

Stewartstown Borough Council Special Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 23rd, 2023

Members present

Pam Almony
Roy Burkins
Donna Bloom
Polly Kreiss
Kim Carl
Dave Elwell

Others present

Jason Brenneman, Engineer
Ira Walker, Jr., Sewer/Water
Mayor Brittany Barnette
Stacy Myers, Recording Sec'y

Visitors

Jordan Ilyes	Eric Johnston	Jason Roberts	Harry Nizer
Bob Hersey	Kelley Wisnom	David Wisnom	Staci & Dave Blevins
Patricia Ripple	Nicole Palmer	Christopher Mink	Kathleen & John McInerney
Bentley Sharar	Christian Nelson	Charles Wood	John Barnette
Rollin Apgar	Dawn Gillispie	Michael Springer	Jon & Janene Schmidt
Charles Tolson	Bob & Karen Hass	Catherine Hoy	Michele Marshall
Nathan Filak	Linda Miller	Kenton Kurtz	

1. The meeting was called to order @ 7:00p.m. followed by the pledge to the flag.
2. Jordan Ilyes, from Ilyes Holdings, LLC was present, along with his Engineer Eric Johnston to discuss their proposed rehab of 13 Mill Street, Stewartstown. Jordan has completed several rehabs on similar buildings, most recently in Red Lion (Red Lion Table Company), Hanover (McCallister Hotel), Dallastown (Tobacco Barn) & York (Keystone Color Works). Jordan hasn't settled on 13 Mill Street yet but is proposing a mixed use of residential & commercial. He loves these types of projects where old buildings have a lot of character. He plans to keep the exposed brick, wherever possible & also plans to keep the water tower. As far as the commercial spaces, Jordan is planning to move Small Town Sweets (currently in the parking lot of 13 Mill) into the main building, along with a coffee shop, a restaurant & brewery. Many areas of 13 Mill Street are in bad shape with the roof collapsing, but Jordan hopes to save it & create loft apartments inside that portion. He also stated the property should have plenty of parking for the proposed uses. Jordan has met with Stewartstown Railroad & Gordon's to discuss the other parcels around 13 Mill to become familiar with all property lines to ensure it comes together well. The Borough's Zoning Ordinance doesn't allow for a mixed use development in the Industrial Zone, so Jordan is looking for a path forward, either by a zoning amendment or a Use Variance through zoning. Eric Johnston presented a concept plan for the project. Following this, would be the Land Development Plan process that would include feedback on different issues such as stormwater management, traffic, lighting, etc. Reviews of all aspects will come from the Borough Engineer, Stewartstown Sewer & Water Authority, York County Conservation District, DEP (if necessary) & possibly others. As stated before, Jordan hasn't settled on this property & said he won't until he has approvals in place.

Questions from residents/visitors:

- **Patricia Ripple, 51 Poplar Springs Blvd.—**
 - Approximately how many apartments are you planning to put in the building? *Jordan said he was estimating 110 based on square footage, but after the exact layout was complete, it's now 106 apartments.*
 - That's a tight-fitting area anyway...what kind of congestion will it add to the town? *Jordan said the Red Lion property he just completed is a similar piece of property & the 100 units work really well, especially with more people working*

from home now. It's unlike a factory, where everyone is coming & going at the same time.

- *A brewery just opened on South Main Street & possibly a new coffee shop; isn't that a conflict? In his experience, it's a healthy competition. Hanover just opened their 2nd fine-dining restaurant downtown & both do extremely well. They also have 5 coffee shops & 6 breweries. Many people like to walk & visit several at a time. He met with Councilwoman Carl & Mayor Barnette who were both interested in a nice restaurant coming to town. He's open to different ideas; this is just a concept plan right now.*
- **Staci Blevins, 29 Charles Avenue—**
 - *What size apartments are you planning? One & two-bedroom apartments for the Mill Street space. He has over 25 projects around the York area. All his apartments are high-end at market, higher-rate pricing. He's aiming for the young professional who may have bad credit, but are great people, possibly a divorced adult. He has no low-income apartments in any of his properties.*
 - *Will traffic volume, such as on High Street, be addressed with this project? Eric Johnston said that would be part of the Land Development process, mentioned earlier. Jordan widened one of the streets near Red Lion Table Company when he did the project, although he was not asked, nor required to do so. Jason Brenneman said the Borough has no Ordinance requiring traffic studies; however, with Jordan's zoning application (if submitted), this will be one of the first steps addressed.*
- **Jordan explained his intended ingress/egress points related to this property—**

