

CITY OF MCKEESPORT
WORKSHOP MEETING

WEDNESDAY

6:30 P.M.

MAY 5, 2021

The Work Session portion of the Council Meeting was called to order on the above-stated date by President of Council Richard Dellapenna.

Secretary James read the following proposed Bills:

Bill #24 - Introduced by Tim Brown – A Resolution of the City of McKeesport, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Approving a Reverse Subdivision Request from Michael & Nicole Cherepko, 711 East Street, McKeesport, PA 15132, to Combine Lot & Blocks 461-E-143 and 461-E-155. The Combined Parcel will Become 461-E-143. The Property Exists in a R-2 Zoning District.

Mayor Cherepko said for the sake of all transparency, this is my home where I reside. I own a piece of property next to my existing property and this is a reverse subdivision to combine two lots into one lot.

President Dellapenna asked for questions or comments and there were none.

Bill #25 –Introduced by Jim Barry – A Resolution of the City of McKeesport, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Approving a Reverse Subdivision Request from Michael & Nicole Cherepko, 711 East Street, McKeesport, PA 15132, to Combine Lot & Blocks 461-A-256 and 461-A-258. The Combined Parcel will Become 461-A-256. The Property Exists in a R-2 Zoning District.

Mayor Cherepko said this is the other house that I own. Yes, I have two different properties that my wife and I own in the City of McKeesport. For the sake of all transparency for anyone that may be listening and thinking I own a bunch, this is it and this is the same thing. It's taking two parcels and combining them into one and I will not be owning this property probably we are planning to sell it within the next thirty (30) days or so.

President Dellapenna asked for questions or comments and there were none.

Bill #26 –Introduced by Jill Lape – A Resolution of the City of McKeesport, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Approving a Conditional Use Request from Ekeyma Ebony Levy, 902 South Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15221, to Operate a Coffee/Tea Shop Located at 322 5th Avenue (Lot & Block 380-E-10), McKeesport, PA 15132. The Property Exists in a C-2 Zoning District.

Mayor Cherepko said this is the Executive Building. This is one of the tenants that will be opening up there, a coffee shop/tea shop, some other little, I think smoothies as well. So, we are excited to welcome a new business to town. The conditions on a building like that, being that it's a store front weren't much, it was just basic type things of can't keep your garbage out front; must be in the back; you need to have a sign; and things like that, there were only 3 or 4 basic conditions. So, obviously it was recommended for our approval.

Bill #27– Introduced by Brian Evans – A Resolution of the City of McKeesport, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Approving and Authorizing the Filing of the Fiscal Year 2021 Annual Action Plan for Funding Known as B-21-MC-42-0106 Under Title I of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (Public Law 93-383) As Amended.

Mayor Cherepko said this is our CDBG Budget for next year. That's what we mean when we talk about the plan. It was \$1,064,467.00 allotment that was our yearly allotment. Some of the highlights, I will just read them all, pretty much how it's broken down: rodent control and wild-life pest control -we have \$16,800 budgeted; demolition – we have a little over a quarter of a million dollars budgeted \$255,472; Code Enforcement \$100,000; street improvements, paving and things like that \$275,000; we take our street paver lease, we did purchase a new street paver last year, we got a great machine that helps us be much more efficient and it does a much better job with the roads, there's a \$40,000 payment that comes out, this is year 2 of that payment; community policing we have \$100,000 that gets allocated out of that funding for that; fair housing there's a \$3,000 expense out of that particular budget; administration and community development \$209,893 that's just costs and things throughout the office in addition to a couple salaries; fire equipment \$48,624, that's contractual we are going to be purchasing turn-out gear that's their equipment we need to purchase so many sets every other year, every 2 years so we are going to allocate that out

of CD; and a fire truck, a utility truck that we are purchasing, it's a lease, we call it a lease, it's a 5 year lease but it will be \$15,000 a year with a dollar buy-out at the end so \$15,000 will be allocated out of that, so we have another equipment truck to help with the different equipment that we have throughout the Fire Department to answer calls, that's not a big fire truck, it's more like a pick-up truck, utility style type truck. That's pretty much how our CDBG Budget breaks down. It's pretty much the same every year it just varies with what we can get into demolition, what we can get in for policing, not policing, paving and demolition, so that's where we are at for Fiscal Year 2021.

