

January 22, 2007

CALL TO ORDER

The Special Meeting of Oakmont Borough Council was called to order at 7:48 PM by President Benusa.

ROLL CALL

Present: Messrs. Bland, Favo, Federici, Kennedy (arrived 8:30 PM), Myers (arrived 8:03 PM), Taliaferro and President Benusa, members of Council; Mayor Fescemyer; Solicitor Shoop; and, Roger A. Dunlap, Jr., Borough Manager and Ex-Officio Borough Secretary

Visitors: Thomas J. Briney – Chairman, Oakmont Borough Planning Commission

Kacin's Edgewater at Oakmont

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss with Mr. Briney the modification requests of Kacin Company, Inc., and to transact any other business to come before Council.

President Benusa asked Mr. Briney to review with Council the Planning Commission's thinking on the Kacin development in terms of: 1) density; 2) connectivity; 3) rear yard setbacks; and, 4) active recreation space.

Mr. Briney said the Commission had spent a lot of time discussing density with regard to this development. He noted that Mixed Use Districts usually require "striking a balance" in relation to density. However, "Anything beyond 14 units per acre is not advisable," cautioned Mr. Briney.

The Planning Commission's final calculations for density in the Kacin Plan came to an aggregate 13.86 units per acre. The highest density is concentrated around the commercial area closest to Allegheny Avenue. Kacin asked for approval on 255 housing units. The Commission recommended approval for 225 units in the Kacin plan.

Concerning the streets connecting with community streets and those of the adjacent Brooks & Blair development, Council felt strongly that Second Street should also be opened to connect the plans, in addition to First and Third Streets.

Mr. Briney reminded Council that he had cautioned them not to be too literal about interconnectivity between the plans. The crucial connection, said Mr. Briney, was the tie-in between the plan's streets and the rest of the community, starting at California Avenue. Later on, Mr. Briney said that he was not an advocate of making Second Avenue a thru-way street.

President Benusa asked about adequate parking in the plan. Mr. Briney likened the width of most of the streets in the Kacin plan to Eleventh Street in Oakmont. He felt that parking would not be a problem. He added that the Planning

Commission had asked Kacin to come back with a parking plan before the Commission could grant tentative approval.

Mr. Briney also remarked that Kacin was still at risk of not getting tentative approval if they do not conform to the *Zoning Ordinance*, as required.

Mr. Benusa said he wanted Kacin to install sidewalks on their side of California Avenue, and also brought up the possibility of requiring Kacin to improve the property next to the Borough's boat access ramp at the bottom of California Avenue.

Mayor Fescemyer asked Mr. Briney what would happen if the Borough insisted on granting only 225 units and Kacin decided to appeal the decision. Mr. Briney said Kacin would have to prove that 225 units were a hardship to them, which would be unlikely. He said the development would be viable at 225 units, and that his sense was the Kacin wanted the project to go forward.

At Council's request, Mr. Briney reviewed some possible scenarios for design changes that could be suggested to Kacin. In particular, he pointed out two housing units around the Duquesne Light substation that could be removed because they would be undesirable to potential buyers due to their proximity to the substation.

Further discussion ensued concerning parking and the connection of Second Street between the Kacin and Brooks & Blair plans.

Council Member Kennedy asked why there was all this discussion about details when Kacin had yet to even purchase the land from RIDC. Mayor Fescemyer asked Mr. Briney: "So, we should approve this at 225 units?" Mr. Briney said the Planning Commission had done their calculations and recommended that number to Council.

President Benusa asked what the Planning Commission's recommendation was on open green space. Mr. Briney said the Commission had already indicated their concern to Kacin that there was a lack of green space in the plan.

In regard to the Dark Hollow Road property, offered by Kacin to the Borough for athletic fields, Mr. Benusa said he felt the property would be more of a liability than anything else, because it is in a floodway on questionable soil.

Discussion followed regarding Kacin's willingness to proceed with the project. Solicitor Shoop queried, "At what point will Kacin walk away?" After further discussion, it was agreed that the Borough is currently in an enviable position in terms of desirability of the property, either to Kacin or other interested developers.

Finally, Mr. Benusa asked Mr. Briney if Council should approve the Giovanetti subdivision plan on Lee Street. They discussed the various aspects of the plan, noting that the subdivision would include one lot upon which nothing could be built. Mr. Bland asked if it would be unreasonable for the Planning Commission to re-evaluate the plan. Mr. Briney responded that it certainly was within Council's prerogative to make such a request, and it was agreed that the Planning Commission would revisit the plan.

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Dialogue returned to issues surrounding the Kacin development, and what could be required of Kacin in lieu of the undesirability of the offered property for ball fields. Mr. Kennedy asked, "Why do we keep looking for some adversarial confrontation with these guys?" Mr. Federici said the main issue for him was density.

Mr. Favo asked that Mr. Dunlap contact Kacin the following day, explaining that the following issues were of concern to Council:

- 1) Density
- 2) Second Street Connectivity
- 3) Boat Ramp Improvements
- 4) Parking
- 5) River Trail

At 9:00 PM, Mr. Briney left the meeting.

