

The Easton Planning Commission met on Thursday, June 6, 2013 in the 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Council Chambers, Easton City Hall. The meeting was called to order at 6:35pm by Charles Elliott. Present: Charles Elliott, Ronald Shipman, Bonnie Winfield, William Heilman, and Robert Sun. Staff members Becky Bradley, Director of Planning & Codes; Brian Gish, Chief Planner; Carl Manges, City Planner; and Michael Handzo, Lehigh University Community Fellow were in attendance. Also in attendance was City Solicitor Joel Scheer.

Ms. Bradley indicated that Hubert Etchison of the College Hill Neighborhood Association (CHNA) requested that the CHNA presentation be delayed until he could arrive. The agenda was approved as amended.

Mr. Elliott noted several typographical changes in the minutes of the May 15, 2013 minutes. A motion to approve said minutes, including the changes, was made by Mr. Shipman, seconded by Ms. Winfield, approved by all.

**Privilege of the Floor.** None.

**Special Exception – 12 N. 7<sup>th</sup> Street.** Mr. Manges reported that the applicant, Ernesto Gomez, proposes to establish a C4 – Food Establishment (Grocery Store) use in the currently vacant one-story commercial building at 12 N 7th Street. This building is attached to the rear of the building at 701-703 Northampton Street. The previous use at this location consisted of a mini-mart store, and the building has been vacant since 2009. The property is located in the West Ward Zoning District, Block Class C, where the proposed Food Establishment (C4) is not permitted per Article XIV §595-75. However, the property is also located in the Street Corridor Enhancement Overlay District, where the Food Establishment (C4) use is permitted by Special Exception per Article XXIII §595-126.

A conversation with Mr. Gomez on May 23, 2013, revealed that he wants to establish a Grocery style store at 12 N 7th Street. The applicant and another person would be the only employees associated with this business. The hours of operation would be 7am – 8pm everyday. The applicant also indicated that there is no off-street parking provided at this location. The applicant believes most of the customers patronizing his store would be walk-ins from the neighborhood. According to the applicant, deliveries would be made in small trucks and delivery vans. There would be no tractor-trailer deliveries associated with this business. The applicant also indicated that this building is attached to the 701-703 Northampton Street building, but the buildings are not accessible to one another. Mr. Manges additionally noted that the establishment of a grocery store in the mixed-use residential/commercial building would be consistent with the goals and objectives of the Street Corridor Enhancement Overlay District, the 1997 Comprehensive Plan, and surrounding land uses. Therefore, Mr. Manges advocated that the Planning Commission recommend Special Exception approval, with conditions, to the Zoning Hearing Board. Following Mr. Manges' review, Mr. Shipman asked Mr. Manges to clarify the "additional comments and concerns of the Zoning Officer and Codes Department" listed in the resolution. Mr. Manges indicated that there were none at present, but this statement accounted for any future code concerns.

The applicant, Ernesto Gomez, was present. Mr. Sun asked him if he was the owner of the building, with Mr. Gomez responding that he was not. Mr. Elliott inquired if on-street parking was available directly in front of the building. Ms. Bradley and Mr. Manges indicated that, while parking was not available immediately in front of 12 N 7<sup>th</sup> Street, spaces were available up the street. Mr. Elliott additionally asked about the logistics of drop-offs and deliveries, with Ms. Bradley explaining that deliveries made to the front of the building, with trucks utilizing their four-way blinkers and parking as shortly as possible, would prove the most practical. Mr. Elliott inquired if there was a wiser delivery site that would avoid double-parking, but Ms. Bradley indicated that no other road providing access to the building would be wide enough to accommodate deliveries.

A motion to approve the resolution recommending to the Zoning Hearing Board that the Special Exception request be granted for the proposed Food Establishment use, with conditions, was made by Mr. Heilman, seconded by Mr. Shipman, and approved by all.

**Special Exception – 620 Lehigh Drive.** Mr. Manges explained that the applicant, Henry Rouhana, has proposed to establish an F1 – Trade Contractor use in a 2,500 square foot warehouse area in a one-story commercial building, located at 620 Lehigh Drive. This warehouse space would be used strictly for the staging and storing of materials used in the applicant’s remodeling business (Sure Fix Remodeling). On-site materials are proposed to consist of cabinets and countertops, plumbing fixtures, limited quantities of drywall, millwork/trim, windows, and doors. The materials would be purchased on a per-job basis, and not be stored in the warehouse for extended periods of time. Debris left over from jobs would be disposed of in a dumpster at the site. Company trucks would be parked over-night at the site within the gated area. Additionally, a small office will be in the building with a computer, printer, desk, and cabinets.