Currently, there are 3 entrances off Mill Street. His hope is to have all secured parking for the residents & a public lot for the proposed restaurant. He's also proposing egress coming off Bronson Avenue. Bronson gets wider as it gets to Rt. 851 but narrow at the dead end, so Jordan would like to widen & improve it in that area. So, Bronson would be a 2nd egress, then possibly 2 or 3 egress/ingress off Mill Street, although it's very early in planning.
- **Mike Springer, 19 Cloverfield Street--**
 - *Any idea what the rent range for the apartments will be? Jordan doesn't think he'll see any rent lower than \$1,200 & depending on the demographic, up to \$1,900-\$2,000, depending on apartment size which range from 600-1,500 sq. ft.*
 - *If approved, how long will the whole process be? Once building permits are approved & construction is started, Jordan is estimating approx. two years to completion. He may be able to do it in phases & complete the side of the building that's in the worst disrepair first.*
- **Charles Wood, 4594 Bridgeview Rd.--**
 - *In front of his house, which is Rt. 851 (near Bronson Avenue), traffic is a nightmare with speeding, accidents, vehicles passing school buses, etc. Would the Borough increase signage, adjust speed limit, etc? Rt. 851 is a State road & as you travel into Stewartstown, the speed limit does drop to 25mph, but where 4594 Bridgeview is located is Hopewell Township & patrolled by State Police.*
 - *Bonkey's Snowball Stand is another area where speeding & dangerous traffic is an issue. Unfortunately, speeding is an issue in many areas of town.*
- **Christian Nelson, 3 Aster Street—**
 - *Will the proposed 13 Mill Street project tie into the Cloverfield development? Not at all. Cloverfield has a large stormwater pond as a buffer at Bronson Avenue's dead end/turnaround. Jordan also plans to fence his property with black*

wrought iron/aluminum fencing, as he likes to do with all his properties. He also adds gates.

- **Dave Blevins, 29 Charles Avenue—**
 - His parents live at 12 Mill Street, across from Gordon's & he's very concerned about the additional traffic the proposed development may bring. He's asking Council, Jordan & anyone involved to keep that in mind during the LDP process. Maybe a traffic light is a possibility? Is it possible to create less than 106 apartments? *Not really unless Jordan would knock part of the building down. He's certain it will be a really positive addition to the Borough.*
 - There's wetlands behind 13 Mill Street, what does Jordan plan to do with that? *It must stay as wetlands. Eric Johnston said they'll design around it & incorporate their stormwater design with that in mind.*
 - **Nicole Palmer, 78 Smokebox Circle—**
 - Is there a Plan B if the proposal for apartments falls through? *Jordan said because he has the apartments, he can build out a custom space for a restaurant, brewery, coffee shop. He can do that because he's not just a landlord with apartment space.*
 - Many people like the "small town feel" of Stewartstown. How can that remain? *Jordan feels this will add to that feeling because an old building is being restored. 106 apartments sounds like a lot, but he said the building is huge. There's a vinyl-sided building on the property that's in really bad shape. That will be torn down & he'll only keep the brick buildings.*
 - Will the tenants be allowed to sublease their apartments? *No, Jordan self-manages all his properties through Tailored Real Estate. He's not a property flipper & he hasn't sold any of the properties he has rehabbed.*
 - **Chris Mink, 4 Chicory Street—**
 - Will there be an open space area? Dog park? Recreation area? *This property, like some of Jordan's others will have a full gym available to its residents. Some have a patio area with gas grills, fire pit area, seating, etc. One of his properties has a dog park & one has a community building available for rent by his tenants.*
 - **Janene Schmidt, 203 Gauge Ct.—**
 - How many floors does the building have? *It has two floors, technically it's 2 ½ stories because of how the one side is positioned. It will remain the same height.*
 - **Other items mentioned by Jordan—**
 - It will be a pet-friendly building.
 - Concrete floors will offer a soundproof & pet-proof environment, as well as fire protection.
 - Current ceilings are beautiful with 3 ½" tongue & groove, which will be exposed.
3. **Council & Borough Engineer discussion regarding zoning amendments for 13 Mill Street.** Jason said, because this use isn't allowed in the Industrial Zone, Jordan is requesting direction from Council (to move forward) whether it be a text amendment or Variances. Jason spoke to Borough Solicitor, Craig Sharnetzka to discuss different options/thoughts. Craig said whatever changes are made to the Zoning Ordinance (for the Industrial Zone) it will apply to the entire Industrial Zone, not just to Jordan's property. There could be an overlay district done on the Industrial Zone that would have certain conditions for certain projects, such as this. Craig suggested getting a consensus from Council whether members want to see the project move forward & if so, what direction they would like it to go (text amendment, Variances, etc.). Craig also suggested the developer come up with what they feel is the best scenario for them. Those ideas/comments would come back to Council for review & further comment.