President Dellapenna said thank you Mayor. Any questions regarding Bill 27? There were none.

Bill #28 –Introduced by Luethel Nesbit – A Resolution of the City of McKeesport, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Authorizing the Proper City Officials to Request Funding Through the Allegheny County Economic Development Department for Act 152 Funds for the McKeesport Rising: Cultural and Educational Sector Enhancement Project.

Mayor Cherepko said I think you remember earlier, or, I don't know, time flies, last year sometime or not long ago, the County announced that they were adding a fee onto real estate transfers and that additional whatever it was they put on there was going to break down to help demolition projects throughout Allegheny County. This will be the first batch that we are applying for. We are turning into a development project. We didn't want to just do random demolitions with it. Obviously, the Cultural and Educational Sector, this administration, this Council, has put a lot of resources into that Section. That's the section of the City where the library and Little Theatre and state of the art educational facility with Twin Rivers and McKeesport Presbyterian, First United Methodist Church as well. This is to extend it a little bit and that's what we call enhancement. The developer, Brandon Kucich, is now approved for funding to pretty much get the Centennial Facility open for senior housing and what this particular funding is going to do is going to be to clean up all that area. So, all the vacant houses that are around the Centennial Building, we want to make sure that we clean up that area to help with that development. As we continue to move forward and expand on the cultural and educational section, I think it's important for us to build around our

assets and I think you know with the dire need and demand for senior housing in our City I think it's good to help support the project and make sure that seniors that do move in there feel safe and don't have to look at blight. As we encourage any developer, we try to help any way we can. If anyone is going to come in and put significant amount of money into any project, we want to try to support them and this is one way we can support them for sure. This will not be our only paving project, or our only demolition project this year. We will be coming to Council probably next month with another one down off Walnut Street. It will run pretty much from 9th Street to 13th and we want to get all that property ready for development. We will see how money can be spent when we do get the money from the American Rescue Plan. We will see. It might not be able to go directly for demolition but if there's ways that we can help fund expenses through Police and through Fire that we are already paying, then that would help us have additional resources to go and do more paving projects and more demolition which are much-needed infrastructure projects. Now, infrastructure is part of it as well I don't know exactly what that means, it might mean water lines, sewage lines, and you know, we are still waiting to get more details on how that can be done but we will continue to move forward with demolition but this is more than just demolition it's to enhance that entire area. This is development. You know, you are going to be building hopefully another house this year and I know Luethel and her help with Action Housing we built the first house up across from Twin Rivers. We secured funding through this Council through a couple Motions of shuffling some money around a few meetings ago and we are excited to be able to say we are going to be building a new home. Another new home up there. In addition to rehabbing homes and helping current homeowners who can't afford it and are on fixed incomes to rehab their own homes. So, there's a lot of good things going on in that particular area. You know I always look at all of McKeesport for that matter but I know time flies but it doesn't seem all that long ago when many people questioned why would build a school in that area. So, when I think of Hope, which is one of our messages in our community message, when I think of Hope I think a neighborhood that many had written off and I think you see some good things going on now and it's the same concept of not just bringing that neighborhood back but as we continue to move all of McKeesport forward you do it one block at a time, one neighborhood at a time and until we continue to move our entire City.

President Dellapenna said thank you and asked for any questions or comments and there were none.

Bill #29 – Introduced by Tim Brown – A Resolution of the City of McKeesport, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Authorizing the Demolition of Certain Deteriorated Properties in the City of McKeesport, Pursuant to Ordinance #2253, Series 1962, Section 5 for the McKeesport Rising: Cultural and Educational Sector Enhancement Project.

Mayor Cherepko said this is now the demolition for them. One's applying for funding and these are all the demolition. This one is actually to tear them down, to authorize the demolition. The other one is to apply for funding.

President Dellapenna asked for any questions and there were none.

