

**BUILDING & BUILDING CODES COMMITTEE MINUTES
FEBRUARY 21, 2017**

The Building & Building Codes Committee meeting was held on February 21, 2017, at North Royalton City Hall, 14600 State Road. The meeting was called to order at 6:38 p.m.

PRESENT: Committee Members: Chair John Nickell, Vice Chair Dan Kasaris, Larry Antoskiewicz; **Council:** Gary Petrusky, Dan Langshaw, Paul Marnecheck, Cheryl Hannan; **Administration:** Mayor Robert Stefanik, Law Director Thomas Kelly, Fire Chief Robert Chegan, Community Development Director Thomas Jordan, Building Commissioner Dan Kulchytsky, Assistant Law Director Donna Vozar, Service Director Nick Cinquepalmi; **Other:** Lou Krzepina.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Moved by Mr. Kasaris, seconded by Mr. Antoskiewicz to **approve the January 17, 2017 minutes as received.** Yeas: 3. Nays: 0. **Motion carried.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Chapter 1464 and 1486 amendments regarding abatement and demolition.

Mr. Jordan said that over the course of performing demolitions last year we have discovered that some of the process of getting the demolitions completed was difficult with our current code. He said that they asked the Law Department to review the code. He said that the city spent a lot of time on these demolitions and asked that language be inserted into the code to enable the city to recover the actual cost of the demolition in addition to the administrative costs of overseeing the process. He said that the Law Department prepared a draft code and was presented to the committee shortly before last month's meeting. He said that the committee has now had time to review the proposed language and said that the Building Commissioner and Asst. Law Director are present this evening to answer any questions there may be. Mr. Kasaris asked what specific changes were placed in the code to comply with due process, etc. Mrs. Vozar said that they added some definitions for clarification of things such as what a nuisance is, and to deal with the blighting and deteriorating effect that had not been previously addressed. They also set forth the process to make sure that we are taking care of the notice requirements for the due process. She said that as Mr. Jordan indicated, we have included recovery costs. Mr. Kasaris asked if it is expected to handle these administratively or through court action. Mrs. Vozar said that the way the code is written, we can move forward administratively. However, we have discussed this and if it comes to an occupied structure we will move cautiously and carefully and go through courts to seek an order. Mr. Kasaris asked if we have any occupied structures that meet this code. Mrs. Vozar said that we have one that we intend on moving forward with through the Court of Common Pleas. Mr. Kasaris asked if it is a rental. Mrs. Vozar said no. Mr. Jordan said that a growing number of the homes are senior citizens or hoarders. We also have some homes in North Royalton where the age of the home has become an issue due to homeowners not keeping up on maintenance. Mrs. Vozar said that they are moving cautiously but at the same time we want to make sure they we retain the value of the homes in the city so the Building Department is seeking to be very vigilant in this area. The way that the code has been amended will allow for additional assistance that might be needed. Our goal is to help people get their homes fixed and get in compliance with our codes. She said that in some instances is it only an accessory structure that needs to be demolished and those are easier to do. Mr. Kasaris asked how many homes we have that currently meet the definitions that have been presented to Council. Mr. Kulchytsky said that we currently have 4-5 that are in serious disrepair. Mr. Kasaris asked if any are due to fire damage. Mr. Kulchytsky said no. Mr. Antoskiewicz said that a section of the code references the city being able to come in and do some of the work. He asked for an example of this. Mr. Jordan said that this is a slippery slope. For a lot of these homes we are already doing grass cutting and assessing the property owner. The next step further would be if something like the gutters were falling down, trash around the home, etc. We would go ahead and repair the damage and remove the trash. He said that the sometime we hire someone to do it and sometimes our crews can perform the work needed. Mrs. Vozar said that the nuisance isn't always a house needing to be torn down. It could be something as simple as repairs to make the structure safe. Mr. Nickell agreed that issues like

