

September 6, 2016, Public Hearing

The Clarion Borough Council held a Public Hearing on September 6, 2016, at 6:45 p.m. in the Assembly Room of the Clarion Free Library, the purpose of the hearing was to receive testimony/comments on the Tax Increment Financing.

A list of those people in attendance is attached to the Official File Copy of these minutes.

Dr. Sanders Dédé, Chair of the Housing and Zoning Committee, called the hearing to order at 6:45 p.m.

Attorney Jeff Mills, counsel for the developer, stated for the record a notice was published for this meeting, which Secretary Hall has a copy of, indicating the Borough's intent to create a Tax Increment Financing District within the site of the former Clarion Owens-Illinois Glass Plant, Clarion Borough, Clarion County, Pennsylvania. Specific tax parcels were included in the publication. Attorney Mills introduced Ms. Jamie Lefever, Clarion County IDA Executive Director, who will give a presentation on meeting requirements of blight. The TIF Plan, which was given to everyone again tonight, describes the economic benefits to the County and Borough.

Ms. Lefever reported the Clarion County Industrial Development Authority hereby presents the following findings of blight to the Councilmembers of Clarion Borough for consideration and adoption. Since Council has a copy, only parts will be referenced. Paragraph 3 indicates there are seven conditions of blight outlined in the Redevelopment Law and are used to determine whether an area can be certified as blighted. The seven conditions are: unsafe, unsanitary, inadequate, or overcrowded conditions of dwelling; inadequate planning of the area; excessive coverage of land by buildings; lack of proper light, air and open space; defective design and arrangement of buildings; faulty street and lot layout; and economically or socially undesirable land uses. Ms. Lefever commented the Law stipulates that only one of the seven conditions of blight must be met or determined to make a finding of blight. Continuing from the document, Ms. Lefever read "The Redevelopment Law also states that the applicable conditions need not be evident throughout the entire area to be designated as blighted. The fact that individual properties are free from blight within the designated blighted area does not make the finding arbitrary in that comprehensive planning requires that areas be considered in their entirety and not in their non-severable parts." Ms. Lefever informed Council the property comprising the TIF District contains at least two of the seven conditions of blight: (A) unsafe, unsanitary, inadequate, or overcrowded conditions and B) the area contain economically and socially undesirable land uses. The document continued to state the following: "The proposed TIF District has the following features that constitute an "unsafe condition" finding of blight: The TIF District is situated at the former Owens Illinois Glass Plant which operated for over a century. Since the closing of the glass plant, the property has now remained vacant for over ten years. As a result of over a century of manufacturing on the property, it has suffered from various forms of environmental contamination on the site. The existence of the environmental contamination on the property create an unsafe condition for the subject property. The subject

property is “unsafe” unless or until proper remediation is undertaken. As such the property demonstrates the “Unsafe, Unsanitary, Inadequate, or Overcrowded Conditions” criteria required for Determination of Blight.” Ms. Lefever read on, as follows: “The proposed TIF District has the following features that constitute economic and socially undesirable land uses: The subject property is an economically undesirable land use as it negatively impacts the area by reducing property values, increasing the potential for dumping, squatting, and other crimes. Abandoned properties also deprive the area, Borough, and region of revenue from income taxes and real estate property taxes and jobs. Vacant property reduces real estate values and the corresponding tax base that supports the Borough, School District, and County as such undesirable. Additionally, Clarion County has a higher level unemployment than the statewide average, properties which have potential for development provide opportunities for new jobs for Clarion County residents. Properties that are in areas that have potential for development but remain vacant because of the extraordinary cost of development (such as the site costs for this property) reduce the opportunity to create new jobs in an area that already lags behind the state. New jobs will generate additional wealth and income which raises the standards of living in the area. The extra ordinary costs associated with physical conditions of the property and which prevents the property from being developed has a negative economic impact on the area. The property demonstrates the Economically and Socially Undesirable Land Uses criteria required for Determination of Blight.” Ms. Lefever stated lastly the facts set forth in the TIF Plan are included herein by reference.

Dr. Sanders Dédé asked for comments or questions from Council or the public.

There were none.

At the October 4th Council Meeting, Attorney Mills added there will be a Resolution to create the TIF District.

Secretary Hall stated Council will vote on that Resolution that evening.

Solicitor Marshall suggested Council may want to ask if anybody else would like to present anything to Council?

Dr. Sanders Dédé asked if anybody wanted to address Council regarding this proposal or the Industrial Development Plan?

Solicitor Marshall asked the minutes reflect that there was no other testimony or anything presented and understands that Attorney Mills wanted the documentation submitted as part of the hearing?

Attorney Mills agreed and asked the TIF Plan document as well.

The Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Plan and the Findings of Blight are attached to the Official File Copy of these minutes.

Hearing nothing further, Dr. Sanders Dédé adjourned the Public Hearing at 6:52 p.m.

Mark E. Hall, Borough Secretary