

**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF JANUARY 14, 2019 REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**  
**NO. 19-01**

**The Council Work Session of the Town of Sykesville was held on Monday, January 14, 2019. Mayor Shaw called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. in the Council Meeting Room at the Town House. Mayor Shaw led the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Ian Shaw, Council President Julia Betz, and Council Members Anna Carter, Alan Grasley, Leo Keenan, Chris True, and Stacy Link.

**STAFF:** Aretha Adams, Town Manager  
Police Chief Michael Spaulding  
Evelyn Sweet, Town Treasurer  
Kerry Chaney, Town Clerk  
Derek Shreves, Public Works Director  
Jana Antrobus, Executive Assistant  
Mark Onheiser, Special Projects Coordinator  
Dennis Hoover, Town Attorney

**PUBLIC HEARING: Economic Development Use of 714 Sandosky Road**

Mayor Shaw gave a background on the building and property. The public hearing was then opened for comments.

Debbie Scheller, owner of A Likely Story Bookstore and resident of 305 Kalorama Road, explained that she did not want to see the Town lose control of the parking and that her customers are upset over the possibility of the loss of the parking. She asked why certain property uses proposed in the past were disallowed. She explained that she personally would like to see something family friendly in the location, but the business should flow and be a part of the Town. Ms. Scheller also explained that she had been present at the Liquor Board's review of the French Twist's liquor license, and at the time the Board expressed concern over the number of liquor licenses in one small area.

Val Gadiyak, 13739 Barberry Way, explained that she is a regular shopper on Main Street and would like to see something that is geared towards kids. The Carroll County Dance Company would be beneficial to everyone including parents who would drop their kids off at lessons and go shopping on Main Street.

Megan Logee, owner of the Carroll County Dance Center, explained that the dance studio has been in Sykesville since 1990, first on Main Street and most recently in the Warfield Center. She explained that the Dance Center is planning on submitting a proposal when the RFP opens. They want to maintain themselves as part of the Sykesville community.

Ridia Dearie, owner of The Vine on Main, explained that she felt like more information should have been released for this public hearing. She is in support of a brewery but also suggested that the

## **COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**January 14, 2019**

**Cont.**

property would be a good spot to house displaced Ellicott City merchants. She does not like the idea of using the building as a municipal building.

Ben Schuman, 1606 Andylin Way, explained that he is in favor of having the Carroll County Dance Company on the property. The families who attend the Dance Center are both local and from around the county and state. He and others who attend the Dance Center would support businesses after the dance classes. He thinks that there are too many alcohol establishments in Sykesville, and that the need for such has already been met on Main Street.

Joanna Schofield, 401 Oklahoma Avenue, spoke in favor of the Carroll County Dance Center. She was not happy with how the Dance Center was treated during the sale of Warfield. She is concerned with the direction of the Town and does not think there is enough for kids or arts and culture. She has a daughter with disabilities and would not be able to get her to dance classes reliably if the Dance Center were to move far away because her daughter cannot drive.

Jennie Rogers, 7322 Norris Avenue, spoke in favor of the Carroll County Dance Center. She believes that having a family friendly place is important. Her daughter was part of the flash mobs on Main Street during the festivals and Farmers' Markets, which commanded people's attentions more than a beer.

Dan Andersen, 7411 Second Avenue, said he would like to see the property developed for retail or small business and not for a municipal building. He would like to see it happen both quickly and transparently.

Marcene Trump, 5870 Philben Circle, spoke in support of Carroll County Dance Center. She explained that her children have been attending the dance center for a year now. She explained that she would love to be able to walk down to get a coffee or shop during the lessons and their family would eat dinner locally after lessons or would grab ice cream during the warmer months.

Dana Alonzi, 7307 Spout Hill Road, explained that she did not drink beer, but she brought her nieces and nephew to a brewery and sat in the grass and played games. She would not want a brewery to be counted out because they are "not family friendly" as that is not her experience.

