

MINUTES
Town of Easton Council Meeting
July 6, 2010 – 7:00 PM

PRESENT AT CONVENING

Mayor Robert C. Willey, Council President John F. Ford, Councilmember Kelley K. Malone, Councilmember Pete Leshner, Councilmember Leonard E. Wendowski, Councilmember Megan M. Cook

IN ATTENDANCE

Also in attendance were the Town Manager Mr. Karge, Town Attorney Ms. VanEmburch, Jackie Knopp for the Town Clerk, and from Easton Utilities were Mr. Hugh Grunden.

CONVENING

At 7:00 p.m., President Ford called the meeting to order.

Mr. Wendowski opened the meeting with prayer and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 21, 2010 MEETINGS.

Upon motion by Mr. Leshner seconded by Ms. Malone minutes of the June 21, 2010 meetings were unanimously approved.

ITEMS BY THE EASTON VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT.

Assistant Chief Jamie McNeal presented the June Report. He stated that dry conditions are becoming a problem.

He also stated that revenues were down.

ITEMS BY MAYOR WILLEY.

Mayor Willey stated that there will be a meeting on July 29, 2010 with MDE to discuss the tests that were run at the old Public Works facility at Easton Point.

President Ford discussed the letter/resolution from the Maryland Municipal League in regards to the State shared funds.

Mr. Wendowski discussed a fee of \$1000.00 to replace a roof for a non-profit. Mayor Willey stated that Don Richardson is looking at the calculations.

ITEMS BY THE TOWN MANAGER.

APPROVAL OF PUBLIC ASSEMBLY EVENTS.

○ BLOCK PARTY FOR JESUS, Saturday July 24, 2010 from 1000-1700 hrs.
LOCATION: Municipal Parking Lot #3 (by Historical Society)
DATE/TIME: Saturday July 24th, 2010 from 1000-1700 hrs.

○ Outdoor Church Service, Sunday August 15th, 2010 from 0800-1300 hrs.
LOCATION: Moton Park
DATE/TIME: Sunday August 15, 2010 0800-1300 hrs.

○ Dixon House 100th Birthday Celebration, Sunday September 26th, 2010 from 1300-1700 hrs.
LOCATION: N. Higgins St. in front of the Dixon House
DATE/TIME: Sunday September 16, 2010 1300-1700 hrs.

○ Holy Smoke KCBS BBQ State Championships, Friday July 23rd, 2010 from 1800-2300 hrs. and Saturday July 24th, 2010 from 1000-1900 hrs.
LOCATION: Bernstein Property (behind Target)
DATE/TIME: Friday July 23, 2010 from 0800-1300 hrs. and Saturday July 24, 2010 from 1000-1900 hrs.

Upon motion by Mr. Leshner seconded by Ms. Malone the Public Assembly events as recommended by the Easton Police Department were approved.

Mr. Karge discussed the blizzards of this past year and the Budget Stabilization Fund. He stated that Mayor Willey executed an Executive Order to transfer funds. This was done as of June 30, 2010. The expenses incurred for the December 2009 storm plus the two back to back blizzards were \$167,059.14. The budget for snow removal was \$20,000.00. The total of funds transferred was \$147,059.14. The Executive Order also states that any money received from FEMA will be returned to the Budget Stabilization Fund.

Also discussed was a request from Ms. Cook that “No Parking” signs be placed along Port Street in the vicinity of Londonderry due to the inability to see when coming out of Londonderry when cars are parked on either side of the street. Mr. Wendowski motioned to place the “No Parking” Signs in the requested area. Mr. Leshar seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

A request from Mr. Hoppy Stafford was also discussed to place barricades on Brant Court to block access in order to stop dumping and other activities. Upon motion by Mr. Wendowski seconded by Mr. Leshar this action was unanimously approved.

Mr. Wendowski asked who was to pay for the barricade placement.

Mr. Karge stated the developer was willing to pay for this.

Mr. Karge gave an update on the work at 5 Corners and the 2 new parking lots, one at Idlewild and the other on the north end of North Easton Park.

Mr. Karge also stated that Katie Clendaniel has been hired as the Community Development Coordinator.

Mr. Ford asked about her duties.

Mr. Wendowski wanted to know what FEMA will be giving the Town.

Mr. Karge stated that we would be at least 25% short of the real expenses.

ITEMS BY THE TOWN ATTORNEY.

Town Attorney Ms. VanEmburch had no items to bring before the Council.

DISCUSSION OF RECENT ELECTRICAL OUTAGES

Mr. Hugh Grunden from Easton Utilities discussed the recent electric outages.