The property is located in the River Corridor and Other Green Areas Zoning District; Block Class A, where the proposed F1 – Trade Contractor use is not permitted per Article XVII §595-88, and the applicant is required to obtain a Use variance from the Zoning Hearing Board. The property is also located in the Flood Hazard Overlay District, requiring Special Exception approval for use in the floodplain. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Rate Map 42095C0287 D, 620 Lehigh Drive is located in a Federal Emergency Management Agency defined 100-year floodplain. When water levels reach Flood Action Stage of 16 feet, all vehicles, construction materials/equipment, all movable office furniture/equipment/fixtures would be relocated to the recovery site at 277 N. Main Street in Phillipsburg, NJ. The dumpster would be removed by Raritan Valley Disposal, and arrangements have been made in the case of a flood event. The applicant indicated that the evacuation procedure should not take more than 4-6 hours.

The applicant has provided additional information regarding measures to be taken in the event of a Flood Warning and/or Emergency Declaration. The site plan indicates that the ground floor of 620 Lehigh Drive is at an elevation of 190.14 feet, and according to the FEMA flood map, the base flood elevation is 195 feet. The applicant has indicated no hazardous materials of any kind will be stored at this site.

A conversation with the applicant May 29, 2013, revealed that materials used in his remodeling business would be stored on-site on a per-job basis, and will not be in the building for any extended periods of time. Currently, this business has 6 employees associated with it. The applicant also informed staff that the water levels of the Lehigh River would be constantly monitored on the National Weather Service website, and specific attention will be placed at the monitoring station where the Lehigh River intersects the Borough of Glendon. Mr. Manges further indicated that the proposed use was consistent with the goals and objectives of the River Corridor and Other Green Areas Zoning District, the 1997 Comprehensive Plan, and neighboring land uses. Therefore, Mr. Manges advocated that the Planning Commission recommend Special Exception approval, with conditions, to the Zoning Hearing Board.

The applicant, Henry Rouhana, was present. Mr. Shipman asked him if the address at 277 N. Main Street in Phillipsburg was another shop for his business. Mr. Rouhana clarified it was another property with the same owner.

A motion to approve the resolution recommending to the Zoning Hearing Board that the Special Exception request for a Trade Contractor Use in a Floodplain with conditions was made by Mr. Shipman, seconded by Mr. Heilman, and approved by all.

**Special Exception Request – 248 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> St (Mohican Building).** Mr. Gish explained that the applicant, Lafayette College, has proposed an (E1) Educational Services use at 248 North Third Street (Mohican Building). After renovation, the Mohican Building would house classrooms, media labs, studios, a rehearsal room, offices and other associated storage, flex space areas and restrooms. Work at the site would be predominantly to the building’s interior, with only minor exterior alterations. Proposed external alterations include utility work and sidewalk reconstruction along North Third Street, and a sidewalk pedestrian connection with adjacent parking to the south, adding only 160 square feet of impervious surface to the lot. The proposed use would ultimately be an element of the College’s Film and Media Studies (FAMS) Center.

The Zoning Administrator has determined that 248 North Third Street is located in the River Corridors and Other Green Areas Zoning District, where the proposed (E1) Educational Services use is not permitted per Article XVII. However, the property is also located in the Street Corridor Overlay District, where the use is permitted by Special Exception per §595-126A(22). Additionally, 248 North Third Street is located in a FEMA-Defined Floodway, requiring additional approval as a Special Exception per §595-143B(3). Also per the Zoning Administrator, the adjacent lot, owned by Lafayette College, provides sufficient parking for the proposed use.

Mr. Gish further mentioned that the use was consistent with the goals and objectives of the River Corridors and Other Green Areas Zoning District, the Street Corridor Enhancement Overlay District, the 1997 Comprehensive Plan, and neighboring land uses. He explained that the proposed (E1) Educational Services use is within a floodway, making it a matter of concern. The applicant has proposed measures and procedures to assure public safety and property in case of a flooding event.

The applicant has submitted a copy of the Lafayette College Incident Action Plan, specifically *Chapter 119.00 Severe Weather Conditions*. Under *Section 119.03 Flood Plan - Film and Media Studies (FAMS): Heavy Rain Storms*. The plan includes a phased response triggered by river stages measured at the United States Geologic Survey's (USGS) National Water Information System (NWS) Gauge for Easton/Phillipsburg, located at the center of the downstream side of the US Route 22 bridge over the Delaware River (USGS 01446995).