Onorato Update Meeting

It was agreed that the February 12th meeting with County Council Chief Executive Dan Onorato, concerning the Edgewater property, would be best held either at 9:00 AM or 3:00 PM. Mr. Dunlap will attempt to reschedule.

ARB Restoration Update

Mr. Dunlap reported that on January 17, 2007, Mr. Federici, Borough Engineer Mike Skinner and himself met with former Pittsburgh Public Works Director Reginallo to discuss repairing the brick surface of Allegheny River Boulevard nearest Hulton Road. Mr. Dunlap also reported that earlier that day an 8' x 8' section of the road was excavated to determine the nature and condition of the underlying concrete base surface. Mr. Dunlap reported that in the area under investigation the concrete base was still intact.

Mike Skinner will be preparing a letter of recommendation to Council and is to bring us to the point where bidding can begin. All will probably be ready by next week. The target for completion of this portion of the Boulevard is mid-May. There was a short discussion on the advantages of using contrasting bricks for traffic lines, rather than incurring the expense of having them painted each year.

Upcoming Street/WWTP Labor Negotiations

It was agreed that Mr. Dunlap would send a letter to the Bargaining Unit to set up a time to begin negotiations on the upcoming labor contract, and asking the Bargaining Unit to name the representatives who will be negotiating for them. The existing labor contract expires June 30, 2007. Several Council members requested that these meetings be held after work hours.

2007 Salaries and Wages

Mr. Dunlap is to submit recommendations to Council for 2007 wages on all non-bargaining unit personnel. Some discussion followed concerning

responsibilities for determining yearly wages and remaining within budget. Mr. Favo remarked that Library Director, Shannon Dunn, had submitted requests for salary increases that would give Library employees a 20% to 30% pay increase. Mr. Taliaferro disagreed with Mr. Favo's interpretation, saying that Ms. Dunn's intentions were to bring Oakmont Library wages up to current standards, based on the Allegheny County Library Association (ACLA) standards, an organization to which the Oakmont Library belongs. The intent was to enable the Library to recruit more qualified personnel, said Mr. Taliaferro.

2007 Fee Schedule

Mr. Dunlap reviewed each change in the proposed 2007 Fee Schedule in relation to current fee schedule and asked Council if they would like to make any changes. There were no changes specified by Council.

It was also reported by Solicitor Shoop that Riverview School District was appealing the recent assessment change of the vacant Brooks & Blair property.

USGA Agreement for Riverside Park Parking

Solicitor Shoop reported that the USGA has offered to pay the Borough \$7500 for use of the upper portion of Riverside Park to park cars during the U.S. Open. They are also to restore the fields once the golf tournament is over. There was some discussion concerning the length of time the field will be in use. Mr. Shoop said he was reworking the agreement with the USGA and will stipulate a specific amount of days for use of the Park. Any use of the Park after that, the USGA will be billed at a rate of 1/7th the total fee, per day.

Municipal Authority

Each member of Council received a copy of a letter, dated January 17, 2007, from Municipal Authority Board of Governors' Chairman Hank Buechli asking Council to approve an amendment to the Authority's Articles of Incorporation that would extend the Authority's term of existence for a period of 50 years.

Mr. Dunlap was asked to write a letter to Mr. Buechli inviting him to attend an "exploratory committee" meeting to discuss this request. The meeting should be cordial and friendly, said President Benusa, and preferably in the late afternoon. There is no rush to set up this meeting. Council's concern at present is to find out more about reauthorizing the Municipal Authority.

Mr. Shoop noted that he had someone at his law firm researching the legal issues involved with municipal authorities.

Ordinance Codification Project

Mr. Bland and the Borough Manager are to work together on this project. Mr. Dunlap asked for other volunteers to work on this, too. No one volunteered. The current *Code of the Borough of Oakmont* is missing ordinances and has not been brought up to date for a while. Mr. Dunlap has solicited a proposal from Keystate Publishers, Inc. that appears to be significantly less expensive than the Borough's current *Code* producer, General Code Publishing.

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It was agreed that General Code Publishing should at least be given the chance to offer a proposal for the same work.

Mayor Fescemyer asked that the new Civil Service regulations be adopted as soon as possible. He mentioned that Patrol Officer Ralph Marsico was leaving, so they will need to hire another full-time police officer soon.

2007 Industrial Appraisal

Mr. Dunlap said the Borough was in need of a full appraisal of the Borough's assets, both for accounting purposes and for insurance reasons. The last full appraisal of Borough assets was done over 10 years ago, which may have resulted in some inaccuracies in the yearly appraisals.

Meeting Reminders

Upcoming meetings were reviewed by Council.

Police Cars

Mayor Fescemyer asked Council to consider the purchase of another vehicle for the Police Department. One police car currently has 102,000 miles on it; another one is being sold with 107,000 miles on it, and a new car is being purchased.

Because the Police were purchasing cars on an 18-month, rather than a 12-month schedule, two cars sustained significant mileage at approximately the same time.

The Mayor noted that money had been saved in the Police budget as a result of moving to the County's dispatch service and because of the mild winter.

Adjournment

There being no further business to conduct that evening, Mr. Kennedy offered a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Taliaferro seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 PM.

Roger A. Dunlap, Jr., Borough Manager
and Ex-Officio Borough Secretary

Transcribed by: L. C. Jensen