Laura Green, 606 Concord Lane, echoed support for arts on Main Street. She explained there could be a unique partnership for parking with the Carroll County Dance Center.

Dawn Pritchard, 4702 Arlington Drive, explained she is a business owner in Westminster and is currently looking for a space for a garden store nearby, but she does do a lot of the events in Sykesville. She explained that parking really is an issue and hopes the Council will consider parking when they make their decision.

Steve Enslow, 7148 Norris Avenue, explained that the property is important to the future of Sykesville. The economic value will play a very heavy role in this decision. From a planning perspective, Main Street has been one of the driving factors in Town with its resurgence about 10 years ago. The continuation of Main Street is limited by the river and railroad tracks and the residential area. The only option left would be to expand up from Main Street similarly to how the French Twist and visitor's center are off of Main Street. He believes that parking is very important.

Kerry Chaney, Town Clerk, read into the record comments from people in attendance who did not want to speak and also comments that were emailed to the Town prior to the start of the meeting.

## **COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**January 14, 2019**

**Cont.**

Jane Linde, owner of Tri-Sport Junction, wrote "I strongly feel that since parking is such an issue in Town and that the primary reason the Town purchased the Sandosky property was to secure parking then parking should be the #1 priority. A 2-3 level parking area would be a great asset and fee should be charged to help offset upkeep etc."

Kelly and Stephanie Case, 1184 Day Road, wrote "support Carroll County Dance Studio proposal to relocate to Sandosky Road property. We believe that CCDC provides a valued benefit to the Sykesville community, through participation in fall/spring festivals, Nutcracker performances, etc. We believe that CCDC's use of the property aligns well with Town of Sykesville's requirements."

Jake Slade, 7205 Patton Drive, wrote "the "Brewery 1623 is would be a great addition to Sykesville. I think it would make the Town much more of a destination. A lot of breweris and business in Sykesville could very well benefit from an opening. Even the local creameris with collabs on beers."

Tyler Wittig wrote "I am in favor of a brewery coming to Sykesville. It would be a great addition to the Town, and bring more people to Town."

Jon Shook, 1530 State Route 97, wrote "lease or sale of 714 Sandosky Road building. Please lease to CCDC."

Jessica Kovolenko, 7571 Braemar Court, wrote "dance center has been a huge support to downtown Sykesville, started on the Main Street – moved to current property and bring students from Howard County, Carroll County, etc. Support the girls/boys in the area and give them exposure to culture."

Laura and Dave Green, 606 Concord Lane, and Peter Gnoffo, 7406 Brandenburg Circle, wrote "I'd like to see Main Street support the arts and CCDC's bid to use Sandosky property. The dance center was affiliated with Main Street for close to 30 years and supported Town's events (Harvest Fest and Art and Wine Fest) and annual free dance class. Would like to see partnership continue – could broker agreement to use lot for Farmers' market. Will have captive audience among parents taking kids to dance."

Robert Barker, 7466 Brandenburg Circle, wrote "Renovate into three commercial business spaces. Preferred feasons would be a fitness "club". Since building is of no historic significance it would be better used as professional commercial office space thereby leaving store fronts on Main Street for retail merchants."

Victoria Sambuco wrote "Hi there, I am unable to attend the meeting on the 14th, but I have an idea of something that's a little different, but something that could be very beneficial and honestly pretty easy to fix up/create for the town. What if we turned that building on Sandusky into a small animal shelter/animal rescue center for our area? Now I know we have the humane society in Westminster, but they have horrible hours (like being closed after noon on Saturdays) and it's a good 30-40 minute drive from here. We also have a TON of dogs and cats in this area that get out of their houses or get lost, but people have no clue what to do with the animal, especially if they have other pets themselves and can't take care of the dog overnight. What if we turned that into a 24 hour animal rescue center so that people can take the animals there for safe keeping and to make sure the animal stays safe. We can set like a "normal business hours" for like 10-8 so people can pick up their pets, or possibly adopt a surrendered one. It would be pretty easy to maintain, especially since on the Sykesville online people want to donate blankets and stuff all the time to shelters but never know where to take them. With that as well it's easy to charge maybe \$25 to get the animal back if they stay overnight (similar to what people pay at kennels) to keep it open and have food/necessities

## COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

January 14, 2019

Cont.

for the animals. We could also get some of the local vets to donate some of their time and work with the rescue to help with any injured animals that would come in as well. Since that location has a decent sized parking lot (granted I don't know how expensive this would be) but you could rip up some of that gravel and fence it off to make a little yard for the pups to play in/exercise until they find their home. The other thing that I would like to see is that this facility be open at different times than the vets and the humane society so that when the dog gets out at 9pm because of a firework then someone can at least check if they are chipped, have a main point of contact to help find the owners, the dog is guaranteed to be taken care of until the owners are found, or taken care of until they find that new home.

I honestly have a lot of ideas about this and would love to see this happen. If it is something that is considered, I would love to draft up a more formal proposal and actually work with the community and council to see that, if not at this location, we can do it at another location. I am very serious about looking into this for our community and wanting to make this idea a reality. Please let me know if you have any questions, or if I can help with this in any way. I am very passionate about helping with animals and doing a project like this.”

Maria Hogg wrote “Hello, Thank you for opening this up to residents. My first question would be about the condition of the property inside. If it could be repurposed for an activity building, such as an arcade or something else to draw even more people to Sykesville, that would be great. If not, perhaps demolishing it and making way for additional parking would also be an option if the inside is not in decent shape. Alternatively, the property could be used for indoor markets so the farmer’s market could be all year round. Thanks for taking the time to read this.”

Jeff Queen wrote “Hello. I would provide some ideas regarding the 714 Sandosky Road property: 1. Turn the space into an “urban square” type of concept which would mean potentials knocking down the buildings but reusing the utilities for use depending on the concept desired. The new space would could be a multi-use, open air, green space that would support functions like: Exhibitions/Festivals Small Concerts Open Air Cinema Skating Rink. 2. Create an open green space with a multi-layered garden and local art sculptures which would attract local polinators and birds. This space would be great just for local strolling and relaxing, and would attract people to visit local shops and relax. Create parking (or re-use existing spaces) around the space. 3. Re-use the builds for restaurants. Divide the spaces up, redesign the outsides to make them more attractive and reuse the parking spaces. 4. Turn the spaces into a community center or a recreation center, offering up classes, activities, or rentals for the space depending on the demands of the community. 5. Green field the space completely. 6. Take down the buildings and turn the entire property into more parking. I hope I have provide some inspiration and look forward to hearing what you all come up with. Thanks.”

Kristen Keiser wrote “Hi Town of Sykesville! Not sure if this meeting is still happening tonight or not, but unfortunately I am not longer able to attend. I am really happy the town purchased the building and space - It seems like a wise move to "control and guide" the type of industry that would move in. I am also happy that you are reaching out to the residents to get their input. I know you'll never make everyone happy but hearing everyone's input is a start. I have no preference for or against yet another brewery on Main Street. However, I do have concerns: Right now there is a bar inside Becks, Baldwin Station, and Market Tavern where you can also get food. There is Patapsco Distillery and The Vine on Main where you can purchase alcohol. I am not sure our small town can support more competition? I don't want to make another business struggle when the new business moves in. Have you heard any comments from these businesses about the proposal? Do you (and they) think another brewery would be complimentary to their business or deter from it? Have you

## COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

January 14, 2019

Cont.

done any market analysis (professional or otherwise) that would lead you to believe we could support another business of similar nature?

With more liquor stores and wine bars and brewery/pub type places (Oscars, Glory Days, etc.) nearby/in surrounding towns -- what is the draw to visit this new store on Main St? What will be unique about it? Why would it cause people from Westminster or Columbia drive to Sykesville to visit it and stay on Main Street?

