demolition is the intent, not neglect of property owner.

8. Announcements

Council President Murphy announced on September 10, 2019, Borough Council will hold an information session to receive information from its Borough Manager and Solicitor prior to the regularly scheduled Borough Council meeting at 7:00 PM that evening. The Budget Meeting scheduled for Thursday September 12, 2019 will begin at 7:00 PM. Individuals running for Columbia Borough Council are encouraged to attend and participate and an email invite will be sent.

Resident and Borough Council Candidate Sharon Lintner announced she will be out of town and unable to physically attend the September 12, 2019 Budget Meeting.

Kelsey Miller from CHI stated that the construction company doing work at 4<sup>th</sup> and Locust Streets were asked to tend to the high weeds.


9. Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 PM

Motion by:	Second by:	Voice Vote:
P. Williams	T. Burgard	All Favored – Motion Carried

MOTIONED AND APPROVED this 10<sup>th</sup> day of September 2019, by the Borough Council of the Borough of Columbia, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in lawful session duly assembled.

BOROUGH OF COLUMBIA, LANCASTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

By:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kelly Murphy, Council President

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Rebecca S. Denlinger, Secretary/Treasurer

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# COLUMBIA FACTORY HAS FUTURE AS APARTMENTS

## FIRM WILL SPEND \$4.5 MILLION TO CONVERT BUILDING INTO HOMES FOR ELDERLY

Intelligencer Journal (Lancaster, PA)

Publication Date: November 15, 1995

Tag: 1995319163

Section: LOCAL

Page: B-1

By PAUL BOMBERGER

A 106-year-old wagon factory in Columbia is being converted into an apartment complex for elderly and disabled people by a State College development company.

Water Tower Development Corp. is spending \$4.45 million to turn the former Columbia Wagon Factory on Plane Street along the Susquehanna River into the Columbia **Wagon Werks** apartment building.

Construction began two months ago on the historic structure, which has been vacant for 10 years after being used as a warehouse to store tomatoes. The 110,000-square-foot building is listed with the National Historic Register.

Water Tower Associates, a State College limited partnership of investors, purchased the old wagon factory for \$450,000. The partnership is spending \$4 million to build **110 apartments in the first section of a two-part development project.**

The first part of the project consists of building **10 one-bedroom apartments, 45 two-bedroom apartments and five three-bedroom apartments.** This section of the redevelopment work, covering 65,000 square feet of the building, is slated to be finished by next April.

Twelve apartments in the first phase of the project are earmarked for disabled tenants while the rest of the apartments are for elderly people who are at least age 55.

The developer hopes to begin construction next November on the final **50 apartments in the second part of the building project.**

Ronald Mittelman, president of Water Tower Development Corp., said Columbia was chosen for the project because a geographic search showed that the borough needed affordable housing for elderly and disabled residents.

Water Tower Development, an affordable housing building specialist, has completed nine construction projects since forming five years ago. This is the firm's first project in Lancaster County.

Columbia **Wagon Werks** will be heated by natural gas and include air conditioning in each apartment. The property will include social space, a lobby, a laundry room, elevators and **789 parking spaces.**

The project is being financed with what Mittelman called an "indirect federal subsidy."

Water Tower Associates secured \$4 million in tax credits from the federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program. In this state, that federal money funnels through the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency.

Mittelman said the project has received \$3.2 million in federal income tax credits and \$800,000 in historic renovation tax credits.

The Water Tower limited partnership lured investors by giving them a portion of the tax credits in exchange for the capital they invested in the Columbia apartment project.

The apartment building will pay Columbia property taxes and county real estate taxes.

The monthly apartment rental prices, which include utilities, will be \$472 for one bedroom, \$567 for two bedrooms and \$655 for three bedrooms.

The construction general contractor is H. Paul Stumpf of State College. Stumpf hails from Lancaster. He has hired several subcontractors for the job from this county.

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