Ms. Cook asked about the design of the conductor.

It was stated by Mr. Wendowski and Mr. Grunden concurred that some of the outages can come from other grid areas.

DISCUSSION OF THE COMPENSATORY TIME OFF PLAN

President Ford discussed the proposed changes regarding the Town of Easton Compensatory Time Off Plan.

Mr. Leshar asked about the time period to be allowed to comply with the proposal.

Ms. Cook asked if there would be any loss to the employee.

Ms. Adams stated there would be no loss to the employee.

Upon motion by Ms. Malone seconded by Mr. Leshar, the proposed change of accruing a maximum of 100 hours of compensatory time off was unanimously approved.

RESOLUTION NO. 5963, “A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN OF EASTON APPROVING THE 2010 CABLE TELEVISION SERVICE RATE REVISIONS PROPOSED BY THE EASTON UTILITIES COMMISSION.”

Mr. Wendowski commented on the Resolution agreement between Easton Utilities and Public Access Television Provider. He would like the town to be a part of the agreement and discussed concern of opening up this to a third party.

Upon motion by Mr. Leshar, seconded by Ms. Malone, Resolution No. 5963 was passed 3 to 1 following a roll call vote with Mr. Wendowski voting no and Ms. Cook abstaining.

REQUEST FROM MRS. SHELBY MITCHELL, PRESIDENT; HISTORIC EASTON, INC. FOR INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE.

Upon motion by Mr. Wendowski seconded by Mr. Leshar this action was unanimously approved.

LETTER FROM MR. JAMIE MERIDA, OWNER; BOUNTIFUL CASUAL ELEGANCE REQUESTING PERMISSION TO ERECT TENT AUGUST 19 THROUGH AUGUST 23 AND HANG A BANNER ADVERTISING A SALE AT TALBOTTOWN.

President Ford mentioned the July 19th Public Hearing on changes to our Zoning Ordinances.

Upon motion by Mr. Leshar, seconded by Ms. Malone, approval was granted for the erection of a tent and banner August 19 through August 23 advertising the sale at Talbottown.

DISCUSSION OF POSTPONEMENT OF PUD AMENDMENT PUBLIC HEARING FOR OLD LOWE'S

Mr. Ford discussed an extension granted for the Public hearing of the old Lowes building to August 16th after a brief explanation of why Mr. Showalter needed this extension.

7:45 PUBLIC HEARING CONTINUATION ON THE REQUEST OF EASTON INVESTMENTS II, OWNER OF BLOCK "C" OF THE LAKELAND'S PUD SUBDIVISION. THE DEVELOPERS ARE REQUESTING TWENTY-FOUR (24) ADDITIONAL UNITS IN BLOCK "C" INCREASING THE TOTAL UNITS IN THE BLOCK FROM THE TWENTY-NINE (29) CURRENTLY APPROVED UNITS TO A TOTAL OF FIFTY-THREE (53) UNITS. THEY ARE ALSO REQUESTING APPROVAL OF NEW ARCHITECTURE FOR THE UNITS IN BLOCK "C."

President Ford opened the Public Hearing. He stated the council would come to a consensus at the July 19th meeting and a vote would be taken on the August 2nd meeting.

Mr. Ryan Showalter was present on behalf of the applicant, Mr. Steven McAllister, owner of Easton Investments. He discussed the history of the changes to Block C and concerns of the community. He presented 2 different scenarios. Mr. Showalter proposed 20 ft wide townhomes in Block C with Scenario A vs. Scenario B in detail.

Ms. Cook asked about the size of the dog park.

Mr. Showalter stated the dog park is larger than the playground.

Mr. Leshar asked for clarification on frontloaded homes.

Mr. Showalter explained the end units were front loaded 2 car garages with side entrances.

Ms. Cook asked if it were possible to move the garage doors to the side and have the doors in front.

Mr. Showalter explained with 20 foot wide homes there are limited modifications that can be made.

Ms. Cook stated and Mr. Showalter agreed that with Scenario B the HOA of Block C would be responsible for the trail, but all residents would have access to it.

Ms. Cook asked for the dimension of Scenario A and Scenario B.

Mr. Leshar asked about HOA fees

Mr. Showalter stated there would be no increase in fees using Scenario A and a slight increase in fees for Scenario B due to the operation and management of the pool.

Ms. Malone asked if building a small pool would eliminate any parking.

Mr. Showalter explained that a small area would be eliminated.

Mr. Wendowski asked if there was any cost to the town.

Mr. Scott Appel
29119 Superior Circle

Mr. Appel talked about how the design has changed over time. HOA and insurance costs should not go up. Realtors said amenities would make this community more desirable. Urged council to support Scenario A.

Mr. Dave Wilford
29261 Pin Oak Way, South Beechwood

Mr. Wilford stated that his property values dropped significantly. He is opposed to any development.

Ms. Joan Baird
29118 Superior Circle

Ms. Baird stated the reality is that all property values have dropped. Supported Scenario A because it allows for some off street parking.

Mr. Richard Murphy
29044 Superior Circle

Mr. Murphy discussed the number of parking spaces and safety issues with EMS not being able to drive up to the homes.

Preference is for the original plan of 29 units.

Mr. Philon Thompson
29031 Superior Circle

Explained the vote that was taken at 50/50 split was for keeping the original 29 units or the extra townhomes. There was no Scenario A or B at that time.

Mrs. Fran Elliott
29251 Pin Oak Way, South Beachwood

Mrs. Elliot expressed her concern with emergency services. Would like to see the 29 unit proposal.

Ms. Shannon Cunningham
29045 Superior Circle

Pointed out the parking issues are in a certain area of Superior Circle. Pool hours have been cut by Lennar. Does not think they need the extra amenities because the townhomes are selling.

Mr. Steve Hurtner
29206 Superior Circle

Mr. Hurtner stated that the parking issues are based on life style. He also discussed HOA fees. Mr. Hurnter likes Scenario A.

Mr. Richard Murphy
29044 Superior Circle
Discussed HOA dues.

Mr. Dave Wilford
29261 Pin Oak Way, South Beachwood

Mr. Wilford asked who is cutting the grass for Town dedicated property.

Mr. Tim Harper
29020 Superior Circle

Mr. Harper is not interested in amenities, but would like to see more parking due to safety issues of poorly planned roads and parking.

He is for the original 29 units.

Mr. Scott Appel
29119 Superior Circle

Mr. Appel discussed sales of property.

President Ford urged those commenting to set aside personal issues and to focus comments on the proposal being considered.

Mr. Norm Fink
29034 Superior Circle

Prefers the original 29 proposal.

Ms. Sue Palmisano
29010 Superior Circle

Thinks the residents can fix parking issues among themselves by using other parking spaces and is pleased with the Lennar product.

Ms. Shannon Cunningham
29045 Superior Circle

Ms. Cunningham wanted to go on the record that there was already an HOA deficit from snow removal from the year before and expressed safety concerns.

Mr. Gene Lietner
29217 Superior Circle

Supported the original 29 units.

Mr. Steve McCalister of Easton Investments

Mr. McCalister discussed the history and business aspects of this project and prefers Scenario A.

President Ford stated that he would like to close the public hearing and invited closing comments.

Mr. Showalter stated the reason for change in Lot C was to improve parking.

President Ford commended the community for their participation in the process.

At 9:38 P.M. President Ford closed the public hearing.

President Ford stated written comments will be accepted until close of business, Friday, July 9, 2010.

Items by Members of the Council:

There were no items from the council

ADJOURN

Upon motion by Mr. Wendowski, seconded by Ms. Cook, and carried; the meeting was adjourned at 9:49 P.M.

Important Dates

July 19, 7:00 PM, Town Council Meeting, Town Hall
July 19, 7:15 Public Hearing regarding proposed zoning amendments
July 26, 6:00 PM, Historic District Commission, Town Hall
July 27, 9:00 AM, Board of Appeals, Town Hall
August 2, 6:15 PM, Police Board, Town Hall
August 9, 6:00 PM, Historic District Commission, Town Hall
August 16, 6:15 PM, Fire Board, Town Hall
August 16, 7:15 PM, Lowe's PUD Amend Public Hearing, Town Hall
August 19, 1:00 PM, Planning & Zoning Commission, Town Hall
August 22, 3:00 PM – 7:00 PM, Community Dinner, Harrison Street
August 24, 9:30 AM, Board of Appeals, Town Hall
September 6th Town Offices Closed for Labor Day Holiday
September 7, 7:00 PM, Town Council Meeting, Town Hall
September 13, 6:00 PM, Historic District Commission, Town Hall
September 14, 9:00 AM, Board of Appeals, Town Hall

September 16, 1:00 PM, Planning & Zoning Commission, Town Hall
September 27, 6:00 PM, Historic District Commission, Town Hall
September 28, 9:00 AM, Board of Appeals, Town Hall