Bill #30 – Introduced by Jim Barry – A Resolution of the City of McKeesport, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania Authorizing the Proper City Officials to Enter into an Agreement with Environmental Planning & Design, LLC, in the Amount of Eighty Thousand Five Hundred (\$80,500) Dollars for a Twelve (12) Month Study of Public Access to McKeesport Walking and Bicycle Trails.

Mayor Cherepko asked, Jen, this covers all costs, there are no additional costs through the plans? Mayor Cherepko said I know I talked to Luethel earlier and we wanted to verify that. I will let Tommy talk about this a little bit. He took the lead on this but this just goes with that Grant that we received a few months back, the \$80,000 Grant in order to help connect the Trail, help connect the neighborhoods to the Park and these were the three proposals and Tommy took the lead on that.

Tom Maglicco said our Planning Committee reviewed and selected Environmental Planning & Design to engage in a planning study. This study will identify the potential to provide safe pedestrian bicycle access to existing recreational and mobility trails for users of all ages and abilities. It's basically linking Renzie Park and our Gap Trails to our neighborhoods.

Mayor Cherepko said, the one that they picked, Environmental Planning & Design, we've worked with them before. I don't know if some of you recall. That was the group that helped us with our comprehensive plan a few years back. They are the ones that helped with all the zoning, got out into the neighborhoods a little bit. So, I am very happy with that choice. I think it's; they are more familiar. Well, we

know how they work so I think that goes a long way. They are familiar with McKeesport and they've been there by our side for a couple other things, especially the zoning issues. I don't know if you saw that in the proposal but they've really helped to come testify when some different entities were challenging our zoning and so I am very happy with that choice so hopefully you guys are ok with the recommendation. That's one of those ones that you say this is what we have for as far as the bid goes. They knew what we were working with and it wasn't one where they just give an amount of money. It's like the fireworks that we say we have \$10,000 for the show what are you going to give us so it's the same type of thing.

President Dellapenna asked for questions and there were none.

President Dellapenna said at the time of the regular meeting we will need to have a Motion to Amend the Agenda and add Bill 31.

Bill #31– Introduced by Keith Soles – An Ordinance of the City of McKeesport, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania Authorizing the Proper City Officials to Execute all Documents Necessary to Grant an Easement to Peoples Natural Gas Company for the Construction of a New Regulator Station on Wainwright Avenue in Haler Heights.

Mayor Cherepko said you passed this last month but they came up with slightly different dimensions and location. But, if you are going up to Haler Heights, you are coming down Marshall past Councilman Barry's house if you start coming up to where it goes to a "Y" and you could go left on Wainwright or stay on Marshall and go to the right, before you get onto Wainwright there's that left like behind that guardrail area where a lot of people put signs. You probably see some signs. That's pretty much where it will be. It will be fenced in so it won't be an eyesore at any point. That was my big concern when we talked with them and they promised us it will be nice and neat and it's going to be brand new which will help as well. It's a little, the facility ends up being a little larger than what it initially was so we just want to make sure we ran everything through the proper way.

Councilman Barry said I've read the size, it's 10x25, that's pretty big. It's a lot bigger.

Mayor Cherepko said not the building that's the fenced in area. So, it's going to, the fenced in area is going to look like a single, the size of a single car garage for the most part.

President Dellapenna asked for any other questions on Bill 31.

President Dellapenna called for Council Reports.

Council Reports

Mrs. Nesbit – I don't have anything at this time.

Mr. Evans – nothing.

Mr. Barry – nothing.

Mr. Soles – nothing.

Mr. Brown – nothing Mr. President, Sir.

Mrs. Lape – nothing.

President Dellapenna said the only thing I have is I've been receiving calls from Eaton Street, folks up on Eaton Street. There's an alley I guess behind 1809 Eaton Street that's basically a dead end and cars are parking back there. They were wondering if there is any chance of getting a no parking sign back there because they can't swing out of their garages to get out of there.

Mayor Cherepko said yea, we can look at it. I will have to go up and look at it.

President Dellapenna said also just the abandoned vehicles up in that neighborhood.