Jason said this is a multi-step process that will take some time, but the first step is zoning approval. One of his concerns is traffic & the impact this project will have on it, but whatever direction this moves forward, he feels it's very important to address those concerns & tie them into any decision. He said it's not out of the question & could also be a condition of the zoning approval to request the developer conduct a traffic study.

Questions from Council, Jordan Ilyes, Eric Johnston:

- Eric stated again, as was stated last month, a text amendment, such as an “apartment conversion” would work for Jordan’s project but would not apply to other uses in the Industrial Zone. There is a distinction because it would prohibit someone from constructing another apartment building in the Industrial Zone.
- Ms. Almony reported that Jordan plans to spend \$15million in this project alone. She urged anyone, if possible, to visit Jordan’s other properties to see the type of work that he does & wants to do in Stewartstown.
- Does Jordan plan to incorporate the railroad into the project? *Discussions up to this point are that the railroad wants to remove the tracks from this site because they’re not used. Jordan said they wouldn’t need to remove them & said, if he can help improve other areas (to help turnaround, to help aesthetics, etc.) he’s willing to discuss this further.*
- Would the railroad tracks across Mill Street be repaired? *Council has been in several discussions with the railroad about repair. It involves drainage, as well as the rails, ties, etc., but it’s very expensive.*
- Jason suggested possibly treating this project as a redevelopment overlay district where it only applies to projects like this; old buildings that can be rehabbed rather than building something from scratch on vacant land; however, existing projects are more involved & more time consuming. He thinks more discussion/research about that may be beneficial. Eric stated, in his experience, overlay districts involve long-term planning, where a text amendment (specific to a particular zone) or the Variance process (with the Zoning Hearing Board) would be the faster route.
- Mrs. Carl asked about parking & if text amendments would be requested for that. *The current ZO requires 3 spaces/apartment dwelling & that cannot be attained on this property. That would be one area where a text amendment would be proposed. Jordan said his goal is to always have 2 spaces/unit, but most times 1 ½ spaces is perfect for his clientele.*
- Jordan stated “multi-use” is good verbiage to protect the Borough from anyone creating low-income housing if they can convert a building somewhere within the Borough. The number of units can also be a requirement, such as 75 or more units because there aren’t any other buildings within the Borough that can accommodate that. The specifics of the verbiage would need to be reviewed by Craig.
Jordan agreed to have his attorney get the desired language to Craig in order for the project to move forward.
- Mr. Elwell suggested the clearest mechanism be used to manage traffic, whether it be via text amendment or through zoning & a Variance because that’s something we don’t want to compromise on in this project.
Jason stated any improvements at Bronson/Rt. 851, Mill/Rt. 24, Mill/Rt. 851 are off-site improvements which the Borough cannot require to be done. The Borough could **request** Jordan do the improvements, but not require. Jason would request a traffic study for these areas, but he believes the majority of the traffic will travel Rt. 851.
Being that the Borough’s Zoning Ordinance doesn’t require traffic studies, Eric Johnston said in most text amendments, if proposed for over a certain number of houses, a traffic study would be required. Borough Council could then grant a SALDO waiver (not zoning relief) for this project. This would help Jason identify which intersections are a concern,

Jordan's traffic engineer would distribute the traffic patterns from the 106 proposed units out through the different routes (stated above) and then evaluate those intersections & their "level of service" (How long is a vehicle stopped there? Site distances? Turning radius?)

- John Barnette asked if Council approves a text amendment for this project, will that also apply to the Bailey Hotel & their change of use? *13 Mill Street is in the Industrial Zone; the hotel is in the Commercial Zone, so if a text amendment is adopted, it would be for a specific use **only** in the Industrial Zone.*

Ms. Almony made a motion to recommend the developer propose a text amendment to Borough Council which would allow him to move forward with his proposal; Mrs. Bloom seconded.

Mrs. Carl moved that the text amendment include the requirement of a traffic study should the project go over a certain number of dwelling units in a restored building. Mrs. Bloom seconded.

All were in favor; motion carried.

Since the text amendment would need to go to York County Planning Commission for their review also, Eric Johnston suggested the first draft of proposed comments go to Atty. Sharnetzka for review prior to the June Council meeting. Council agreed.

4. **Adjournment**—Ms. Almony made a motion to adjourn the meeting @ 7:56p.m. Mrs. Bloom seconded. Motion carried, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Stacy Myers, Recording Secretary