

1 SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL

2 PUBLIC HEARING

3
4 IN RE:

5 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 97-2017 - AN
6 ORDINANCE - CLOSING AND VACATING A PORTION OF AN
7 UNNAMED ALLEYWAY BETWEEN SOUTH MAIN AVENUE AND HALSEY
8 COURT IN THE 1200 BLOCK OF SOUTH MAIN AVENUE.

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11 HELD:

12
13 Thursday, April 17, 2016

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15 LOCATION:

16 Council Chambers
17 Scranton City Hall
18 340 North Washington Avenue
19 Scranton, Pennsylvania

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24 CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR - OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER
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CITY OF SCRANTON COUNCIL:

JOSEPH WECHSLER, PRESIDENT

PATRICK ROGAN, VICE-PRESIDENT
(Not present)

WAYNE EVANS

WILLIAM GAUGHAN

TIM PERRY

LORI REED, CITY CLERK

KATHY CARRERA, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

AMIL MINORA, SOLICITOR

1 MR. WECHSLER: I'd like to call this
2 public hearing to order. Roll call, please.

3 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

4 MR. PERRY: Here.

5 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

6 (Mr. Rogan not present).

7 Mr. Evans.

8 MR. EVANS: Here.

9 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

10 MR. GAUGHAN: Here.

11 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

12 MR. WECHSLER: Here.

13 MS. REED: The purpose of said
14 public hearing is to hear testimony and
15 discuss the following:

16 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 97-2017 - AN
17 ORDINANCE - CLOSING AND VACATING A PORTION
18 OF AN UNNAMED ALLEYWAY BETWEEN SOUTH MAIN
19 AVENUE AND HALSEY COURT IN THE 1200 BLOCK OF
20 SOUTH MAIN AVENUE.

21 MR. WECHSLER: We do have a few
22 representatives here to discuss this
23 project. Gentlemen, will you use the mic?

24 MR. MORAN: Hi, everybody. My name
25 is Larry Moran and I'm an attorney and I

1 represent the developer in this project.
2 With me is Emmett Mancinelli, who is our
3 engineer, who I'm going to hand over for the
4 more particular questions if council has
5 them, but generally what we are looking to
6 do is redevelop two blocks parallel to one
7 another on one of the last blocks of Main
8 Avenue in West Scranton. So we frame this
9 as the gateway to West Scranton if you are
10 coming up from Old Forge area. When you
11 enter into Scranton proper on your left-hand
12 side, you will see what's now kind of a
13 deteriorated video store. Next door is a
14 restaurant, but it's changed over a couple
15 of times. It's presently an Asian Fusion
16 restaurant, steak and seafood, but you can't
17 really keep it occupied, and there is an
18 empty church next door. We have acquired
19 those parcels. We are developing it into
20 professional/medical mixed use, meaning our
21 tenants that we have are an established
22 chiropractor, aquatic therapist, a
23 pharmacist.

24 Above the professional/medical will
25 be residential apartments, and then directly

1 across the street there is presently a
2 Sunoco gas station that is part of our
3 redevelopment as well and then next door is
4 the corporate offices for that gas station.
5 We are going to do a Phase II with the RACP
6 award and develop that office, the office
7 piece next door to the gas station, into a
8 smaller scale, mixed medical use and
9 residential apartment building.

10 The request is that council vacate
11 what is I guess technically regarding an
12 alleyway, but it is really just a parcel
13 that separates my client's gas station and
14 it's corporate offices that really just
15 serves as his driveway right now. You know,
16 it's inaccessible to the public. Nobody
17 uses it except the owner of both parcels on
18 both sides, obviously, you know, there is
19 the occasion for economic development,
20 growth, and removal of liability for
21 council. That's our pitch.

22 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

23 MR. MORAN: Thank you.

24 MR. WECHSLER: Just a question, what
25 phase of the project is the -- is there a

1 timeline for any start of demolition or
2 construction for either project?

3 MR. MANCINELLI: Yes. My name is
4 Emmett Mancinelli, I'm the engineer for the
5 project. Right now we are finishing up the
6 drawings and we are soon going to be in to
7 the bidding phase for the demolition. I
8 would expect that we would probably start
9 doing the demolition on the west side of the
10 street which would be the vacate church and
11 the video -- vacant video store on the
12 corner probably in the next six to eight
13 weeks, I would guess would be when we should
14 have some activity out there.

