

CITY OF MCKEESPORT
WORKSHOP MEETING

MONDAY

6:30 P.M.

FEBRUARY 2, 2022

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 #3 - Introduced by Brian Evans – A Resolution of the City of McKeesport, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Approving a Reverse Subdivision Request of from Frank Ruccio to Combine 463-K-134 and Part of Parcel 463-K-123. The Property Exists in a R-1 Zoning District.

Mayor Cherepko said this is our typical example of the VPRC Program working, the Vacant Property Review Committee, this was a house that was torn down years ago, it was purchased a few years ago through our VPRC Program and this request is now just taking the two separate parcels and combine them into one. As we all know, according to Code, if you want to build onto a vacant lot, a fence, anything, it needs to be one parcel, so that's what this particular resident is asking.

President Dellapenna asked for questions and there were none.

Bill #4 –Introduced by LuEthel Nesbit – A Resolution of the City of McKeesport, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Declaring Certain Properties to be Blighted, Public Nuisances Pursuant to Ordinance #2253, Series 1962, Section 5. Said Properties were Discussed at a Public Hearing held January 26, 2022.

Mayor Cherepko said you are going to be seeing a lot of these in the upcoming months. As we said, we plan on being aggressive with the McKeesport Rising Project. We are looking to take down 300-400 homes, get them at least in the hands of contractors this year. So, this is just condemning the houses, officially condemnation to consider them blighted. I will be coming to you with others as well. We are doing a lot of different contracts will be coming up. We have some that were already condemned and we have others that we are in the process of Public Hearing. We have others we are going to cite through court. So we are

going to use all the resources available to us to be able to move onto the next step.

Solicitor Elash said there's a typo in the list of properties. The correct list of properties was handed out to everybody in the attachment. Those are actually VPRC properties that were declared blighted through VPRC.

Mayor Cherepko said oh, I apologize, we had a different hearing this morning.

Solicitor Elash said yes, we are doing these at warp speed here, demolition hearings and VPRC hearings.

Mayor Cherepko said these are properties that we considered blighted and a nuisance for VPRC. I will say, the question comes up often about just tearing down houses and eliminating blight, several of these homes, several of the properties on this list actually have homes. So, as we said, if we can save a home and get it on the tax rolls and someone wants to VPRC a property, as long as they are in good-standing with the City, they don't have back taxes, they don't have any other blighted structures and things like that, they are eligible to VPRC a home. Obviously, the process takes about a year but that's what these ones were. I apologize, we had a whole different hearing yesterday and today, just everything is mixing together. But, I think this is an example, I don't know what percentage actually have homes on them but there's a good bit which actually have homes on them which is good. So, not only do we get to keep those on the tax rolls if someone comes in and fixes them up, but also, it's 7-10 to 12 thousand dollars that we as a City don't have to pay to demolish them either.

President Dellapenna asked if anyone had questions and there were none.

Bill #5 –Introduced by Timothy Brown – A Resolution of the City of McKeesport, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Amending the Physical Year 2019 CDBG Program.

Mayor Cherepko said this CDBG money was part of the original CARES money that was given early in the Pandemic. It was given with lots of restrictions to the point to this day we really haven't spent any of it. This is not the American Rescue Plan money. This is the CARES funding and what we are looking to do on this is part of the money was going for, part of its CDBG and the other is CARES. We were using it to try to get small businesses to qualify through income to be eligible for grants. To this date, we have yet to have anyone fall into compliance to be able to use it,

to meet the guidelines. We are continuing to find people but this is going to be a reallocation of money. One of the things that we can use, as we all know, this City came together as a community, when we lost the Boys & Girls Club. We were able to secure that facility from the Boys & Girls Club of Western Pennsylvania and we want to preserve this asset, keep this asset in our community, so there are some improvements to that building that will be able to be utilized through this programming, already approved through HUD. If Mr. Tedesco is here, but he's not, some of these funds will be allocated there. I probably won't utilize all of them but whatever is not utilized to make sure we preserve this building it will help the LaRosa Youth Foundation really not have anything to worry about for quite some time. I think this will address some of the odds and ends that are out there. As I said, at this time, I want to thank Senator Brewster and Representative Austin Davis, because if it weren't for their help, I could tell you that building would not be in our hands. We would have a facility that is not down in that particular area servicing approximately 75-100 kids a day, even more come and go in different programming and things that they have. But it was true, you talk about working together, it was a joint effort from day one and they pushed and we were able to secure it and I think it is very important to make sure the last things we want to see is this community lose that. The biggest fear of getting that building for me personally as Mayor was if we are able to secure these facilities and not be able to sustain funding to operate programming to service the kids in this community that's always been my biggest fear when we took this endeavor on. So, I think with us having funding that actually will work for that particular use I think goes a long way for us to make sure the funding is available for the programming. As with anybody in here that's any part of any group organization, anybody can have something go wrong with a building, HVAC, things like that and then you have to find the money for it. So, we are hoping to really be able to put the building in a position to where we won't have to go searching any funding for quite some time, at least for those types of uses. So, like I said, whatever is not utilized we will be able to pull back and being that it seems to be they are not allowed to use this for programming, they are not allowed to use this for anything like that, it's strictly for infrastructure improvements. So, it's anyone that actually has a facility that can use some help. So, whatever money is available after this particular program is done and bids go out, we are probably going to look to find, I hate to make that announcement

publicly because we will have everyone lined up, but if there is anyone with facilities that may be can utilize some help we are going to look for some other non-profits that are out there that actually have facilities to be able to utilize these funds as well.

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

Bill #6 –Introduced by Jill Lape – An Ordinance of the City of McKeesport, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Approving the Editing and Inclusion of Certain Ordinances as Parts of the Various Component Codes of the Codified Ordinances of McKeesport, Pennsylvania.

Mayor Cherepko said this is just your typical updates to the Codes, Jason? Solicitor Elash said yes, all the Ordinances that were passed last year that affect various sets of laws. It puts them into the Code and puts them into the Index.

President Dellapenna said thank you Solicitor and asked for questions but there were none.

President Dellapenna then asked for Council Reports.

Council Reports

Mrs. Nesbit – I just wanted to make people aware that the emergency heating program is still in existence and if you know of anybody that has lost their heat from their furnaces, LIHEAP is still operating as long as you meet the income guidelines and weatherization is still going strong for people to get their homes weatherized. Once again you have to meet the income guidelines but there is more than enough money to do the Mon Valley Area and also there's an emergency clean and tune program which will just come out and check their furnaces and make sure they are operating efficiently and if not repair or replace them.

President Dellapenna said thank you.

Mr. Evans – nothing.

Mr. Barry – nothing.

Mr. Soles – nothing at this time.

Mr. Brown – nothing Mr. President Sir.

Ms. Lape – nothing.

President Dellapenna said that concludes the Work Session unless Mayor you want to speak.

Mayor Cherepko said no, I would like to conclude this meeting and I am going to need everyone in the back for personnel.

portion of the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

President Dellapenna said thank you. 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

/das