JOPLIN | BUILDING BOARD OF APPEALS

Building Board of Appeals

Special Meeting

Minutes

March 13, 2023

Call to order

Mr. Denham called to order the special meeting of the Building Board of Appeals on March 13, 2023

Roll call

Mr. Denham conducted a roll call. The following persons were present: Kyle Denham, Garret Wagner, Lance Windsor, Christopher Tucker, Steve Brown, Gary Duncan, City Building Official Bryan Wicklund, Jeff Oliver and Administrative Assistant Vicky Copeland.

Continued Items

Item 3015, 117 S. Byers Ave.
Item 3016, 121 S. Byers Ave.

Tyler Casey, 1027 S. Main Street, Suite 330, Joplin, Missouri. Mr. Casey is the owner of ProX Property Management and now owner of the properties. He closed on the properties. He negotiated a deal with the owner, and they closed March 10th. They had asbestos testing done and it is only on the siding which they will have it abated properly.

Mr. Denham asked for the plans and the schedule of the renovation.

Mr. Casey replied they think the whole project will only take 6-9 months to complete. Their plans are to completely renovate the buildings. There is no other option. They called in what they thought was a gas leak over the weekend, so the gas has been shut off. There currently are no utilities on and the residents have mostly vacated. There are

a few stragglers. They have attempted to direct the remaining residents to Economic Security, the Housing Departments and an organization called Next Step. He stated they manage 400 rental properties in the City of Joplin and 500 rental properties in the City of Pittsburg. Their intent was to do new siding, new roof, new windows, new plumbing, new electrical, new HVAC, repave all the existing parking. They will tear out all the existing steps, tear out all the concrete on the exterior, pour all new sidewalks and ramps to make one unit on the lower floor ADA accessible. They plan to repave the existing parking lot and stripe it with hopes of adding additional parking. Their intent is keeping the layout exactly the way it was.

Mr. Denham asked how many units in total.

Mr. Casey stated there were twenty.

Mr. Denham stated ten in each building.

Mr. Casey stated yes.

Mr. Denham asked how many parking spaces off street.

Mr. Casey stated he honestly did not know. He said there is obviously on street parking there. He stated there is an ample parking lot there presently and had been there since the structure was built. He said they would create as much additional parking as possible on the other lot.

Mr. Denham asked if they had determined whether the water company would be able to provide the water capacity to allow for a sprinkler system.

Mr. Casey stated he had been told it should not be an issue. He stated he had a meeting with several building officials a week ago and had discussed that issue. The assumption after speaking with the water department was that would not be an issue.

Mr. Denham reiterated that would not be an issue.

Mr. Casey stated correct.

Mr. Casey said his target budget was approximately one million dollars.

Mr. Denham asked if there was a target rent for each unit.

Mr. Casey stated the one-bedroom would be rented for approximately $600-$625 and the two-bedrooms would be $695-$725. There will be eight two-bedroom units and twelve one-bedroom units. He said that is how it is currently laid out.

Mr. Denham asked if any of the units were in the basement.

Mr. Casey stated no units were in the basement. The intent was to create a coin-operated laundry facility. Most of the basement would remain empty and unfinished. The area would remain locked and only the residents would have access to the laundry facility. He said on the south building there is a stairwell that goes to the basement off the parking area, the northeast corner of the south basement they would like to frame in and create a laundry facility. Mr. Casey stated they have a trespass affidavit on file with the Joplin Police Department. They have installed a temporary fence to keep people off the property. The bottom level windows have been boarded up to try and secure the building.

Mr. Tucker asked why they wouldn't demolish and start new.

Mr. Casey stated it was not cost effective and as good a return on the investment. Mr. Casey stated he was going to make this place look so good he would move his family in.

Mr. Tucker asked if ProX had their own maintenance team to make any repairs on the property.

Mr. Casey said the vast majority would be sub-contracted.

Mr. Tucker asked if there was black mold in the building.

Mr. Casey stated not that he was aware of but if there was it would be ripped out and treated.

Mr. Tucker asked if the basement would be sufficient for a storm shelter for the residents.

Mr. Casey stated yes. The basements are huge, almost the footprint of the building.

Mr. Tucker asked if the tenants would be vetted.

Mr. Casey stated yes.

Mr. Tucker stated he personally would like to see these structures demolished.

Mr. Casey stated this would be a non-issue. They have a very low eviction rate. They are roughly 95% occupied. He stated he would not have made this investment if he was not confident that it would get done. Mr. Casey said they would appear before the Board every 30 days and prove it to them.

Mr. Denham stated the Board was only trying to do due diligence. Mr. Denham asked Mr. Casey if he would serve as his own general contractor.

Mr. Casey stated that is the intention.

Mr. Denham asked how quickly construction should begin.

Mr. Casey stated within the next couple of weeks, they obviously have it pretty much secured. They should be able to start demo and siding remediation and some of the exterior work within the next couple of weeks.

Mr. Oliver asked if there would be someone monitoring the property a couple of times a day during the next couple of weeks before they start on the project.

Mr. Casey stated yes.

Mr. Duncan asked Mr. Casey what he saw as the tenant population.

