

AMBLER BOROUGH COUNCIL MINUTES

July 18, 2023

The regular meeting of Ambler Borough Council was held Tuesday July 18, 2023, at 7:00PM at Borough Council Chambers located at 131 Rosemary Avenue Ambler, Pennsylvania 19002.

Council President Siskind called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Ms. Siskind, Ms. Welch, Ms. Endicott, Ms. Sheedy, Ms. Hughes, Ms. Auerbach, Ms. Roecker Coates, Mayor Sorg, Police Chief Jeff Borkowski, Solicitor Joe Bresnan, and Borough Manager Mary Aversa were also in attendance. Ms. Forst and Ms. Henderson were absent.

Approval of Minutes: Ms. Siskind made a motion to approve the Minutes of June 20, 2023, Council meeting. Seconded. **7 -Aye.** Carried.

A Public hearing was held for the Ambler Lakeview Development LP at 9 N. Maple Avenue Conditional Use Application proposing a 92 residential unit five story building with associated parking. A vote was taken at the conclusion it passed 7-AYE.

The Following Business was discussed:

Finance and Planning Committee – Ms. Nellie Forst Chairperson, Committee Members: Ms. Karen Sheedy, Ms. Lisa Auerbach Ms. Nancy Roecker Coates

The Committee will consider the following recommendations:

1. That the June 2023 bills be paid in the amount of \$578,116.69 as follows: General (\$143,288.35); Street lights (\$3,684.68), Fire (\$0.0), Refuse (\$58,552.66); Parks & Rec (\$7,907.88); Water (\$124,318.37); Sewer (\$25,167.00); WWTP (\$169,334.29), liquid Fuels (\$206.24); Water Capital (\$45,657.00); Voided checks (\$0.0).
2. Attached for consideration was an Ordinance for a residential inspection program for resale properties. The Committee will consider the ordinance for adoption.
3. A public hearing was held for the Ambler Lakeview Development LP at 9 N. Maple Avenue Conditional Use Application proposing a 92 residential unit five story building with associated parking. Borough Engineer, Borough Planning Commission, and Montgomery County Planning Commission reports were reviewed. A vote was taken at the conclusion **7-AYE.** Carried
4. A recommendation was requested to approve the lease for the Head Start program for the 2023-2024 school year.

Ms. Siskind opened the meeting with #2 on the Finance and planning agenda. Ms. Welch explained guidelines for discussion, following the same procedure as at the last meeting regarding council discussion and public comment.

Ms. Welch explained that the changes made to the ordinance was exterior inspections were removed and the electrical inspection was removed. Added to the ordinance was an affidavit for smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors, changes to curb and side walks and sewer lateral time frames have changed. Ms. Welch had a verbiage change to section 11-202 verbiage should read working smoke detectors.

Ms. Auerbach noted there are resources available from the state for residents who cannot afford the repairs required by inspection.

Ms. Roecker Coates questioned the process for identification of inflow vs infiltration. Mr. Bresnan answered. Ms. Siskind questioned sump pump requirement inspections. Ms. Aversa answered.

Allison Wolf, 318 Rosemary Ave. commented on sump pump and seller disclosure. Appreciated the explanation of the ordinance and expressed the feeling that the sewer lateral at time of sale will not help to address the issues impacting the Borough. Her opinion was that an alternative plan should be investigated. Gave an option for another plan to consider, one which would include a rate increase, so the cost of repairs can be spread out among all residents.

Ms. Roecker Coates asked a question regarding ACT 44 funds. Mr. Bresnan and Ms. Aversa explained.

Bernadette Dougherty 338 Tennis Ave. agreed with Allison, commented on Right to Know report and length of discussion of sewer lateral and fairness to all.

Ms. Siskind agreed with the sump pump affidavit.

Matt Edgar 44 School St. comment on illegal connections. Ms. Aversa clarified. Comment on procedure, agrees with Allison. Same comment on back flow preventor and voluntary inspection, and incentives. Ms. Aversa clarified EPA requirements.

