The Johnstown Planning Board held a meeting on May 2, 2017 at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

PRESENT:

Peter K. Smith : Chairman

Terri Easterly : Board Member

Fredrick Franko : Board Member

Betsy Camarra : Board Member

George Nicholas : Board Member

Michael Poulin : City Attorney

Christopher Vose : City Engineer

Larry O’Regan : Assistant Fire Chief

Mary Jo Smith : Deputy City Clerk

Kathi Iannotti : City Liaison

ABSENT:

Bruce Heberer : Fire Chief

Cathy VanAlstyne : City Clerk

Chairman Smith called the meeting to order.

A motion was made by Mr. Nicholas and seconded by Atty. Poulin to accept the minutes of the April 4, 2017 meeting. Motion carried.

 HEARING FOR 105 S. Comrie Ave. SMALL ADDITION, Shelly VanNostrand CPA PLLC

Chairman Smith announced that the purpose of this Planning Board meeting was to hold a public hearing on the application of Shelly VanNostrand for an addition to her building at 105 S. Comrie Ave. He stated that the application was referred to the Fulton County Planning Board, because the property is located on a state highway. Sean Geraghty sent a letter indicating that the county Board didn’t “recognize any regional implication, so offered no reaction”. He opened the meeting to any comments from the public on the matter. No one present wished to speak, so Chairman Smith announced that the public hearing was closed. Chairman Smith commented that each approval is valid for one year, and if the project is not completed within that timeframe, the applicant must reapply. He told Ms. VanNostrand she could now apply for her building permit. Mr. Nicholas motioned to accept the proposal for an addition to the building at 105 S. Comrie Ave. Mr. Vose seconded the motion. Motion carried.

APPLICATION FOR NEW BUSINESS OPERATING PERMIT FOR 229 N. PERRY ST., James Cha

Chairman Smith opened the application for 229 N. Perry St. which is the former Diana Knitting Mill on the corner of Grove St., and invited Tim Beckett to speak about this proposal. Mr. Beckett said they have been looking for additional space for Townsend Leather, but Townsend Leather doesn’t need the whole building. They would like to lease out the block side which is where they would put raw material and partial processing. The brick side would be office space with about two floors to be leased out for shared working space. The brick side would have offices, and the block side would hold machinery such as dry drums. There would be roughly 12 people in the manufacturing section in the first 6 to 12 months. In 12 months they would hope to have up to 40 people occupy the office spaces. He said parking is a concern. They would plan on 10 parking spaces on the west side of the building. They are looking at the “bottom part” of the building with the “small out buildings” which potentially need to be razed anyway, providing about 10 more spaces. He said they have approached JAVAC about purchasing land behind their building on Grove St. to provide additional parking. When asked, Assistant Chief O’Regan said the property is zoned commercial. In response to Mr. Franko’s question, Mr. Beckett said that two years out they hope to replace the windows. They also want to cut down the trees that are too close to the foundation. The windows on the brick side are very expensive, so he thought they would be replaced over a longer period of time. He said they are thinking about putting up some kind of mural on the block side. Mr. Nicholas asked about the truck traffic and loading docks. Mr. Beckett said the JAVAC side has already had the grass paved over to the curb, and thinks the trucks must have been off the road when they backed up to the loading dock in the past. He estimates, that for Townsend’s use of the building, there would be one tractor trailer truck load there per week. A box truck would come in twice daily. Chairman Smith mentioned that the 18 wheelers that used to load on to Perry St. were a concern for the neighbors and tied up traffic. Beckett said the truck should be able to move back far enough to where only the front wheels may be in the street. Mr. Franko inquired about the exterior lighting and/or signage. There are no particular plans, but they imagine they will have some signs and lighting for safety purposes. He said they also hope to remove the barb wire fence, and pave the grassy area inside. Franko reminded him that the signs would need to be compliant with the codes. Assistant Chief O’Regan said their department looked at this application and thinks it is the best use for this building. Chairman Smith said the Board can’t take final action until after a public hearing at the next June 6 meeting, but the application is not subject to County referral. Attorney Poulin said the City has to be declared lead agency for environmental procedure and compliance. Mrs. Easterly made a motion to declare the Johnstown City Planning Board as the lead agency. Mrs. Camarra seconded the motion. Motion passed. The City Clerk was directed to give notice to the newspaper about the public hearing on this application for the June 6 meeting.

APPLICATION FOR LIGHTING PERMIT FOR 121 N. Comrie Ave., BROWN’S FORD

Chairman Smith asked why the application for lighting required a review by the Board. Attorney Poulin responded that it was a commercial expansion so under the jurisdiction of the Planning Board. Derek Brown was invited to explain the proposal. He said they want to replace 4 old poles and lights across the front of the building and have 5 new poles with lights installed going north from the driveway to the raised display area where they also plan to install a flag pole. On the south side to the lumber yard, there are 5 poles which are in good condition, but the existing lights will be replaced with LED lights. Chairman Smith wondered if this application had to go to the County since the business is on a state highway. Assistant Chief O’Regan said it wasn’t new construction so he didn’t think it had to go to the County. Mr. Franko agreed. Mr. Brown said they haven’t even had the lights on for a year now, because they are so old and can’t be repaired. He said the photometric layout avoids light bleeding into the roadway. Also, they are installing a small back shield on the road side of each of these horizontal lights providing additional light control. The flagpole will be lighted by three mounted above ground lights which will have cap shields on them. Chairman Smith said there would be a public hearing on this proposal at the June meeting after which the Planning Board will be able to take final action on the application.

 A motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Easterly and seconded by Mrs. Camarra. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 4:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Jo Smith

Deputy City Clerk