

Warren County Commissioners Public Hearing
September 22, 2021 12:02 p.m.
Jackson Courtroom

Commissioner Benjamin Kafferlin called the meeting of the Warren County Commissioners Public Hearing to order with Commissioner Tricia Durbin and Commissioner Jeff Eggleston present.

Staff Present: Pamela Matve, Chief Clerk, Lisa Hagberg, Finance Director, Attorney Nathaniel Schmidt, Lorri Dunlap, Grants Administrator, Michael Lyon, Zoning Officer, Lisa Rivett, Director of Elections, and Warden Jon Collins

Citizens Present: Josh Cotton (WTO), Andy Close (Titusville Herald), Beth Christensen, Scott Blume, Lee Borger, Tom Eaton Sr., Tom Eaton Jr., and Brianna Powers

Commissioner Benjamin Kafferlin called the meeting to order stating that the meeting is being recorded.

Commissioner Benjamin Kafferlin stated that we are here today to discuss the rezoning of 100 N. Main St. in Clarendon which is the former Allegheny Elementary School. He then turned the hearing over to Michael Lyon, Zoning Officer.

Michael stated that this parcel is 15.2 acres that is currently zoned as R-1 Residential and the owners are asking that it be rezoned to BT Business Transitional. Michael stated that Tom Eaton is here today to speak on their behalf as owners of the property.

Tom Eaton gave a presentation on the building along with the floor plans. He went onto state that the 31,000 sq. ft. that you cannot see from the road will be the location of a 32-bed veteran's shelter.

Currently the YMCA is using the gymnasium, and the Borough has moved their offices into the building. Phase Interest Income would create the Allegheny Veteran's Center. He then gave some statistics on the veterans, and then stated that the Veteran's Association is on board with this project. This would be a transitional shelter for those coming out of rehab or the hospital and they need a place to continue to recover.

Tom Eaton stated that they have spoken with Delores Stec, Acting Director of Veteran's Affairs, and told her they would provide an office space for her to meeting with the veteran's once a week or when necessary.

Commissioner Tricia Durbin asked, even if you didn't put the shelter in would it still need to be rezoned. Michael Lyon and Tom Eaton both stated yes. Michael went onto state that R1 is very limited on the uses, and this building would deteriorate. With a BT zoned area there are so many more things that the property can be used for.

Michael went on to state that the postings were done, and letters to the surrounding property owners were sent out. He stated that he did receive some phone calls; some were in favor of the rezoning, and others had concerns about the homeless shelter going in and the kids in the neighborhood.

Tom Eaton stated that there is a divider up and that section of the building is self-contained, it has its own entrance etc. It cannot be accessed by the entrance that is used for the Borough Offices or the YMCA.

Commissioner Benjamin Kafferlin stated that while he appreciates the presentation and the information from Mr. Eaton, we are not approving the use, we are approving the rezoning of the area.

Michael Lyon stated that this has gone before the Planning Commission, and they recommended that this goes before the Commissioners for approval.

The public hearing was then opened for public comment.

Beth Christensen stated that she lives next door and has some concerns. She went on to state that she is very uncomfortable with the homeless shelter going in; they are drug users and alcoholics. How will they interact with the community? Clarendon is getting more and more children into the community. She stated that she has spoken to several people that live on Main St., some are ok with this, and others don't want to say anything as they feel it will not help anyway, but they do not want it.

Beth went on to state how the Eaton's have harassed her and her husband on several occasions. She also stated that they move their equipment up behind the school, but since this project started, they have moved it off the lot as it was illegal.

Beth wants to make sure the harassment stops, and then went on to state that when the School District sold them this land, there were stipulations that there would be no drug or alcohol use in the building.

Mr. Scott Blume provided the Commissioners with a packet of information for review before the meeting. He stated some statistics on homeless veterans and he feels this is not necessary.

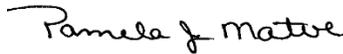
Scott went on to say that all the work that is being done on that building is being done by ICM Construction, a company owned by the mayor; it is not being bid out. He went on to state that as far as harassment, he parked his car on the loop one time and it was vandalized. They are not good neighbors. He then stated he is not in favor of having this property rezoned.

Commissioner Benjamin Kafferlin asked if this approved would it be the building or the entire parcel. Michael Lyon stated it would be the entire parcel. He went onto state that yes, there were conditions placed when the property was sold; it could not be used for a school, and 10% of the building was to be used for public use, and the Borough has to maintain the building.

Thomas Eaton Sr. stated that he is a 65-year veteran and he lives around the property and is he is in favor.

With nothing further, this public hearing was closed at 12:35.

Respectfully submitted,



Pamela J. Matve
Chief Clerk



Approved:



Jeff Eggleston
Warren County Commissioner