Mr. Casey stated he thought it would be a variety, probably a family working class environment. They may get some students. It should be a multi-generational apartment building. It would be available to all perspective residents.

Mr. Denham asked Mr. Wicklund if this building would be subject to current building codes for the remodel.

Mr. Wicklund stated yes, any work they do would need to meet the current building code requirements.

Mr. Denham stated as far as land use the structure would be grandfathered in.

Mr. Wicklund stated they would but as Mr. Casey said, they plan on addressing the parking issue the best they can. Even potentially using another piece of property across the alley if needed to help increase the parking. But, yes, the issue of parking would be grandfathered in.

Mr. Denham stated he thought the density of these structures far exceeded what could be built today. He said parking is one of his concerns. He would really encourage the owner to provide additional parking. He stated he thought a lot of the previous tenants did not have vehicles. Hopefully, the new tenants would have vehicles.

Mr. Casey stated he understood that concern and would do their best to address the parking issue.

Mr. Duncan requested an update at subsequent meetings.

Mr. Casey stated no problem.

Mr. Windsor requested updates at future meetings with timelines to be provided and expectations.

Mr. Casey stated he can provide a schedule before the next meeting.

Mary Anne Phillips, 118 S. Moffet Ave., Joplin, Missouri. Ms. Phillips stated the complaints go back probably thirty years on those apartments. She said those apartments are in the historic district. They are in Murphysburg National District and the national boundaries. They have local boundaries and then national boundaries. Supposedly 117 S. Byers Ave. is actually considered contributing resources to the district, which she knows was very difficult to believe. She brought documentation and provided to the Recording Secretary. She stated she had no proof but had been told the units had come from Camp Crowder and moved here around 1952. Her point was that it was in the National District and the new appendix E of historic preservation, and the master plan of Planning and Zoning does say that any area designated as a historic district by ordinance of City Council, and which may contain definable geographic boundaries one or more landmarks, "blah, blah, blah." They are supposed to have an application of Certificate of Appropriateness if they are going to do anything with those buildings. Traditionally, she believed the Building Department, Planning and Zoning and Historic Commission have said well, that is only for the local district. She stated she researched appendix E and she did not see anything that said this was only for local and it is not for the National. The national boundaries were approved by the City Council, so she was not sure why this had not been addressed. Ms. Phillips stated she wanted this on the record. She was not saying that this project should come out looking like it used to but that whole neighborhood if you put up some random modern stuff. All the other houses on the block, are they going to be encouraged to restore their homes or are they going to do whatever they want. They could rip off all the architectural things and put up whatever they wanted. She stated she does plan on

going to the Historic Commission and City staff and asking for some clarification. She stated she could not find anything that only said local. The local boundaries are Sergeant and Moffet. The National include a little bit of Pearl and Byers.

Mr. Denham stated so if it was a building relocated from Crowder are you saying it would have to go back to that look.

Ms. Phillips stated she was not going to get deep in the weeds on that. She said she was not saying that at all. She said if it was truly a part of appendix E in the Planning and Zoning codes that at least plans should be submitted to the Historic Commission and then they decide. She stated that even the consultants who the City paid big money for twice to do the survey even said it was a contributing resource. She said they all found that very hard to believe. They call it minimal traditional. She stated her point was that she did not want to see a bunch of historic houses torn down and replaced with a parking lot with no procedure. If the Historic Commission said that was okay, then well okay. She stated it should go through all the procedures.

Mr. Tucker asked for insight on the Historic Commission and how neighborhoods were decided.

Ms. Phillips provided information and stated the year built did not matter. The National Register of Historic Places can be found on the City's website. She stated the codes do not address anything going on inside only the outside. She said the codes have not been enforced.

Ellen, 811 N. Byers, Joplin, Missouri. She asked if they had a plan to remediate the mold, roaches, and bed bugs. She also asked if there had been any incidents of cooking meth in the buildings. She wanted to know how those potential problems would be addressed.

Mr. Casey stated they have multiple environmental inspections and remediation companies quoting several of those issues she mentioned.

Mr. Denham asked if the current walls were plaster or sheetrock and was it tested for asbestos.

Mr. Casey stated plaster and yes.

Mr. Tucker asked about the plumbing was tested for asbestos.

Mr. Casey stated yes.

Mr. Denham asked what type of siding they were going back with.

Mr. Casey stated vinyl.

Mr. Tucker asked Mr. Casey if he was prepared to adhere to Historic guidelines.

Mr. Casey stated he had never heard of anything regarding the Historic district until this meeting. He stated he thought that keeping the buildings alive was much better historic preservation than tearing them down.

Mr. Oliver stated this property was on the agenda for March 24th.

Mr. Paul stated a Motion was not needed. The discussion could be ended.

Mr. Denham asked for a Motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion made to adjourn the meeting by Mr. Tucker. Seconded by Mr. Duncan. (6 Aye, 0 Nay) Motion carried.

Approved _____

Mr. Kyle Denham, Chairman

Approved Vicky Lynn Copeland

Vicky Lynn Copeland, Notary Public

My commission expires: May 22, 2026

VICKY LYNN COPELAND
Notary Public - Notary Seal
STATE OF MISSOURI
Newton County
Commission Expires 05/22/2026
Commission Number #09804844