Borough of Kutztown  
Planning Commission  
Minutes of September 9, 2019

A regular meeting of the Planning Commission was held on Monday, September 9, 2019, at the Kutztown Municipal Building, 45 Railroad Street.

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM by Ms. Lisa Ladd-Kidder, Chairperson. Members present were: Ms. Lisa Ladd-Kidder, Mr. Tim Haring, Mr. Frederick Engelhardt, Mr. Joel Seidel, Mrs. Pat Snyder, Mr. Michael Blichar and Ms. Karen Feridun. Also present: Mr. James Schlegel, Mayor; Mr. Gabriel Khalife, Borough Manager; and Ms. Carolann Moody, Recording Secretary. Public Attendance: Sara Hailstone, Shannon Callnori and Jessica Dreistadt representing Hailstone Economics; Ms. Phila Back, Mr. Archie Follweiler, Ms. Jodi Follweiler, Mr. S. Jackson, Mr. Ken Beach, Mr. John Fry, and Mr. Kevin Snyder.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS
There were no public comments.

PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS
Ms. Ladd-Kidder mentioned that she had an informal meeting with Ms. Laura Sherrod, a professor of geology at Kutztown University, adding that her specialties are geology and hydrogeology. Ms. Ladd-Kidder stated that after Ms. Sherrod reviewed the packet of materials that Ms. Ladd-Kidder presented to her, Mr. Sherrod recommended that, “whatever protection the Borough has in place should be fought for to keep them in place.” Ms. Ladd-Kidder mentioned that she presented that information to the Water/Wastewater Committee along with a memo that she prepared in response to their request adding that there was no action taken at the meeting. Ms. Ladd-Kidder mentioned that Planning Commission members will be able to discuss this further at the October meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
The July 8, 2019 Planning Commission minutes were reviewed by members. Motion by Mr. Haring and seconded by Mr. Blichar to approve the July 8, 2019 minutes as written. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS
● Review of Zoning Hearing Board Application for 363 East Main Street
Ms. Ladd-Kidder opened the discussion regarding Zoning Appeal No. Z-19-01 for 361-363 East Main Street. Planning Commission members reviewed and discussed the submitted permit application for the proposed change-of-use from retail to retail/food service including the requested Variances from Sections 225-29.A “Parking and truck loading/unloading requirements; Off-street parking” and 225-39 “Nonconforming parking requirements”, and a Special Exception from Section 225-38.B “Nonconforming uses of structures or buildings; Change of use” of the Kutztown Code.

Following a lengthy discussion, Planning Commission members were in favor of the Zoning Hearing Board approving the Variances that Ms. Follweiler is requesting. Ms. Ladd-Kidder recommended and all Planning Commission members were in agreement that Ms. Follweiler should speak with the neighbors.
and present documentation and/or have them attend the Zoning Hearing Board meeting on October 15, 2019 showing support for the Special Exception needed for the proposed business.

- **Discussion Session with Consultants from Hailstone Economics on Different Task Force Issues Concerning Business District and Rental Housing Situation**

Planning Commission members introduced themselves to representatives of Hailstone Economics. Ms. Ladd-Kidder opened the discussion by asking which areas of the business district are included in their study area/RFP. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the study area, which used to be called the Main Street Program, the Zoning Districts that are included in the study area, adding that the primary focus is along Main Street.

Ms. Callnori stated that they are in the process of studying the ordinances and are not ready at this point to make any recommendations or discussing any overlay districts. Mr. Engelhardt mentioned that the study area stops short of the former Bieber Bus property and recommended that property be included in the study area as well. Ms. Callnori stated that they did walk by the former Bieber Bus property today. Ms. Ladd-Kidder mentioned a few properties that she as well as others thought should be addressed and Mr. Khalife stated that because of the resources available, there are only so many areas they will be able to study.

Ms. Ladd-Kidder mentioned a few items that she feels should be addressed that would be beneficial to the town regarding housing are how to protect what are currently single family homes, having more options for diverse populations such as seniors and people who are not students and turning some of the current rentals back into single family homes. She added that addressing parking would be beneficial and suggested making the alleys in the West Main Street business district one-way so that parallel parking would be available. She also suggested, after calculating the number of parking spaces, taking away the parallel parking spaces on one side of West Main Street, turning them into diagonal parking and therefore allowing for a wider lane of travel.

Following a lengthy discussion regarding ordinances, State building code, local building code, property maintenance code, commercial code, including when it is necessary to obtain a permit, Ms. Callnori mentioned that Hailstone Economics will review Kutztown ordinances and codes and make recommendations to assist so that rental housing and helping businesses thrive.

Ms. Ladd-Kidder stated that things needed to make Kutztown more comfortable and more accessible are more benches, public bathrooms, water fountains, bike racks and hitching posts. Following a brief discussion, Mr. Seidel mentioned that construction on the pocket park by Hive will be starting either this week or next.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding trash and student rental inspections, limiting new student housing, at what capacity are the area student complexes, the Kutztown Plan survey and dates of the community meetings. Ms. Callnori stated that the official launch for the survey is Wednesday, September 11, 2019, adding that the survey can be found at kutztownplan.com. The survey will be posted on the Borough website and the task force will work with Hailstone Economics on getting the word out about the survey. She added that there will also be two community meetings with the first one being on September 25th at 7:00. The location will be decided within the next 24 hours.
OLD BUSINESS/UPDATES
There was no old business_updates to discuss.

OFF AGENDA
There was nothing to discuss off agenda.

ADJOURNMENT
With no further business to discuss a motion was made by Mr. Blichar and seconded by Ms. Feridun to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 8:26 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ms. Carolann Moody
Recording Secretary