Mayor Cherepko said we are out "orange tagging" so we can get them. I know C&D took a lot of cars over this past week so yea, if they are up there, we will get them. That's pretty much what we do every Spring. It's almost like Spring cleanup. You know, lets get these cars that aren't registered and have proper tags and things so we can definitely get them up in that area.

President Dellapenna said thank you Mayor and asked Mayor Cherepko for his Mayor Report.

Mayor Cherepko said I'll just wait til the meeting because I am really not saying anything, but we could be talking, just to give you guys an update.

President Dellapenna asked do you want me to adjourn?

Mayor Cherepko said no, I will keep it going. I will just chat a little bit on the record.

Mayor Cherepko said next Wednesday night at 6:00 p.m. out at Sulfur Springs Baseball Fields we will be having a service to celebrate the life of Councilperson and your colleague, Jamie Brewster-Filotei. We will be renaming the Baseball Field after Jamie. That was one of the fields that was built back under Mayor Brewster when he was sitting in this seat and it was a field that we really never gave a name to. We just called it Sulfur Springs so obviously we know what Jamie meant to this community; we know her extreme commitment to our youth, professionally and we know her as an athlete as well from her involvement and knowledge, whether it's coaching with kids or whether it was playing as an athlete who received a basketball scholarship and things and we all thought it was the perfect opportunity to remember Jamie and next Wednesday will be one year that she passed away. So, I ask all of Council and anyone else that would like to be there to make sure they are there next Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. at Sulfur Springs Baseball Field. That will be the last time I call it Sulfur Springs once we dedicate it. So, as sad as it is it's a good thing. You know I think, that's what I keep telling myself, we have to remember it's a celebration, we are celebrating for what all of her incredible accomplishments throughout her life and how critical and the impact that she had on each and everyone of those lives that she touched, from children to adults to just the person she was. So, it's going to be a celebration, I am sure it will be a little tears as well but we are going to be there to celebrate her life and what she meant and she will never be forgotten and I think this is just one small way for people to remember her even after we are all long gone and leave this world just as we look at so many of our ballparks around and other things that are named after I couldn't see anything more fitting than to take an opportunity for a ball field that is not named after anyone at this time. So, that will once again be next Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. and it would be nice to see Jason Togyer of Tube City and Mon Valley Independent as well there to cover

it because obviously she is so extremely deserving and this is just the least of what we can do for her.

Good Neighbor Day is Wednesday, June 16th downtown McKeesport. The rain day will be the very next day, Thursday. So, if you have a chance to get to Good Neighbor Day. We will announce that again next month.

You may have been out Renzie and see the walking trail is under construction. It would have probably been done but of course we are getting pounded with all this rain and without question it's hindering the progress on that project. It's going to be exciting; people are already talking about the 6' width and things like that. It will be another tremendous asset; well it is already such an asset to Renzie Park and brings so many people from all over. It's going to be nice to upgrade that.

June 12th, we will announce in June as well, but June 12th is the Fishing Derby for the kids. So, we will remind everyone at next month's meeting.

I was going to mention something else.

Good Neighbor Day, the vendors can register we have forms for that.

With the announcement of, I think last month we talked about we have full intentions on doing all of our events this Summer, I think with the announcement of Governor Wolf I think that pretty much solidifies that if you ask me. I know as of May 30th pretty much the only restriction is going to be wearing a mask, everything is going to be open to full capacity with no restrictions so there will be no reason not to run International Village in the normal way and the normal Rib Feast, Concerts in the Parks and those types of things. Obviously, we will ask for people to wear masks. Obviously, the CDC says if you are in a room right and everyone is vaccinated there is no need to wear a mask. But you can't count on that when you are in the general public so we will try to make sure that people have masks at the events.

Other than that, Mr. President, I won't have to speak at the regular meeting so that's good.

President Dellapenna said thank you Mayor.

ADJOURNMENT:

President Dellapenna said that concludes the Work Session portion of the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette James
City Clerk and Clerk of Council

APPROVED:

Richard Dellapenna
President of Council

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