Ms. Hughes clarified the back flow preventor and the Borough's services regarding inspection when asked for. Ms. Aversa further clarified.

Rachel McGinn 231 N. Spring Garden St. concerned for complexity of ordinance and cost at resale to fix at time of sale. Interested in more education rather than requirement at time of sale. Looking for less onerous conditions for inspection. Feels ordinance needs more editing.

Matt Walker 364 Rosemary Ave. Looking for more available funds for repairs. Looking for Borough to find available funding resources. Asking for cooperation from other municipalities.

Debbie Burchett 217 N. Spring Garden St. Question regarding sewer line to the street and homeowner responsibility when sewer line in under busy street with large vehicles passing over. Question regarding storm water, and home sale statistics, and runoff water into storm drain. Ms. Aversa clarified. Question regarding other municipalities and their use of our treatment plant and their responsibility vs Borough residents. Mr. Bresnan clarified. Ms. Aversa further explained.

Ms. Sheedy questioned compliance with the corrective plan with the DEP and the umbrella of the corrective action plan. Mr. Bresnan clarified the Borough's reach.

Ms. Roecker Coates asked a question regarding dye testing sewer cracks and sump pumps. Ms. Aversa clarified. Mr. Dougherty further explained.

Mr. Orehek 237 Walnut Lane. Defined I & I. Described sewer lining program already in place in the Borough.

Ms. Roecker Coates question regarding repairs and waive of Borough fees to defer costs to homeowner. Ms. Aversa and Mr. Bresnan clarified.

Meeting Continues

Ms. Welch Smoke and Carbon dioxide section. No questions or comments from Council or the public.

Meeting Continues

Next section is the Sidewalk requirement section. No comment from council.

Public Comment

Allison Wolf Rosemary Ave. reiterated public safety is the goal and to achieve it her opinion is that point of sale is not the ideal way to achieve it. Feels systematic inspections are the way to proceed to achieve the goal of safety. Mr. Bresnan clarified the existing sidewalk ordinance.

Matt Edgar 44 School St. ordinance verbiage concerns him regarding fire Marshall overreach.

Ms. Siskind recommends taking that verbiage out of the ordinance.

Matt Walker 364 Rosemary Ave. asked for sidewalk clarification.

Mr. Orehek Walnut Lane asked for clarification on measurement requirements and wanted clarification on the total size of crack. Mr. Bresnan explained. Discussion ensued.

Ms. Siskind clarified the ordinance, and the sidewalk inspection program, and procedure and potential financial impact on the Borough.

Bernadette Dougherty 338 Tennis Ave. comment on ordinance enforcement. Mr. Bresnan and Ms. Aversa explained further.

Ms. Hughes expressed concerns regarding ordinance enforcement.

Rachel McGinn 231 N. Spring Garden St. expressed plan regarding systematic repair, and dissatisfaction with ordinance.

Kiersten Puskar 324 Rosemary Ave. commented on the possibility availability of grants, questioned tripping issues on sidewalks in the Borough. Mr. Kucher clarified grants we have received and the unavailability of public grants for sidewalk repair. Ms. Aversa further clarified. Mr. Bresnan further commented.

Ms. Burchett had a question regarding linear footage.

Meeting Continues

Ms. Welch Moving onto backflow preventer section.
Ms. Sheedy asked a question regarding the affidavit.

Public Comment

Allison Wolf 318 Rosemary Ave wondering about the possibility that Borough ask residents permission to voluntarily submit sewer lateral data. Ms. Aversa clarified.

Meeting Continues

House Number section.

Ms. Endicott asked a question regarding house number specifications. Chief Borkowski and Ms. Aversa explained.

Ms. Welsh explained there are necessary changes to the ordinance verbiage which will be made for the next meeting in August, no vote was taken.

