

Owen Planning Committee
Minutes
Thursday, August 30, 2021
Owen City Hall 833 W. 3rd St.
4:00 pm.

Called to order at 4:03 pm. by Bob Wilczek

Roll call: Present were Wilczek, John Mauel, Tim Conway and DPW Chad Smith. Mayor Milliren was also present. Absent were Allen Gajewsky and Bernie Shelton.

Others present. Tim Swiggum-CDC, Jim Bohl, Dominic Haupt, Jane Schmitz, Scott Jalling, Tom Jirschele, Andrea Mahnke, Joel and Lisa Kastner, Adam and Karen Simington, Mark Hanson, Jean Jankee, Fred Schindler via telephone, and Cindy Cardinal-O-W Enterprise

Rubber Recycling Plant:

Wilczek opened the floor for public comment. Joel Kastner presented a petition with 94 signatures opposing the proposed Rubber Recycling Plant. He asked several important questions regarding the holding pond for cooling equipment and the stormwater pond for the park. Bohl explained that the cooling pond will be very small and not connected to the stormwater pond to be built by the city. The stormwater retention pond will be large enough to allow drainage for the whole park. Kastner also asked about fire and evacuation plans. Wilczek assured him that it has been a big concern since the first meeting and one of the reasons for spreading out the holding bunkers and adding a dry hydrant to the stormwater retention pond. Wilczek also explained that the equipment used is different and the technology has improved to reduce noises and the chances of a fire. Taking steps up front to deter fires and spills will go a long way to prevent anything from going wrong. The facility will employ 38-40 people and will be made as safe as possible. The facility will also pay approximately \$60,000 in taxes per year according to the developer's agreement approved by the City Council on August 10, 2021. The group watched a video showing the process of recycling tires. Mark Hanson asked where they plan to store the tires. Bohl replied that they would be stored in semi-trailers and some may be stored temporarily in a bunker. More discussion on the potential fire hazard to which Wilczek replied that we will do our best to prevent such a problem. The restrictive covenants were discussed and Kastner requested a copy of the covenants and the developer's agreement which he received. He asked about the size of the building in which Bohl replied it would be 30 foot tall but may be shorter if it is possible to build part of it into the ground. What type of pollution risks are there with this facility and who will enforce the covenants? The pollution risk is low as rubber is not toxic and it is likely more rubber gets loose on Highway 29 than will get away from the property. The City and the O-W-C Fire Department will be the main authorities to enforce the covenants. Tom Jirschele interjected that the city doesn't follow its own covenants on the CountrySide Estates. It was pointed out that those covenants are controlled by the developer, which is the city, and not relative to this discussion. Karen Simington asked where all the workers are going to come from since employers are having trouble finding workers now? Swiggum explained that having a place to live is part of the problem for employers now and Bohl is planning to build 3 apartment complexes to help with recruiting workers. It was asked if we were going to be like Abbotsford? Mayor Milliren questioned what that meant and pointed out that it doesn't matter where they come from if they are here to work and be productive. Fred Schindler asked if the TIF could be extended due to the Covid pandemic? Swiggum replied that the TIF has already been designated as distressed and is not allowed any more amendments. Schindler cited the DNR regulations for landfill siting are extensive and difficult to get through. The developer's agreement requires DNR approval and Bohl will be required to get the permit. Schindler asked where the tires will be coming from? Will they be coming from Antigo or Auburndale? Bohl responded that it would not matter where they come from. Schindler stated that he is worried that Bohl will be in competition with the big corporations that may undercut him and kill his business. Bohl was not concerned because there are so many tires out there. John Mauel pointed out that there will always be tires even if the cars all get turned to electric in the future.

The DNR Permit was discussed again and Wilczek and Bohl both agreed that the public would be welcome to attend those meetings and the agreement requires approval of the DNR. Adam Simington asked how big the building would be and Bohl responded that it will be approximately 160'X210'.

Wilczek asked if there were any more questions or input from those in attendance and there were none.

A Smith/Mauel motion/second to amend the agreement to sell 15 acres now and 16 acres when the project goes to the second phase passed by a 3-1 vote with Conway voting no.

Adjourn: Wilczek adjourned the meeting at 5:42 pm.

Submitted by Tim Swiggum