Other possible ideas:

Escape room attraction: Either mom-and-pop run or corporate like Breakout Games; I know several people in the area that travel to Westminster and Columbia to play; Bring some of those people here! It would be mostly an evening attraction, leaving the parking lot open for farmers market mornings; People would enjoy being able to eat on Main Street before/after their game; Would up the "cool" factor of Sykesville - it is a hip and happening thing (and has been for years); No direct competition with other businesses on Main St or in the area, except for maybe Stratosphere and the roller skating rink as "things to do" with friends besides eat; Adults are hooked

A mom-and-pop run bed and breakfast: Definitely a need for it; There is no place to keep local guests nearby; If it's unique enough, it could draw people from other towns to visit just to stay! Might compete with Norwood, but I hear that's for sale? And some of the rooms don't even have AC! Would compete with the (rumored?) hotel they're building in Eldersburg if it's not unique enough.

Miniature golf: Would attract people from other towns; No direct competition; Seasonal :( unless you did like Monster Mini Golf where it's all indoors and black lights; Great to do before/after a meal and/or ice cream! If built well, adults and kids get hooked

Dinner Theater: No direct competition nearby would attract people from other towns; Would be great for local school-aged children to be involved; Autobahn Indoor Speedway; Would attract people from other towns; Great to do before/after a meal; No direct competition; Adults get hooked! Kids too :)

A craft store: Either mom-and-pop or corporate; Might compete with the pottery shop depending if the merchant is more like Michael's. Direct competition with Michael's; Might compete with Home Goods; Might compete with Walmart; Just some thoughts. I look forward to seeing what you come up with!"

Chris and Jessica Zador wrote "Good afternoon, I am unable to make the meeting tonight but would like to have my voice heard. My husband and I grew up in Sykesville before all these stores were here. We grew up in the town when Becks had a carry out and we would walk down the street after school with our friends to get French fries and a soda. The town has grown so much and now we enjoy walking down the street with our kids and their friends to get ice cream and go to the playground. The town doesn't need another alcoholic establishment it needs family friendly business like a pizza place or a carry out location that has a few arcade games where we can take our kids and not worry about destroying someone's dinner experience because one of the kids act up. Keep Sykesville family friendly! Our vote is no to the brewing company!"

Jeff Gardner wrote "Just a suggestion, remove the existing building, then construct a multi-level building. The main level containing spaces for retail & offices. The upper levels are for parking.

The McCann family wrote "Mayor Shaw and members of the Town Council, Thank you for arranging tonight's hearing regarding the property at 714 Sandusky. We are unable to attend, but I wanted to share our thoughts via email. My family lives up on Mellor Ave, very close to the property. So the future use of 714 is important to us.

## COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

January 14, 2019

Cont.

For the use of the property, we would love to see the area cleaned up and turned into a Horticultural Garden park. As land is developed around town, it would be nice to see some preserved. A unique garden with native plants to Maryland would be wonderful. A nice area with open air and seating would be a nice escape for those seeking sanctuary. You could walk there on lunch break from a local business, or take a break from life as a resident. I know it is not a traditional revenue generating project, but it would be an attraction that would bring people to town and reward those living here. While the small areas around the fountain and Townhouse are nice, it is not much open space for the immediate Downtown area in my opinion. I am not suggesting something large, but a smaller area under half an acre.

This link shows a garden concept in Bel Air that is nice. With areas and concept gardens sponsored by local businesses.

<https://www.belairmd.org/DocumentCenter/View/377/RockfieldGardensBrochure?bidId=>

Regardless of the winning proposal, we wanted to suggest additional access to the Railway Park be included in any plan to develop the property. A nice path that cuts back and forth (switchbacks) up the grade on the east side of the property would be a safe way for families to access the Train Park. Currently, many small children and families walk up the sidewalk along Sandosky to access the Train Park. This stretch of road often carries high levels of traffic and unfortunately at times high rates of speed. There are many occasions we have seen close calls with cars “barreling” over the hill and slam on their brakes when people/cars are approaching the entrance to the Rail Park and the parking areas behind Becks and at 714. I cringe when I see numerous people with strollers and small kids navigating so close to the roadway coming up the hill. And with the increasing levels of traffic due to development, this could be an issue.