faulty gutters can cause a house to deteriorate quickly and needs to be addressed. He also said that Cleveland is now going to start boarding up homes using Plexiglas rather than plywood. He asked how much we rely on county funds for this work. Mr. Jordan said that the county only reimburses the direct cost of the actual demolition. Discussion on the various city departments that are involved in this process ensued. Mrs. Hannan asked if there are any public assistance programs to which the property owners can be referred. Mr. Jordan said that Cuyahoga County has an income based senior citizen program where they essentially provide a zero interest loan that liens the house and would only have to be repaid if the house is transferred and/or the owner is deceased. He said it is very hard for us to take down a home, and it should be. Every avenue has been explored by the time we get to the point of demolition. Our interest is not in demolishing the home but to retain the value of the home. Mrs. Vozar said there are other avenues available as well such as church groups and the Boy Scouts who will assist home owners with maintenance, yard work, etc.

Moved by Mr. Kasaris, seconded by Mr. Antoskiewicz to **remove this from committee and recommend approval to Council**. Roll Call: Yeas: 3. Nays: 0. **Motion carried**.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Ordinance 17-19 – Pifer/Toth rezoning

Mr. Kulchytsky said that these property owners have come to an agreement about the property division to bring it into compliance. The lot split/consolidation has already been approved by the Planning Commission contingent upon this rezoning request. It is only a portion of the property that is being rezoned to Local Business in compliance with the balance of the parcel it is being adjoined to. Planning Commission will be conducting a Public Hearing on this matter. The portion of the property that is being consolidated is where the septic and the leach bed are located.

Moved by Mr. Kasaris, seconded by Mr. Antoskiewicz to **remove this from committee and recommend approval to Council**. Roll Call: Yeas: 3. Nays: 0. **Motion carried**.

MISCELLANEOUS

Mayor Stefanik said that we have received renderings from an architect regarding what we might be able to do with the old City Hall property. He said that he believes that we have a consensus from City Council that they are in favor of tearing the old building down and repurposing the property to its original intent of being used as a public meeting place. He said that anything that we propose for this site would come before City Council for approval. He said that we have talked in the past about options such as a pavilion, a band concert shell, etc. The architect is looking at combining the two concepts together. They have come up design that would build a pavilion into the existing hill where the building is and on top of that have a second level for a patio/pavilion area that would take advantage of the great southern view that is there. He said that this is in the early stages and if we get the consensus from Council we will move forward with the architect to come up with something more substantial. Mr. Jordan said that the removal of the asbestos will be starting next Monday. The next stage with Council's consent is the actual demolition of the structure. We are currently preparing specs for this and Council will review those in the near future. Mr. Jordan provided a visual display of the architect's rendering. Mr. Jordan said that demolition of the existing building will probably occur this year but we will be looking to budget in 2018 for the construction of the new structures. Mr. Antoskiewicz stated that he feels that it is time that we move forward with this concept. Mayor Stefanik said that we have tried for 2 years to obtain funds for preservation of this building, but there is none available. Therefore we want to repurpose the area with something we can be proud of and get it completed before our bi-centennial. Mr. Marnecheck commented that this proposal still fits with the original intent for the land when it was donated. Mr. Jordan explained that there was a significant water leak in the building and the water had to be turned off as a result, and the boiler system had to be turned off as well resulting in no heat in the building. The building's deterioration is accelerated as a result of no heat. The actual cost of the demolition is offset by the continued maintenance costs of the building, so it is actually a positive effect long term on the budget. Mr. Antoskiewicz asked if Council is ready to move forward on this. Mr. Langshaw agreed that it makes sense to move forward. Mr. Nickell

stated that he likes this concept. It would be a unique feature to North Royalton. Mr. Kasaris said that from the outside the building looks good, but when you get inside you see that it has many problems and it is time to do what is necessary to better utilize this property. Mr. Nickell asked if the Boskovich memorial will remain. Mayor Stefanik said that they plan to keep this in place along with the flag pole and cannon. Mr. Langshaw asked if any type of commemorative plaque will be erected at the site. Mr. Jordan said that different concepts are being looked at.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Mr. Kasaris, seconded by Mr. Antoskiewicz **to adjourn the February 21, 2017 meeting.** Yeas: 3.
Nays: 0. **Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.**