The applicant's engineer, David P. Calhoun, discussed flooding at the Mohican Building with staff on May 29, 2013. Mr. Calhoun confirmed a number of figures:

- The first floor elevation of the Mohican Building is certified to be 191.5 feet above sea level, as noted on plan sheets
- The base elevation of the referenced gauge is 155.43 feet above sea level
- At the Mohican Building, current flood evacuation procedure is:
  - 30-Foot Gauge Measurement
    - Lafayette College closes its facilities along North Third Street, evacuating all faculty, staff and students.
    - Lafayette College disconnects electric service to its facilities along North Third Street
    - North Third Street is shut down by the Easton Department of Public Works
    - Flood waters are roughly six feet below floor level in the Mohican Building (185.43 feet)
  - 34-Foot Gauge Measurement
    - An inspection of the Mohican building is conducted and storage is relocated as necessary
    - Flood waters are roughly two feet below floor level in the Mohican Building (189.43 feet)
  - 35-Foot Gauge Measurement
    - Contents are elevated or removed from the first floor
    - Flood waters are roughly one foot below floor level in the Mohican Building (190.43 feet)
- Current flood evacuation procedure leaves very little room for error

Mr. Gish additionally indicated that the status of various external reviews was satisfactory. He ultimately communicated staff advocacy for a Planning Commission recommendation to the Zoning Hearing Board for the granting of Special Exception requests by Lafayette College for an (E1) Educational Use and for a New Use in a Floodplain for the Mohican Building, located at 248 North Third Street with conditions.

A contingent from the applicant's project team was present, consisting of Mitch Wein and Bruce Feretti of Lafayette College, Chad Helmer of Taggart Associates, David Zaiser of KSS, and College counsel Danny Cohen. Mr. Scheer commended them for their commitment to the project.

Mr. Helmer noted that the HDC review, listed as not submitted in the staff analysis memo, had been completed in December 2012; City Council granted a Certificate of Appropriateness in January 2013. He additionally clarified that the flood contingency measures outlined in Section 119.03 of the Lafayette Incident Action Plan would be taken as soon as a particular maximum gauge measurement was

predicted, rather than when the reading was actually achieved. The College will make these clarifications, and re-submit the Incident Action Plan to the City. Mr. Gish reminded the Commission of the volatility and difficulty of flood predictions, and the possibility for slim margins of error.

Mr. Elliott highlighted the recommended condition that the College complete their emergency preparations and removal of first floor equipment from the building prior to the shutdown of electrical services on N. 3<sup>rd</sup> St, and asked the College if the condition would create any issues. Mr. Feretti indicated the College had successfully completed three (3) successful exercises, and that floodwaters usually rise at the rate of one (1) inch per hour. Ms. Bradley expressed her confidence in Lafayette's diligence in flood responses, based upon past events.

Mr. Heilman asked if the façade was finalized, and Mr. Sun requested to view the floor plans. Mr. Elliott inquired about the cause of the Chapter 105 encroachments permit review; Ms. Bradley described changes in Commonwealth law creating tighter regulations, and Mr. Gish mentioned utility changes and the concrete pad. Mr. Shipman requested more information on the concrete pad.

In response to these questions, Mr. Zaiser described the floor plan, which illustrated teaching spaces, media spaces, digital video editing spaces, a television studio, a rehearsal room for acting, faculty offices, and a mechanical mezzanine. Mr. Zaiser confirmed Mr. Elliott's inquiry that the mechanical equipment would be kept on the second floor. Mr. Sun asked if the design would place expensive equipment at risk, or if materials stored on the first floor could prove hazardous if not received in time. Mr. Zaiser and Planning staff confirmed that the College had protocols in place to mitigate these hazards.

Mr. Sun asked how many of the College's 109 available parking spaces would be utilized by the complex, with Mr. Zaiser indicating that only eight (8) staff would occupy the building, with none of them parking onsite. Mr. Sun asked if the complex would cause students to drive downtown, with Mr. Zaiser explaining that would not be allowed. Mr. Sun expressed that Planning staff and the College should reach an agreement concerning the use of density figures in parking requirements, with Ms. Bradley reporting that a formal zoning amendment was currently being drafted.

Mr. Elliott asked staff to confirm that the project was too small to warrant land development review, which they did. Ms. Winfield expressed a concern that access and egress to the onsite parking lot, via North Bank Street under the US-22 overpass, was dangerous. Ms. Bradley indicated the location in question was under Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission jurisdiction, and Mr. Elliott requested staff discuss their Snyder Street work with the Commission as soon as details become available.