As the property’s plan develops, we truly hope that the town continues with the goal of 714 complimenting the future of Sykesville. But most importantly, we hope the future of Sykesville includes maintaining its unique small town charm. We would hate to see this sacrificed for an overly aggressive plan for Economic Development. We bought a home in Sykesville to start a family and enjoy small town living. We understand progress, and support the local businesses. But we also want to remind you that there are families living downtown too, who would not like to see the town outgrow itself too fast. And at times, it feel like it is trying to do so. The areas surrounding Sykesville are growing rapidly now. We would love for Sykesville to maintain its unique identity through the years as we raise our kids here.

Thank you for all of your hard work.”

Jenn Wheeler wrote “Greetings, Unfortunately I am unable to attend tonight's town meeting to discuss the use of the property located at 714 Sandosky Rd., however, I would like to submit my support in favor of a brewery at that location, as mentioned on the infographic shared on Facebook.

I believe that a brewery could bring a great sense of community to our town, and undoubtedly, would bring guests from near and far, thereby helping to support our town's current businesses while in downtown Sykesville.

Breweries can be very family-friendly, and as I have seen at breweries in surrounding counties, they always spark camaraderie and community among its patrons.

Additionally, should the brewery choose not to sell food at their location, guests of the brewery could choose to enjoy meals at the nearby restaurants on Main Street.

I am strongly in favor of a brewery at that location, and believe it would be a wonderful addition to our flourishing and growing community.

## COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

January 14, 2019

Cont.

Thank you in advance for including this in the record of the meeting tonight.”

Melissa Clark, owner of Blue House Architecture which is not a Main Street business but has done business on Main Street, explained that there needs to be a large destination that will draw people to Main Street, and to the other businesses currently there. She asked if any interested users have submitted a proposal, put financial obligations in place, or is it just an idea?

Mike McKelvin, owner of 1623 Brewery, explained that the brewery is not a closing time bar and is not open all day, every day. He said that Scott Beck has put a lot of time and money into the building to make it work for him, and if he can't do it, then 1623 Brewery would like to do it. He explained that Sykesville, MD would be on the side of the cans that would be distributed across the country. He also explained that they have done market research and, on average, a visitor travels 40 minutes to visit a brewery, and they stay for an hour. At any given time, there are seven families in the brewery including some with newborn children. 1623 Brewery would not have food so people would need to go to one of the locations on Main Street. He would like them to be a part of the community.

Kathleen Hiteshew, 7726 Carter Road, is excited about the possibility of a brewery. Economic diversification is important to the stability of Main Street. She is also excited about the potential collaborations with the different stores on Main Street and the brewery. She is not concerned with the additional parking concerns.

Julie Della-Maria, Executive Director of the Downtown Sykesville Connection, thanked the Mayor and Council for voting to use the building for economic development instead of a municipal building. She agrees with Steve Enslow that the only way to expand Main Street would be to expand outward. She doesn't want to stop with 714 Sandosky and believes the Public Works building should be considered as well as other properties for the future. She also thinks there needs to be more creativity with parking like having offsite parking and a shuttle service or having South Branch Park parking lot paved.

Mayor Shaw thanked everyone for their comments and explained that the public hearing will be continued at the Mayor and Town Council Meeting on January 28 at 7:00p.m. Comments can be sent to [town@sykesville.net](mailto:town@sykesville.net) or presented in person.

