

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL PLANNING BOARD MEETING**  
**Tuesday, August 9, 2022**

**Present:**

Chairperson Jessica Pearson

Mayor Alex Roman

Mr. Steven Neale

Mr. Al DeOld

Mr. Jason Hyndman

Mr. Jeremy Katzeff

Ashley Neale, Planning Board Secretary

Vice Chairman David Freschi

Councilman Jack McEvoy

Mr. Tim Camuti

Mr. Larry Lonergan

Mr. Jesse Lilley

Mr. Greg Mascera, Planning Board Attorney

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Meeting called to order at 7:34 PM by Chair Pearson. This meeting was held via ZOOM video conferencing.

**Pledge of Allegiance:**

Chair Pearson reads Open Public Meetings Act Statement.

**Public Hearing**

Chair Pearson asks if anyone from the public would like to address the board on topics not on this meeting's agenda. A Mr. Chopra was brought into the meeting but did not speak.

Ray Rice from 16 Wolfrun Court Long Valley New Jersey noted that he has appeared at the last meeting regarding a property on Bloomfield Avenue. He comments that he has previously submitted plans for this property, which included 60 units and 20 percent affordable, he notes the property has previously been, designated an Area in Need of Development.

**Approval of Minutes**

Chair Pearson asks for a motion to approve minutes from a Regular meeting held on June 23, 2022. Mr. Lonergan makes the motion, Chair Pearson seconds. Mr. Lonergan and Mr. Neale abstain, all others present vote in favor.

**Presentation & Discussion on Draft Master Plan Continued**

Chair Pearson notes that the Board will be continuing their discussion on the draft Master Plan and hands the meeting over to the San and Paul from H2M Associates.

San notes that at the last meeting they left off on page 45 of the Land Use element, and notes that she has received comments from two Board members and would like to go through and address both. She comments that on page 45 table 1.2 is not an error it was done off of the DCA data that is presented to every municipality and notes that she has reached out to the Construction Code official for confirmation. She notes a typo would be changes it should read 10 million instead of 19 million. She continues by stating that the wording under "projects in the pipe line" will be changed to read, "Taking a look at recent development and projects to address the Township's affordable housing" and then stating what those are. Councilman McEvoy notes that under the Cameco site redevelopment there was not an increase in density because other lots were acquired. San mentions that Mr. Hyndman made a comment regarding looking into cottage clusters in appropriate zones. San notes that they have looked at all prior studies and they did not identify any lots where a cottage cluster overlay zone would be feasible, and asks the Board if they would like to incorporate this

idea. There is discussion among the Board regarding the definition and benefits or detriments of including language regarding cottage clusters. The ultimate consensus is to not include any language relating to cottage clusters.

San continues with page 54, noting that there were comments regarding the shared parking suggestions. San notes that they key was to ensure adequate off street parking. San notes that Mr. Hyndman made a comment regarding bike parking, and she does not see an issue with including language that states "additional bike parking where practicable," in the last sentence of the column after shared off street parking. There is discussion amongst the Board regarding bike racks and the best locations for them. Mayor Roman notes there is a line on page 53 that mentions drive thru's and he does not want that to open the door for that. San notes that drive thru will be taken out. San notes that Chair Pearson suggested adding, "that other portions of the Township's C2 professional office zone could potentially support overlays that would allow for mixed use affordable housing." The Board agrees to the addition of that language to page 55.

San notes on page 65, Chair Pearson commented on the last paragraph regarding the increased intensity of heavy rain. San clarifies that they are talking about how the infrastructure is aging and more than 100 years old, and that it has been exacerbated with subsequent development resulting in localized flooding. She adds they will clarify what they meant in that section. Vice Chairman Freschi asks if there could be tighter regulations for properties along the Peckman River. Chair Pearson notes that this has been brought up and investigated by the Township Council. Mayor Roman notes that it is an ongoing process that relies on resources from the federal government. San comments that efforts could still be done even if they are not written specifically into the Master Plan.

San notes on page 68, they removed the word "unlikely" and clarified what was meant by a severe storm that would require mass evacuation by the state. Chair Pearson asks about the section on page 68 where it states one resident per unit versus C2 as two residents per unit. Paul comments that when projecting for multifamily residential units the average household is closer to two, where the C2 zone was projected for assisted living type facilities where one resident is more likely. Chair Pearson questions the specificity of having assisted living mentioned. Mr. Mascera agrees that he would prefer there not be mention of it. San notes they will take that out and adjust any numbers accordingly. Mr. DeOld asks about item number 33 regarding mitigation measures for the municipal building. There is some discussion, and it is clarified that they meant the building and grounds facility on Ozone, and San agrees to make the language clearer.