A motion that the Easton Planning Commission recommend to the Easton Zoning Hearing Board the granting of Special Exceptions, with conditions, to Lafayette College for an Educational Services use and for a New Use in a Floodplain was made by Mr. Sun, and seconded by Mr. Heilman. Ms. Winfield abstained from the vote, and all other Commissioners approved the motion.

**Special Exception – 17-19 S 2<sup>nd</sup> St.** Mr. Gish explained that the applicant, Ken Janowicz of Mellow Lounge, LLC, has proposed opening a (C5) Eating & Drinking Establishment at 17-19 South Second Street. The applicant bills the proposed establishment as "a comfortable alternative nighttime destination," offering a variety of flavored tobacco and steam-based products consumed through a water pipe (hookah). In addition to the tobacco and vapor products, the applicant has proposed streamlined wireless service and serving pre-packaged food and drink upon opening, operating the business initially from only the 17 South Second Street portion of the property. The applicant intends to renovate the remaining portion of the business, 19 South Second Street, concurrently, eventually expanding to the full site, and offering light fare prepared in a kitchen contained within this second area of the business. Each addressed portion of the business is roughly 550 square feet, with a cumulative space of 1,100 square feet. Per a diagram submitted by the applicant, 17 South Second Street would contain 20 seats, and 19th South Second Street 17 seats, for a total of 37, though the applicant notes this is subject to change, pending furniture acquisition. The property is owned by Kerry Blum, and leased to Mellow Lounge, LLC. The applicant has proposed the following hours of operation:

Hours of Operation		Day
6:00 PM	- 10:00 PM	Sunday
6:00 PM	- 12:01 AM	Monday
6:00 PM	- 12:01 AM	Tuesday
6:00 PM	- 12:01 AM	Wednesday
7:00 PM	- 3:00 AM	Thursday
7:00 PM	- 3:00 AM	Friday
7:00 PM	- 3:00 AM	Saturday

The Zoning Administrator has determined proposed use, (C5) Eating & Drinking Establishment, is permitted By Right in the Downtown District per §595-108A(12). However, 17-19 South Second Street is located in a FEMA-Defined 500-Year Floodplain (X500), requiring additional approval as a Special Exception per §595-143B(3). The Zoning administrator has also determined that the proposed use would result in no increase in parking demand relative to the previous hair salon business operated from the site.

Mr. Gish highlighted potential incompatibilities between the proposed use and the intent of the residential goals of the Downtown Zoning District and the Comprehensive Plan. However, he indicated that the proposed use also met goals and objectives of the above documents. Mr. Gish further mentioned potential conflicts created with neighboring residential uses by the business' late operating hours; the 3:00 a.m. closing time could attract inebriated patrons to a neighborhood consisting largely of residences and low-impact businesses. Mr. Gish further explained the applicant's flood evacuation procedures, and indicated the applicant was in the process of seeking an Indoor Clean Air Act exemption from the PA Department of Health. He ultimately conveyed the staff recommendation that the Planning Commission seek further information from the applicant before reaching a decision.

Ken Janowicz, the applicant, was present, and invited questions from the Commission. Mr. Shipman and Mr. Sun inquired into the nature of his business, with Mr. Janowicz explaining he would sell a variety of steam-based tobacco products (hookah and electronic cigarettes) for on-and-off-premises consumption. He explained that such products produce vapors, but do not produce smoke as cigarettes and cigars do. Mr. Janowicz also explained that he would offer prepackaged snack foods, soda, and water. He suggested his intent was not to compete with existing Downtown bars and restaurants, but to offer their clientele a destination to visit afterward.

Mr. Shipman questioned the reasons behind the 3:00 a.m. weekend closing time. Mr. Janowicz indicated an interest in serving the nightlife crowd. Ms. Winfield expressed concerns that the 2:00 a.m. bar closing time generated loud noise, and asked Mr. Janowicz if his business would extend these conditions for an additional hour. Mr. Janowicz explained his business would provide a significantly more relaxed atmosphere than a nightclub; that there was nothing above his space; and that the building to the right closes at 8:00 p.m. Mr. Sun asked Mr. Janowicz if his business would generate loud music, with Mr. Janowicz explaining all music played or performed would be jazz or acoustic music.

Mr. Sun asked if Easton banned smoking in restaurants. Mr. Janowicz explained Health Administrator Ted Veresink would permit smoking in his business. Mr. Scheer indicated smoking was banned in Pennsylvania restaurants, with Mr. Gish clarifying that the Indoor Clean Air Act would allow Mr. Janowicz to allow smoking. Mr. Janowicz further indicated that, as more than 50% of his revenue would be generated by sales of tobacco rather than food and drink, the Commonwealth would consider his establishment a tobacco shop.

Mr. Janowicz distributed business cards to all present, identifying his establishment as "Bring Your Own Bottle" (BYOB). Mr. Sun asked Mr. Janowicz to confirm this was his intention, which he did. Mr. Gish told the Commission that the materials reviewed by Planning staff provided no indication of BYOB. Ms. Bradley indicated that, had staff known previously, they would have completed a more detailed review of potential noise generation. Mr. Scheer further indicated the potential adverse impacts created by extending drinking hours beyond 2:00 a.m. Mr. Sun asked Mr. Janowicz if he would accept a restriction

on BYOB activities as a condition for approval, which he did. Mr. Janowicz inquired if the condition could be lifted in the future; Mr. Elliott indicated this could possibly happen following further review.

Mr. Elliott asked staff if there was no specific category for tobacco shops in zoning ordinances, which Ms. Bradley confirmed. Mr. Elliott inquired about Mr. Janowicz' legal ability to sell tobacco for off-premises consumption, with Mr. Janowicz informing the Commission he was acquiring a cigarette dealer's license in the name of due diligence. Mr. Elliott also asked Mr. Janowicz to explain his ID procedures; Mr. Janowicz indicated that one of his business associates had previous experience with positive ID procedures.

Mr. Elliott asked how the City addresses restaurant-generated music and noise issues after midnight, with Ms. Bradley identifying that situation as a police matter. Mr. Shipman inquired about the number of residents on the block. Ms. Bradley suggested that the applicant's proposal could cause the greatest issue for residents in immediately adjacent units and nearby upper-floor apartments.

Mr. Elliott asked staff if the City had previously imposed Special Exception conditions concerning music and noise audibility beyond property lines. Ms. Bradley indicated that any use would be subject to City noise ordinances as a matter of course. She raised concerns about the appropriateness of the site for the proposed use, echoed by Mr. Gish. Ms. Bradley expressed additional concerns regarding the applicant's proposed BYOB status and the incompatibility of a smoking-related business with public health goals. Mr. Shipman provided his support for the business proposal, suggesting that individuals choosing a Downtown residence accept the 24-hour urban nature of the district.

Mr. Elliott noted that staff had prepared two draft resolutions: one for approval and one for denial of the Special Exception. He suggested the following conditions be added to the approval resolution: (1) a prohibition of alcohol consumption on the premises; (2) the applicant's business may not remain open past 2:00 a.m.; (3) the applicant must maintain a Clean Indoor Air Act exemption from the PA Department of Health; (4) the applicant must obtain a positive ID of all patrons to verify a minimum age of eighteen (18) years; (5) music and/or noise generated by the applicant's business may not be audible beyond property lines. Mr. Janowicz agreed to these conditions.

An amended motion that the Easton Planning Commission recommend to the Easton Zoning Hearing Board the granting of Special Exceptions, with conditions, to Mellow Lounge, LLC, for an Eating & Drinking Establishment Use in a Floodplain was made by Mr. Shipman, seconded by Mr. Heilman, and approved by all.

**College Hill Neighborhood Association request for Karl Stirner Arts Trail Extension/inclusion in Comprehensive Plan.** Ms. Bradley introduced Mr. Hubert Etchison and Mr. Philip Hart of the College Hill Neighborhood Association (CHNA), both of whom were in attendance. She indicated that Planning staff had met with Mr. Etchison and CHNA several weeks ago to discuss an effort to build a new fountain in Nevin Park, and to connect the park to the Karl Stirner Arts Trail (KSAT) by way of an extension.

Mr. Etchison offered a presentation on both projects. He explained that the restoration of the Nevin Park fountain would create a focal point for activity in the park, provide an inviting vista, and promote economic growth. He further suggested that the extension of KSAT to Nevin Park would place the fountain project within the broader context of the City's encouragement of arts and tourism. Mr. Etchison suggested two potential routes for the Trail: one for strong walkers and one for leisurely walkers.