**MOTION: Council Member True motioned and Council Member Link seconded to take a five minute recess at 8:16 P.M.**

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**MOTION: Council Member Link motioned and Mayor Shaw seconded to go back into open session at 8:21 P.M.**

**The motion carried unanimously.**

### **Board and Commission Guidelines**

Aretha Adams, Town Manager, explained the newly proposed Board and Commission Guidelines. She received Council President Betz's corrections prior to the meeting regarding the use of "advisory" as a way of defining the role of Boards and Commissions.

## **COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**January 14, 2019**

**Cont.**

Council Member Link explained that during a big project, such as Warfield, it would be difficult to have rotating Council liaisons. She thinks there should be an exception built in to the guidelines.

It was discussed to have the same person be the liaison for the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA), Ethics Commission, and Board of Elections. Dennis Hoover, Town Attorney, explained that the BZA should not have a Council Member on it because it is quasi-judicial in nature, the Board of Elections shouldn't have a liaison that is elected, as it could be a conflict of interest, and the Ethics Commission is a state mandated commission, so the state statute should be checked prior to assigning a liaison to it.

There was also discussion of a term for the Chairperson of each Board and Commission. Council suggested two-years terms with no limits on the number of terms a member can be selected as Chair.

There was a question about the qualification that anyone already holding an elected office shall not be eligible to serve in a regular voting position on any board or commission. The intention was to mean any elected office whether in Town or not.

### **Strategic Plan**

Ms. Adams presented the draft Strategic Plan document. She explained that it should be updated at least every two years. The strategic focus areas will be added to the staff reports to track throughout the year.

On Page 5, Quality of Life, it was decided to add "and Warfield" to the third bullet point under Long Term Goals so it reads "Development of the Girls' Shelter site in the greater context of Millard Cooper Park and Warfield." Also on Page 5, Long Term Goals, it was decided that the Parks Master Plan would be for all parks, not just Burkett and Millard Cooper Park. Under Action Items, it was decided to add "and repurpose the Apple Butter Building" to the second bullet point so it reads "Partnership with Howard County on the parking lot at South Branch Park and repurpose the Apple Butter Building." An additional bullet point was added to the Action Items which reads "Increase the ADA accessibility and connectivity of the Linear Trail."

On page 6, Economic Development, it was decided to add a bullet point under Long Term Goals that says "Economic Development of Warfield."

On page 7, Infrastructure, it was decided to change the word "create" to "update" so the fifth bullet point under Long Term Goals reads "Update a long term master plan for strategic Town owned properties." The seventh bullet point was updated to say "Update the Stormwater management of the Springfield Avenue corridor." Instead of "near Warfield." It was decided to add "and recommendation of upgrades" to the last bullet point so it reads "Assessment and recommendation of upgrades of Technology Infrastructure."

Council asked for a presentation or briefing on how the Town communicates with the public. This will happen at the next meeting that is recorded by the Community Media Center.

### **CLOSED SESSION:**

The meeting is proposed to be closed pursuant to the General Provisions of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Section 3-305(b): (13) To comply with a specific

**COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**January 14, 2019**

**Cont.**

constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter; and (14) Before a contract is awarded or bids are opened, discuss a matter directly related to a negotiation strategy or the contents of a bid or proposal, if public discussion or disclosure would adversely impact the ability of the public body to participate in the competitive bidding or proposal process.

**MOTION: Council Member Grasley motioned and Council Member True seconded to go into closed session at 9:04 P.M.**

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Those in attendance were: Mayor Shaw, Council President Betz, Council Members Carter, Grasley, Keenan, Link, and True, and Town Manager Aretha Adams.**

**Items discussed were:**

- **Minutes** – October 22, 2018, November 27, 2018, December 10, 2018, and January 3, 2019
- **Negotiation Strategy** – Negotiation Strategy for Potential Sale of Town Property

**MOTION: Mayor Shaw motioned and Council Member Grasley seconded to go back into open session at 10:11 P.M.**

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the Council, Mayor Shaw motioned and Council President Betz seconded to adjourn meeting at 10:12 P.M.**

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Respectfully submitted  
Town Clerk Kerry Chaney**