

## Highlands Civic Association

- To strengthen the sense of community, responsibility, and livability in the Highlands for all residents.
- To protect, preserve, and further the residential quality of the Highlands area.
- To maintain an open line of communication among the Highlands neighborhood, the Borough of State College, the University community, and other Borough neighborhoods and agencies.
- To facilitate the exchange of information among HCA residents.

### MINUTES

Wednesday, May 12, 2021

7:00pm

Zoom Video and Phone Conference

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Meeting convened at 7:00 pm

1. Introductions: Mark Huncik, Eric White, Ron Filippelli, Jennifer Stahl, Vinnie Scanlon, Margaret Sebastianelli, Dina Liberatore
2. Treasury Report: Account balance \$1,329.41
3. Borough Updates:
  - Borough Council:

Tussey View: Presentation and proposal to Council for an affordable housing project at 1306 South Atherton Street by Ara Kervandjian of HFL Corporation to lease a portion of the Nittany Village Park to accommodate housing units consisting of 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom apartments and parking. Following the presentation, a recommendation was made to schedule time for public comments on the proposed project at the June 7 meeting. Council will consider possible solutions (i.e., lease portion of park property to the developer, change ordinance to allow the development project to be part of the park.) the land in question remains property of the Borough. Project site is located across from Dunkin Donuts on South Atherton Street and abuts Nittany Village Park. Issue: The building footprint and parking (with ADA requirements) will not fit on the proposed property.
  - Borough Staff Meeting: The Affordable Housing Project on Atherton Street proposed by HFL Corporation is requesting approval for use of a portion of Nittany Valley Park; the Neighborhood Coalition is concerned any precedent this might establish regarding usage of park space within the Borough will result in a similar fate; Borough has 4 square miles of space, very little open for new construction; the Nittany Valley Park is not in the Highlands or located in other housing areas of the Borough, but citizens are uneasy about the encroachment of its neighborhood parks as a solution for unavailable space within the Borough.

4. Open discussion:

- Amendments to COVID-19 Emergency Ordinance: Natalie Vercillo, Community Engagement Specialist

**Masking Outdoors** – follow the Centers for Disease Control & Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH) masking requirements.

**Masking Indoors** – continue to require masks indoors regardless of vaccination status unless it meets an exception listed in the ordinance.

**Waiting in Lines** – require face masks for all persons in line to enter a business, regardless of on private or public property and regardless of vaccination status. This removes the limitation of the number of persons who can be in line and the physical distancing requirement.

**Limitations on Gathering Size** – increase current gathering size limit at residences from 10 to 25 and increase current gathering size limit at Borough parks and municipal property from 25 to 50 persons.

**The Ordinance remains in effect until July 31, 2021, or until the PA DOH or the Centre Region Council of Governments rescinds their Emergency Declarations, whichever is first.**

- Borough Police Department update: a diverse field of 6 candidates are up for employment consideration to complete 59 of the budgeted 60 positions.
- East Fairmount Avenue Park Project update: new arborist, Lance King, will continue the work of former arborist, Alan Sams, in implementing the vision and plan for the park; continuation of work to resume summer 2021; Jasmine Fields, Borough Sustainability Programs Officer, will track park renovation activity.
- Short Term Rentals: Borough Council's public hearing for comments from residents about rental issues in their neighborhood is scheduled for June 7; enforcement staff have not been able to keep up with rental and vacant home tourist activity; tax revenue is a concern since these properties are not required to register but as income producers do not qualify for Homestead Exclusion; an ordinance with registration fee (not to be considered a money maker but instead to support enforcement expenses) and implementation plan is anticipated by fall.
- Board members expressed concerns for ordinance enforcement pertaining to large gatherings. Also, members expressed quality-of-life concerns regarding the commitment of the enforcement staff living outside the Borough.
- COVID-19 waste water project: data collected on Penn State and State College waste water from October 2020 to April 2021 trends evidence of the virus.
- Reminder to vote in the local primary on Tuesday, May18,2021.

Meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm

Submitted by Margaret Sebastianelli, May 2021