15 MR. WECHSLER: And if you could
16 touch a little bit on why the importance of
17 vacating this property is to this Phase II
18 of the project?

19 MR. MANCINELLI: For the Phase II of
20 the project the importance is that we have
21 -- we have gone to the planning commission
22 and met with them concerning the property
23 and there is a little bit of conflicting
24 information in the archives of whether this
25 alley is already vacated, exists or doesn't.

1 So based on direction from Don King and John
2 Pocius, the city engineer, they thought it
3 would be more prudent to request council to
4 vacate the alley, that should something in
5 the future develop we have already gone
6 through that process and we just want to,
7 you know, so our position is to treat it as,
8 you know, that it does exist, go through the
9 process so that we could be sure, both for
10 the development sake and the client and the
11 city that we have gone through the steps to
12 do it properly versus not.

13 MR. PERRY: Now, once demolition
14 begins and construction starts do you
15 anticipate any type of traffic pattern
16 changes or delays in traffic on Main Street?

17 MR. MANCINELLI: No, not really
18 because everything on the West Side, Wolf
19 Court runs in the back, so the sites that we
20 are working on the West Side are all
21 accessible from the rear. There is parking
22 areas back there now so from the standpoint
23 of construction we do not anticipate any
24 changes to traffic patterns or the one thing
25 that we did discuss in the project meeting

1 was the sidewalk. We may have to request
2 closing the sidewalk during certain phases
3 of the construction, but other than that,
4 there would be no disruption to traffic.

5 MR. PERRY: Thank you.

6 MR. WECHSLER: I know prior to the
7 meeting I spoke to you a little bit, you had
8 maps of the project area, do you have any
9 renderings of the other -- I mean, I'm
10 familiar with the project across the street,
11 I'm not quite as familiar with this portion
12 involving the gas station.

13 MR. MANCINELLI: We do have
14 renderings of the side across the street.

15 (Attorney Moran provide photos to
16 Council.)

17 MR. MANCINELLI: The Phase II part
18 of this court impact is lagging behind in
19 design and in planning so basically the idea
20 was to get the West Side going and then as
21 the design progresses and finishes up it
22 just transitions into the other side so one
23 of the reasons that we are a little bit
24 behind is because of the vacation. We just
25 wanted to get to that process first, whereas

1 on the west side of the street the lofts
2 were already on control so we just joined
3 them through the Planning Commission and it
4 was a much quicker process to get those lots
5 ready for construction.

6 MR. WECHSLER: Yeah, because I was
7 approached by some of the neighbors in the
8 area and they are anxious to see what the
9 new corner would like if there is any--

10 MR. MANCINELLI: We can certainly
11 keep the city informed as to what's going
12 on. We will get those -- we are working on
13 the plans on the west side right now, so I
14 would be happy to share with the city as
15 soon as they are available.

16 MR. WECHSLER: Yeah, as soon as they
17 are available because, I mean, this --

18 MR. MANCINELLI: I would think --

19 MR. WECHSLER: -- looks very nice to
20 me.

21 MR. MANCINELLI: I would think the
22 rendering on the east side would probably be
23 three to four weeks away.

24 MR. PERRY: Do you have a ballpark
25 completion date on when you think everything

1 would be wrapped up and finished?

2 MR. MANCINELLI: We are still in
3 that early stages of trying to determine
4 when we are going to start, but I would say
5 we are probably looking at probably March,
6 April, May of 2017 when it's all said and
7 done.

8 MR. PERRY: Thank you.

9 MR. WECHSLER: I think you meant '18
10 or '19?

11 MR. MANCINELLI: '19 for the street
12 scape.

13 MR. MORAN: '18. One year from now.

14 MR. WECHSLER: Anyone have anything
15 else? Thank you, gentlemen. Meeting is
16 adjourned.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence are contained fully and accurately in the notes of testimony taken by me at the hearing of the above-captioned matter and that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the same to the best of my ability.

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER