

**Meeting Minutes**  
**State College Borough Council**  
**Friday, March 2, 2007**

The State College Borough Council met in a work session meeting on Friday, March 2, 2007, in the State College Municipal Building Council Chambers, 243 South Allen Street, State College, Pennsylvania. Mr. Welch called the meeting to order at 12:00 noon.

Present     Bill Welch, Mayor  
              Catherine G. Dauler, President of Council  
              Thomas E. Daubert  
              Elizabeth A. Goreham  
              Donald M. Hahn  
              Craig R. Humphrey  
              Jeffrey R. Kern  
Absent     Ronald L. Filippelli

Also present: Thomas J. Fountaine, II, Borough Manager; Thomas S. Kurtz, Assistant Manager; Thomas R. King, Chief of Police; Carl R. Hess, Community Development/Planning Director; Mark A. Whitfield, Director of Public Works; Lu B. Hoover, Planner; Etta E. Habegger, Grant Administrator; Sheila Lubold, Recording Secretary; members of the media; and other interested observers.

PUBLIC HOUR: There were no members of the public wishing to speak.

**CDBG Local Funding Process.** Mr. Fountaine explained the Community Development Block Grant Citizen's Advisory Committee has been discussing the human services funding process and how the funding should be allocated. Members of the planning staff along with Mark Bergstrom of the CDBG Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) attended the meeting to review the recommended process and answer Council's questions.

Mr. Hess reported the CAC agreed to continue with the same process as is currently being used but starting with the fiscal year 2008 the priorities would change to focus on support services that are only housing and housing-related in nature. Some of these services would include emergency shelter programs, transitional housing programs, homeless prevention services, group homes and nursing homes, and homeowner support services. Mr. Hess reiterated this is a recommendation being made to Council by the CAC.

Ms. Goreham questioned if any agencies that are currently being funded would now be excluded with these changes. Mr. Hess stated Centre Volunteers in Medicine would no longer be eligible for funding. Ms. Hoover added agencies such as the Community Help Center could still receive funding if they focus their attention towards homeless prevention and housing services.

Mr. Fountaine added the recommendation does not reflect the importance of the agencies, but is a result of the changes in federal regulations allowing for less total funding. He stated Council may want to consider starting a secondary process to support other agencies with local funding.

Ms. Dauler accepted the report on behalf of Council. Mr. Fountaine stated since Council had no objections to the policy, the CAC would make recommendations to award monies accordingly.

**National League of Cities Legislative Meeting.** Mr. Fountaine stated the National League of Cities Legislative Meeting will be taking place in Washington, D.C. in the coming weeks and members of Council will have the opportunity to visit with Representatives and Senators on Capitol Hill. Council was provided with a list of possible issues and concerns to be discussed at the NLC legislative session. Mr. Fountaine stated continued CDBG funding and the Fraser Centre are two local concerns with significant issues for discussion.

Council suggested the following items as other Legislative:

- Taxing alcohol by the drink at the state level
- Development of a verified voting paper trail at state and federal level
- Affordable housing funding at federal level
- Cable television franchising at federal level

Council agreed to limit the issues discussed to only three or four items and requested the appropriate material be prepared before leaving for Washington, D.C. so Council would have the opportunity to review the material.

**Affordable Housing.** Mr. Fountaine stated the planning staff was prepared to show Council a presentation on affordable housing prepared by the CBICC. Linda Marshall, Centre County's Housing Coordinator, and George Khoury, Chairperson of the Affordable Housing Coalition, also attended the meeting to talk with Council about affordable housing.

Mr. Hess presented an update to the presentation given last year regarding affordable housing. He reported the senior housing provided by the Borough at Bellaire Court and Arnold Addison Court has been very successful. The Borough has continued to assist middle income households with the first-time homebuyer program and the Community Housing Development Organizations

(CHDO). The Borough has also continued to aid the family rental housing sector with both Yorkshire Village Town homes and Waupelani Heights. The homeowner rehabilitation program has rehabbed 20 homes to date by assisting home owners who are unable to upgrade such things as roofs and disposing of lead based paint.

Mr. Hess stated the planning staff has submitted an application for a core communities grant, which is a statewide competitive program, to provide additional funding to middle incoming housing and should know the outcome by the end of March. The planning staff is also working to develop a rental rehabilitation program which would allow for homes to be rented at affordable prices.

Council congratulated the planning staff on the excellent work that has been done on all of these projects.

Council questioned if there is follow-up contact made with the home buyers. Mr. Hess stated contact is maintained with the owners to help ensure success for the home buyer.

Linda Marshall, Centre County's Housing Coordinator, reviewed with Council the County's Act 137 program. The program assists first time home buyers with the purchase of homes and also with budget counseling. The residents are monitored and must use the purchased home as their principal residence. Since 1996 the County has helped 20 households from the Borough and processed 265 loans county wide. The program also rehabs local homes with the assistance of Brownfields grants.

Ms. Marshall stated a study was done to prioritize the County's affordable housing needs. The study resulted in the development of a housing cabinet to advise the Housing Coordinator and make recommendations to the Board of Commissioners.

Ms. Marshall explained the cost of land in Centre County is a major roadblock for the program but the County has continued to work with developers and builders to design and develop a model for an affordable housing community. The County has also proposed developing a Centre County Housing Land Trust that would be better able to assist the entire community.

Council questioned how much money goes to the seller and to the land trust when a property is resold. Ms. Marshall explained this has not been an issue but is something that needs to be decided. She added there are also deed restrictions associated with these properties to control who lives in the properties and what the owners can do with the homes.

Ms. Marshall stated the proposed development on the Rockview prison tract on Shiloh Road would provide a sense of community but would not be a "cookie cutter" neighborhood. Council expressed concerns with the social status associated with concentrated low incoming housing and maintenance of the properties in the future.

Council questioned what representation from the Centre Region was included in the Housing Cabinet. Ms. Marshall stated commercial lenders, a member of a builders association and a member of affordable housing association as part of the Cabinet.

George Khoury, Chairperson of the Affordable Housing Coalition, explained the mission and development of the Housing Coalition. The coalition is a voluntary organization and the need for affordable housing became very evident with the closing of a local trailer park in 2003. The organization is community based and has focused on education and advocacy of affordable housing. The coalition hopes to develop a model strategy and "tool kit" to share with developers and other municipal officials to use in developing affordable housing communities and hopes to be a resource for the community.

Mr. Khoury added Penn State University is part of the coalition and they are using the program as an aid to recruit faculty. The healthcare community has also approached the coalition to help as a recruiting tool.

Mr. Khoury stated people are aware of the need for affordable housing and suggested the possibility of considering inclusionary zoning to help with the possible development of new housing.

Ms. Dauler stated she hoped all interested parties would read the Book, "Save Our Land, Save Our Town" by Thomas Hylton and keep an open mind to having varying ranges of income in one development.

There being no further items, the meeting adjourned at 1:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Cynthia S. Hanscom  
Assistant Borough Secretary