

JANUARY 21, 2009
WAYNESBORO, PA 17268
PUBLIC HEARING RE: DOWNTOWN PARKING
ORDINANCE

Council President Craig Newcomer called the public hearing of the Waynesboro Borough Council to order at 7:00 p.m. with the following in attendance:

Borough Council Members – Benjamin Greenawalt, Jason Stains, C. Harold Mumma, Craig Newcomer, Ronald Martin and Charles McCammon

Mayor Richard Starliper

Borough Staff – Lloyd R. Hamberger, II, Borough Manager
Dan Sheffler, Zoning-Code Enforcement Officer
Kevin Grubbs, Head of Engineering Services
Mark King, Police Chief
Dave Martin, Fire Chief

Mr. Newcomer stated that the purpose of the hearing was to receive input on a proposed ordinance amending Ordinance No. 937, the Waynesboro Zoning Ordinance, regarding off-street parking for all districts except Town Center District, and adding an additional section to provide for off-street parking in the Downtown Business District in the Borough of Waynesboro. The hearing was duly advertised in *The Record Herald* on December 22nd and December 29th, 2008. He administered the oath to those wishing to comment for the record.

Kevin Grubbs, Head of Engineering Services, testified to the following:

- September 8, 2008 - Main Street Waynesboro presented proposed amendment for review by Planning Commission. Waynesboro Planning Commission requested Solicitor to put in ordinance form for further review.
- November 10, 2008 - Ordinance reviewed by Waynesboro Planning Commission and recommended that Borough Council consider proceeding with adoption.
- November 19, 2008 - Ordinance reviewed by Borough Council with several revisions to be completed.
- December 3, 2008 (a.m.) - Borough Council held workshop to discuss revised ordinance.
- December 3, 2008 (p.m.) - Borough Council reviewed revised ordinance during Council meeting and recommended ordinance to be advertised for consideration at the January 21, 2009 Council meeting. Council also recommended that the revised ordinance be reviewed by the Waynesboro Planning Commission and the Franklin County Planning Commission.
- December 5, 2008 - Delivered copy of ordinance to Franklin County Planning Commission for review and comments.

- December 8, 2008 - Waynesboro Planning Commission reviewed revised ordinance and recommended to Borough Council to proceed with adoption.
- December 10, 2008 - Received correspondence from Franklin County Planning Commission on review of ordinance and offered “no comment”.
- December 22 and 29, 2008 - Advertised in daily publication of *The Record Herald* newspaper.
- December 31, 2008 - Received proof of publication for advertisement of ordinance from *The Record Herald* newspaper.

Paul Gunder, 9932 Mentzer Gap Road - Mr. Gunder noted that he owns property on Main Street, and has discussed the proposed ordinance with several other Main Street property owners. All with whom he has spoken have expressed that they are in favor of the ordinance. Mr. Gunder added that it will be beneficial for Main Street, as well as the entire business community; and he encouraged Borough Council to approve it. .

Don Shilling, 234 N. Grant Street - Mr. Shilling stated that he has a business downtown. He feels that the proposed ordinance will be very beneficial in helping the community grow and attract new businesses; and he urged Council to vote in favor.

Frank Bittner, 842 Anthony Avenue - Mr. Bittner noted that he has heard the following phrases numerous times on television in the recent past – “change”, “we can do it”, and “time for a new beginning” – and he referred to a letter written by Main Street Manager Bruce Dreisbach in which he states that the new regulation (when passed) would make it much easier to attract new restaurants and retail stores in the downtown district. As a representative of the Design Committee of Main Street, Inc., Mr. Bittner stated he is in favor of the proposed ordinance.

Dave Schmelzer, 128 W. Main Street - Mr. Schmelzer stated that he and his wife operate Burgundy Lane Bed and Breakfast. It is their opinion that the proposed amendment would make it much easier for people to get started in business in Waynesboro, and would aid in recruiting new companies, businesses, etc. to populate Main Street and fill the now-empty storefronts. He encouraged Council to support the proposal.

Edgar Hykes, Myrtle Avenue - Mr. Hykes noted that he is a board member of Main Street, Inc. He requested that Council vote in favor of the proposed ordinance, as it is much needed in order to refurbish and modernize Main Street.

Kelly McGahen, Washington Township (owner of Tranquillitea at 117 W. Main Street) - Mrs. McGahen noted that she “jumped through all the hoops” when starting her business, which was a very difficult process. To date, she has a mailing list of 2000+ people, and attracts customers from the entire Tri-State area. Her occupancy certificate is for 31 people, and her tea room is routinely filled to capacity (without complaint from customers about parking). She feels that if people desire to visit a business, they will find parking. She concluded that she is in favor of the proposed ordinance.

Denise Binkley, 45 S. Washington Street, Greencastle (property owner on Main Street) - Ms. Binkley noted that she feels this amendment would be beneficial to Main Street, and urged Council members to vote in favor of it.

Carlene Willhide, 322 Strickler Avenue (member of Main Street, Inc.) - Mrs. Willhide voiced her support of the proposed ordinance. She feels it would be beneficial to the Main Street businesses, and urged Council’s support. As Mrs. Willhide is also the Executive Director of the Greater Waynesboro

Area Chamber of Commerce, Councilman Martin asked about the Board's decision on the matter. Mrs. Willhide noted that she presented the proposal at a meeting, and "nobody said that they weren't in favor".

Zoe Tsoukatos - Ms. Tsoukatos noted that she operates a business (Zoe's Chocolates) in the Borough. She believes that this amendment would be beneficial to Main Street and encouraged its passage.

Bruce Dreisbach, Main Street Manager - Mr. Dreisbach noted that Main Street, Inc. represents 100+ businesses in the Main Street downtown business core; and they are strongly in favor of this amendment. Over the past 30 years, over 50 key businesses have been lost from the downtown business core, including at least nine (9) strong restaurants from the 12-block core of Main Street. The current regulations require so much off-street parking, it makes it difficult to recruit new replacement businesses. Businesses do come and go ... but you've got to be able to recruit new ones to replace the old ones when they leave if you want to keep a "healthy downtown". For example, if Frank's Pizza on the Square had to operate under the current parking regulations, they would need almost 50 off-street parking spaces. He noted that some businesses have been forced to buy adjacent buildings and tear them down in order to get sufficient parking, which is very detrimental to the health and retail consistency in the architecture of our downtown. A great deal of public parking has been provided by the Borough in metered spaces on Main Street – and a recent survey showed that, for most of the business day, 80% of those are free and available for customers to use. When they surveyed surrounding communities that have healthy downtowns, it was found that almost all have relaxed the parking regulations for commercial businesses in their downtown core. In summary, Mr. Dreisbach noted that Main Street, Inc.'s belief is that adopting the change in commercial parking regulations as recommended by the Planning Commission will allow them to improve the quality and quantity of businesses downtown. This will encourage services to residents of Waynesboro, preserve the beautiful architecture, increase the value of properties, and ultimately provide more revenue to support the activities of the Borough. Mr. Dreisbach noted appreciation for the work and support by Borough Council and the staff to assist in their efforts to rebuild the downtown; and he urged Council to pass this proposed amendment.

Hearing no further comments, the hearing adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melinda S. Knott
Administrative Assistant