Mr. Katzeff comments there is nothing in the plan for cannabis and now that it is legal and the Township is, getting requests he feels that it should be. San defers to Councilman McEvoy and Mayor Roman for their suggestions. Councilman McEvoy comments that he has been told this would fall under the zoning ordinance and should be left out of the Master Plan. Mr. Mascera suggests including language that states as of the date of the Master Plan the governing body has opted out but include a forward looking statement that it could be considered after the five year opt out. San agrees to include such language. There is some discussion amongst the Board on specific language and what should be included. Mr. Camuti suggests reordering the list of recommendations to have more continuity.

Chair Pearson calls for a break from 8:52 to 9:00 PM.

San continues on page 78, Mr. Hyndman comments about the number of cars each household owns being a traffic and pedestrian safety issue. San notes that they cannot control how many cars people own, but it is much higher compared to the County and they are just stating facts. Mr. Hyndman suggests adding information for how ownership of three and four cars compares as well. San and Paul agree. There is some discussion about the language regarding curb space on page 84. It is suggested that Uber and Lyft be replaced with Amazon delivery and landscapers. Paul notes they will come up with appropriate language to differentiate the shorter versus longer time intervals these entities take up curb space. Councilman McEvoy notes that on page 84 regarding meter parking, some street listed do not have meters. Paul responds that they will take out the specific street names. Mr. Neale notes the times are 8 AM to 4 PM, not 6 PM as written. Councilman McEvoy notes that on page 85 regarding public parking, it only states Park Place and should include the one on Grove Avenue. There is discussion regarding suggesting a traffic circle along Bloomfield Avenue to help mitigate traffic and improve pedestrian safety. San comments that they recommended working with Essex County to decelerate and create better pedestrian safety, but they would not recommend specific tools because it is difficult to know the feasibility and space requirements for things like traffic circles. San mentions that Mr. Hyndman suggested



texture pavement as a traffic calming mechanism, she agrees and will add it in this section. There is discussion regarding traffic and cut through streets like Forest Avenue, and adding speed humps to certain locations. It is ultimately decided to remove language concerning speed humps because it may delay emergency response time and make snow removal more difficult.

Mr. DeOld suggests that the map on page 93 shows busy streets that may not be the best option to promote bicycle riding on. There is some discussion on electric bikes and other streets for promoting bike riding and lanes. Mr. Hyndman suggests reworking the map to show bike routes leading to the middle school instead of ending on Bloomfield Avenue. Vice Chair Freschi asks about the pedestrian plaza suggestion on page 99, if it was a general suggestion or if they had a location in mind. San notes that it was just a general suggestion they did not want to specify a location. There was discussion on pedestrian plazas and possible locations for them in the future.

Mr. Freschi suggests adding language on page 101 for possible parks along the Peckman River. There is discussion about locations and feasibility of doing so. It is ultimately decided that no recommendations need to be added on this subject. There is a suggestion for adding electric bike use to the recommendation that reads, "Ensure adequate infrastructure for anticipated growth and electric vehicles." There is discussion on recommendation number 14 that addresses widening sidewalks. Councilman McEvoy asks if specific locations were considered, and notes that in the downtown there would be no way to widen sidewalks. San notes that it was put to be considered for possible future developments, but they could reword the section to read bump outs at intersections for safer intersections along Bloomfield Avenue.

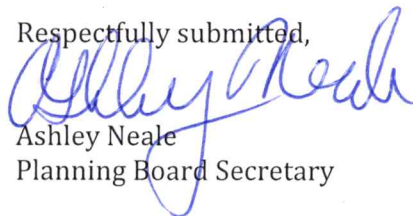
Chair Pearson asks if anyone from the public has any comments regarding anything the Board discussed tonight. No members of the public came forward.

It is noted that this discussion will continue at a special meeting in person at the Verona Community Center starting at 7:30 PM on Tuesday August 16.

### **Adjourn**

After a motion made by Mr. Camuti and seconded by Mayor Roman, there was a unanimous vote to adjourn at 10:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Ashley Neale  
Planning Board Secretary

*PLEASE NOTE: Meeting minutes are a summation of the hearing. If you are interested in a verbatim transcript from this or any proceeding, please contact the Planning Board office at 973-857-4777.*