Mr. Etchison indicated that the project's total budget was \$205,000, with the City providing two-for-one fund matching and in-kind donation. He explained that CHNA was targeting a \$90,000 grant, and would still have a need to raise \$18,305 beyond the grant. Mr. Etchison highlighted the importance of official Planning Commission support for the grant application process. He indicated that the proposed extensions were not in the City master plan for receiving funds, and that the new Comprehensive Plan would not be adopted until 2014 at the earliest. Consequently, Mr. Etchison requested letters of support for both the Nevin Park fountain project and the proposed KSAT extension.

Mr. Sun expressed concerns that the proposed KSAT extension could reduce the City's financial commitments to completing the current phase of the KSAT. Mr. Shipman highlighted the necessity of maintaining funds for current trail maintenance. Ms. Bradley responded to these concerns by explaining that the project was in accord with the Comprehensive Plan, parks plan, open space plan, and Lehigh Valley Greenways Initiative. She further indicated that the City needed to leave itself prepared for grant opportunities whenever they became available, to reduce the time between project conceptualization and planning for execution. Mr. Scheer indicated that the requested resolution simply provided support for the concept of the project, rather than offering any steadfast commitments to its completion.

Mr. Elliott asked if a Planning Commission resolution would provide the appropriate support for both projects, or if future letters of support were also necessary. Ms. Bradley responded that both would be necessary, as government grants require letters of support. Mr. Elliott consequently requested that the provision of letters of support be added into the resolution.

A resolution of support, with the amended provision for letters of support, was made by Mr. Shipman, seconded by Ms. Winfield, and approved by all.

**Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) Update.** Mr. Elliott reported that goats were being used for invasive plant maintenance in Hugh Moore Park. He indicated that the EAC had discussed the City's keeping-of-fowl ordinances, and EAC website improvements, at its most recent meeting.

**Comprehensive Plan Update.** Ms. Bradley indicated that the City had received a \$17,000 grant from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission to analyze and develop neighborhood conservation strategies for the Comprehensive Plan. She thanked Mr. Manges for his work on completing the application. Ms. Bradley additionally informed the Commission that a "virtual town hall" event organized by RenewLV was available on YouTube.

Mr. Handzo indicated that Planning staff had met with over 800 individuals to gather their input for the Comprehensive Plan Rewrite, and that he was currently organizing and analyzing this input. Ms. Bradley suggested that the Planning Commission schedule a working meeting to discuss this information, set Comprehensive Plan priorities, and determine appropriate RFPs to issue.

**Social Media Outreach.** Mr. Handzo briefly discussed the Department of Planning & Codes' usage of Facebook and Twitter to inform the public about the Comprehensive Plan Rewrite, Planning & Codes' activities, and the field of urban planning. He provided examples of the types of content shared on the two social media platforms, and encouraged the Planning Commissioners to publicize the Planning & Codes social media presence to associates and colleagues.

**Foreclosed and Blighted Property Registration Ordinance.** Ms. Bradley indicated that foreclosed properties were creating multiple maintenance issues for the City, with it often taking over a month to locate the bank in possession of a particular property. She explained that this new ordinance would require the owners of vacant and foreclosed properties in the City to register the properties, with contact information for a local property manager on file. The ordinance would also impose escalating yearly vacancy fees as a deterrent. It would not harm homeowners facing foreclosure, but would require banks to maintain properties. Mr. Shipman and Mr. Sun both expressed their support of the ordinance. Ms. Bradley also informed the Commission that a Saturday property maintenance inspection program had started, and would continue through September.

**Lehigh River Dam Removal Project.** Ms. Bradley indicated that a study advocating the removal of Chain Dam and Easton Dam on the Lehigh River, prepared by KCI Technologies for the Wildlands Conservancy, would come before City Council for discussion on July 10. Following this meeting, public comment would remain open for one week. She will email the study to the Commissioners for their review, and encouraged them to comment.

Ms. Bradley explained that dam removal advocates, consisting of the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission, DCNR, DEP, and the Wildlands Conservancy, had only met with like-minded groups, and

that Council will receive many expressions of support from dam removal advocates. However, she expressed that the study was overly myopic, exclusively considering fish passage at the expense of recreational, cultural, and historical effects of dam removal. She shared her perception that the dam removal coalition was not properly engaging the City.

**Keeping of Fowl.** Ms. Bradley informed the Commission that several citizens had requested that the City change its ordinances to allow the small-scale maintenance of chicken flocks on residential properties. She indicated that the Nurture Nature Center would host a public dialogue on the matter on August 8, and explained that the City administration was prepared to oppose such a change due to nuisance issues created by urban poultry flocks.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.