

Hawley Silk Mill project moves forward, residents remain concerned

BY JOSH MROZINSKI (STAFF WRITER) Published: August 17, 2009

HAWLEY - A hearing on a conditional use application for a mixed-used development known as Hawley Silk Mill has been tentatively scheduled for Oct. 1.

Borough council on Wednesday agreed with project attorney Anthony Waldron that the hearing will happen as scheduled, subject to meeting legal notice requirements, among other conditions.

Council expects to finalize the meeting date on Sept. 9.

Developers hope to turn the 98,000-square-foot property off Route 6 into space for residential, commercial and educational use. Work on the \$5 million to \$7 million project is scheduled to wrap up in 2011.

Council on Wednesday also agreed to develop and sponsor an application for federal stimulus funding to improve energy use at the Hawley Silk Mill structures. The application will come at no cost to the borough, Mr. Waldron said.

As part of the project, a portion of nearby Wellwood Avenue would be closed, which concerned several people on Wednesday.

Ann Austin, who lives below the project site on Falls Street, said she isn't sure how closing the street will benefit nearby residents. Residents also said nearby streets would not be able to handle additional traffic volume with the closure of Wellwood Avenue.

Ms. Austin's mother, Duane, said she is concerned the development will create additional runoff that leads to flooding. With people having signed petitions for and against the project, solicitor Robert Bernathy asked a package for the project be created for public review as soon as possible.

Mr. Waldron said many people who have signed the petition are not Hawley residents. Mr. Bernathy said he will ensure that people have standing before being considered valid petitioners.

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