

**BELLEFONTE BOROUGH  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
March 14, 2022 – 5 p.m.  
236 West Lamb Street, Bellefonte, PA 16823  
[www.bellefonte.net](http://www.bellefonte.net)**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The March 14, 2022, meeting of the Bellefonte Borough Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Robert Dannaker at 5:00 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Robert Dannaker, Chair  
Dallas Gallo  
David Lomison  
James Mills, Secretary

**ABSENT:** Mark Edwards

**STAFF MEMBERS:** Gina Thompson, Zoning Administrator  
Ralph Stewart, Borough Manager

**GUESTS:**

Tom Songer	Randy Brachbill
Tom Songer Jr.	Joanne Tosti-Vasey
Mike Siggins	Bruce Cifelli
Doug Johnson	Ed Olsen
Sharon Johnson	Pete Lauck

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** *Mr. Lomison moved to approve the February 14, 2022 minutes. Mr. Gallo seconded. Motion carried.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** Nothing presented.

**PLANNING and ZONING ISSUES:**

**Former Pizza Hut / Confer Land Development Plan**

Mike Siggins presented the preliminary plan for former Pizza Hut building, now owned by Confers. They will add a small addition on the back of the building and change parking, including changing the location of ADA access. There should be no impact on impervious

*Mr. Gallo moved to conditionally recommend to Council to approve the land development plan for the new Confer's addition, pending comments from the County Planning Office.*

### **Waterfront Development Project**

Tom Songer gave Planning Commission an updated on the waterfront Development Project. They requested a zoning change to the maximum height to ceiling in the Waterfront Business District to accommodate the proposed changes to the project. He presented renderings of the project to PC members. Mr. Songer hoped to bring new members into Bellefonte not only at the hotel but also to reside in the Borough. Geotechnical engineering was done, and test borings were done for the foundations for all three buildings in the project. The land development plan as a whole was presented, and Mr. Songer stated that the plan had not changed too much since what PC saw previously. Condos are proposed along the Spring Creek side of the property. Some preliminary concept plans were shown. The first level would be the commercial space that extends out along the promenade. A focus group study was done regarding the condos and interest in them. There is lots of interest and the groups stated that two and three bedrooms would be ideal. The revised plan includes these condos. They were also interested in the parking garage and liked the idea of the hotel to have the opportunity to meet new people coming into Bellefonte. New land development plans to include the condos will be submitted at or about April 1, 2022. Dunlap Street was going to be built all the way through. There will be 333 parking spaces in the parking garage and there will be 77 surface spaces. They will be metered parking as in the Borough now. They intend to be able to compliment the rates that Bellefonte charges. A study is being done at present to evaluate the rates and what they need to be in order to pay for the garage. They have obtained three match grants to help with the project and the infrastructure.

Mr. Songer discussed the patios of the condos. He reiterated that the first floor would be commercial and possibly office. They do have interest in a commercial space, but nothing is signed off on. Once the project moves forward Mr. Songer offered that the commercial space would rent up quite quickly. He described the hotel project briefly. Mr. Peter Lauck presented the restaurant/bar area of the hotel.

They are looking at 7 condos per floor and the plan could change somewhat from the conceptual plan shown. The first ones built will be the ones attached to the parking garage. Concept Plan B will most likely be what the developer will go with. The plan has been bumped up about 5,000 square feet from the original land development plan that was approved.

The ceiling height of the garage and condo are planned at 66 feet. The rooftop experience will be 70 feet 7 inches and that is the part of the project that is driving the zoning request change. The developer would like to raise the height to 75 feet if possible or at the very least 72 feet.

*Mr. Gallo moved to conditionally recommend to Council to approve the request to raise the height increase. Mr. Lomis seconded. Motion carried.*

The County will see the request for the height increase and a public hearing will be held. No action was taken by PC at this meeting.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Updated Sign Ordinance** was reviewed by Planning Commission once again. The feather signs were discussed and PC's recommendation to allow the signs in the Borough. That is written into the temporary signs on (p. 10) of the ordinance with a height limitation of ten feet in height measured from the group to tip of sign. One sign is allowed per storefront side.

Under signs prohibited in all district section, on page 10, the flashing and illuminated signs would be allowed for non-conforming preexisting businesses that already have these types of lights. i.e., JSSB, Bellefonte High School, etc.

On page 9, signs generally permitted, bistro and café lights were added.

Ms. Thompson discussed the language about the signs not being permitted in the Borough row. That already exists in the ordinance so it may be able to be taken out of the temporary sign section.

Ms. Thompson also added definitions for bistro lights. There was a mention of historic markers. Enforcement was discussed briefly.

Ms. Thompson reminded PC that HARB was not in favor of the feather signs. DBI would like to work on signage to help downtown business so they may not necessarily need the feather signs in the long run.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Nothing presented.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Mr. Gallo moved to adjourn. Mr. Mills seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 6:36 p.m.