

# Brownsville council votes to support senior housing development

By Steve Ferris [sferris@heraldstandard.com](mailto:sferris@heraldstandard.com) | Posted: Wednesday, February 11, 2015 2:00 am

BROWNSVILLE — Borough council voted on Tuesday to write a letter of support for the tax credit financing of a proposed senior housing apartment building and retail development.

Trek Development Group of Pittsburgh is applying to the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Authority for \$7 million in tax credits to build Brownsville Senior Housing, a 24-unit apartment for seniors, and retail shops on Market Street in downtown.

The Fayette County Redevelopment Authority, which owns the property, approved an agreement allowing Trek to apply for the financing in January. Brownsville officials voiced their support for the project at that meeting.

Trek's plans are to restore a five-story building at 5 Market St., demolish several two-story buildings located at 13-21 Market St. and replace them with new buildings and a parking lot.

Councilman Jack Lawver said a decision on the financing application is expected in June or July, and if approved, Trek would have two years to complete construction.

Questioned by Councilman John Hosler, Lawver said the development would be taxable.

The Greater Brownsville Area Chamber of Commerce has written a letter of support for the project, Lawver said.

Council voted 5-0 to write the letter of support. Council members Charles Perkins and Tracy Zivkovich were absent.

In unrelated business, council approved a contract with McCollom Development Strategies to manage a \$50,000 grant the borough is seeking from the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to clean up and stabilize the banks of Dunlap Creek.

McCollom will be paid \$25,000 from a \$50,000 grant the borough received from the Benedum Foundation. The other \$25,000 from the Benedum grant would serve as the

required match for the DCNR grant. McCollom, who applied for the Benedum grant on the borough's behalf, would be paid in increments spelled out in the contract, Lawver said.

In a separate matter, Mayor Lester Ward and the public safety committee will look into a complaint by Mary Beth Stanislaw that borough police have never called her towing company Mary Beth's Towing to tow a vehicle since it was added to the tow truck rotation in 2013.

Stanislaw said someone she knows had a vehicle that needed towed from the borough and asked the responding officer to call her business, but the officer refused and another officer told her that police did not have a rotation for towers.

Ward said Mary Beth's Towing is on the list of towers police are supposed to call and that he would find out why the company hasn't been called.

Stanislaw said she tows vehicles for the state police and Redstone Township police, she has an impound yard and has a salver's license to tow abandoned vehicles and operates out of Fairbanks and Republic.

Council President James Lawver instructed the public safety committee to investigate the complaint.

In addition, council agreed to send a letter to the Fayette County Commissioners about a vacant property owned by Ernest Liggett of Monroeville.

Part of a wall on the building, part of the old Brownsville Hospital, fell on to Fifth Avenue.