Public Comment

Matt Walker 364 Rosemary Ave. made suggestion for energy disclosure at point of sale to educate people on energy usage. Mr. Bresnan and Ms. Aversa and Ms. Siskind and Ms. Welch explained constraints regarding the suggestion.

Recommendations:

1. That the June 2023 bills be paid in the amount of \$578,116.69 be paid. **All Aye – 7 Carried.**
2. That the lease for the Head Start program for the 2023-2024 school year be approved. **All Aye – 7 Carried**

Public Safety Committee: Ms. Jennifer Henderson – Chair, Nancy Roecker Coates, Erin McKenna Endicott, and Amy Hughes

The Committee made no recommendations.

The following business was discussed:

1. The police department report was reviewed.
2. The Community Ambulance report was reviewed.
3. The Fire Department report was reviewed.
4. The Public Works and Code Enforcement reports were reviewed.

Ms. Endicott had a question regarding storm water management and rain runoff with unmanaged storm water, in reference to unpermitted construction.

Mr. Kucher and Ms. Aversa explained the time frame and constraints. Ms. Siskind questioned non-permitted violations and the Borough's recourse. Mr. Bresnan further explained.

Ms. Sheedy questioned abandoned vehicles at CVS. Mr. Kucher explained. The Chief offered available steering locks which can be picked up from the police department.

Public Utilities Committee: Committee Members: Haley Welch - Chair, Erin McKenna Endicott, Amy Hughes, and Karen Sheedy

The Committee will consider the following recommendations.

1. Recommendation is requested for the lease for the T-Mobile equipment to be approved.
2. Recommendation is requested to approve the recommendation by the special council to opt out of the 3M settlement PFOS/PFAS contamination. class action lawsuit.

The following business was discussed:

1. The WWTP Engineers report was reviewed.
2. The Solicitor provided an update on the 3M settlement details for PFOS/PFAS contamination. Recommendation by special council to opt out of the class action to be considered.
3. The Solicitor is working on the lease for T-Mobile on Houston Road.

Public Comment: Allison Wolf 318 Rosemary Ave had an overflow capacity question. Ms. Aversa clarified.

Recommendations:

1. Approve the lease for the T-Mobile equipment on the Houston Tank. **7-Aye.** Carried
2. Recommendation by special council to opt out of the 3M settlement details for PFOS/PFAS contamination class action to be considered. **7-Aye.** Carried

Parks and Recreation Committee: Ms. Erin McKenna Endicott – Chair, Jen Henderson, Haley Welch, and Lisa Auerbach

The Committee will consider the following recommendations.

1. A recommendation was requested to appoint Matthew Walker to the EAC.

The following business was discussed:

1. A presentation from Bird Town PA was made at the June Committee meeting, the committee is researching options.

Recommendations.

1. A recommendation was made to appoint Matthew Walker to the EAC **7 Aye**. Carried

Salary & Personnel Committee: Committee members Ms. Karen Sheedy – Chair, Haley Welch, Nellie Forst, and Jen Henderson.

The Committee will make no recommendations.

The following business was discussed:

1. Below is a list of vacancies for the following appointed positions:
 - **Appeals Board** (3-yr term) 1- seat.
 - **Environmental Advisory Council** (3-yr term) 1 seat.
 - **Human Relations Committee** (3-yr term) 1 seat.
 - **Civil Service Commission (Alternante)** 1 seat.
 - **Zoning Hearing Board (Alternates)** 2 seats.

Ms. Siskind requested motions to accept the:

Finance and planning report, **7-Aye** carried.

Public Safety Report **7-Aye** carried.

Public utility Report, **7-Aye** carried.

Parks and Recreation report, **7-Aye** carried.

Salary and Personnel report, **7-Aye** carried.

There being no further public comment or other business, Ms. Siskind moved the meeting adjourned. **7-AYE**

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Wahl Kunzier

Assistant Secretary

Borough of Ambler