

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL PLANNING BOARD MEETING
Thursday, July 21, 2022

Present:

Ms. Jessica Pearson
Mayor Alex Roman
Mr. Steven Neale
Mr. Al DeOld
Mr. Jason Hyndman
Mr. Jeremy Katzeff

Ashley Neale, Planning Board Secretary

Mr. Larry Lonergan
Councilman Jack McEvoy
Mr. Tim Camuti
Mr. David Freschi
Mr. Jesse Lilley
Mr. Greg Mascera, Planning Board Attorney

Meeting called to order at 7:31PM by Mr. Lonergan, 2021-2022 Chairman.

Pledge of Allegiance:

Mr. Lonergan reads Open Public Meetings Act Statement.

Francis Reiner from DMR Architects introduces himself to the Board. He notes that Dan Hauben from DMR and Jamie Placek from DeCotiis are also present. He notes that they are in front of the Board tonight in an informal manner to introduce themselves and update the Board on the Township's Fair Share Housing Settlement Agreement and the ordinance regarding the Town Center Overlay Zone.

Councilman McEvoy and Chair Pearson note that if any discussion occurs regarding this ordinance they will need to recuse themselves, as they own property within the proposed zone. Mr. Hyndman notes his concern that the Board is comparing this to the old out of date Master Plan and not the new one. He asks if H2M has seen the plan. San from H2M notes that she was aware this was being done separate and all the language in the Master Plan is consistent with the Affordable Housing Plan.

Re-Organization of Planning Board

Mr. Mascera notes for the records that the following oaths have been administered prior to the meeting.

1. Jack McEvoy- Class III Member Term Expires June 30, 2023
2. Jason Hyndman- Class IV Member Term Expires June 30, 2026
3. Jessica Pearson- Class IV Member Term Expires June 30, 2026
4. Jesse Lilley – Alternate Member #1 – Term Expires June 30, 2024

Mr. Lonergan notes that he no longer wishes to continue as Chairman and asks for nominations from the Board. Mr. Lonergan nominates Jessica Pearson, Mr. Hyndman seconds. Roll call is taken, Councilman McEvoy abstains, all others present vote in favor.

Mr. Lonergan asks for nominations for Vice Chairman. Chair Pearson nominates David Freschi, Mayor Roman seconds. Mr. Katzeff nominates Jason Hyndman, Mr. Lonergan seconds. Roll call is taken. Mr. Katzeff votes for Mr. Hyndman. All others present vote for Mr. Freschi.

Mr. Lonergan asks for a motion to approve Resolution 2022-06, Appointing Ashley Neale as Board Secretary. Chair Pearson makes the motion, Councilman McEvoy seconds, and Mr. Neale abstains. All others present vote in favor.

Mr. Lonergan asks for a motion to approve Resolution 2022-07, Appointing Greg Mascera as Board attorney. Mayor Roman makes the motion, Chair Pearson seconds. All members vote in favor. Mayor Roman thanks Mr. Mascera for his hard work and passion in representing the Board over the last number of years.

Mr. Lonergan asks for a motion to approve Resolution 2022-08, Board Meeting dates for 2022-2023. Mr. DeOld makes the motion, Mr. Camuti seconds. All present vote in favor.

Mr. Lonergan asks for a motion to approve Resolution 2022-09, Officials Newspapers for Board's Legal Notices. Mayor Roman makes the motion, Mr. Camuti seconds. All present vote in favor.

There is discussion among the Board regarding Sub-Committees. The 2022-2023 Sub Committees will be as follows:

Architectural Review Board: Mr. DeCarlo, Mayor Roman and Mr. Camuti

Site Plan & Subdivision Committee: Mr. DeCarlo, Mr. Neale, Councilman McEvoy, and Mr. Hyndman

Landscape & Environmental Committee: Mr. DeCarlo, Chair Pearson, Mr. Neale and Mr. Freschi

Master Plan Implementation Committee: Mr. DeCarlo, Mr. Lonergan, Mr. DeOld, Chair Pearson, Mr. Camuti & Mr. Mascera

Public Hearing

Mr. Lonergan asks if anyone from the public would like to address the Board on anything not on tonight's agenda. Ralph Valente from 855 Bloomfield Avenue- He notes that he has discussed with various bodies in Verona the potential to develop this site, and that the new Master Plan draft still has the property zoned as residential.

Ray Rice- Real Estate Developer notes they approached the Township Manager in 2018 regarding plans to develop the site. His opinion is that the current zoning for the property is functionally obsolete, and notes the site has already been designated as an area in need of redevelopment.

George Manousos from 37 Forest- Asks if there will be other opportunities for the public to speak on the Master Plan.

There is discussion among the Board about timelines and meeting dates for the Master Plan and the application at 1 Sunset. It is ultimately decided that the Board will hold two special meetings on August 9 and August 16. Mr. Lonergan asks for a motion to hold special meetings to address the Master Plan on the above-mentioned dates. Mr. Katzeff makes the motion, Mr. Hyndman seconds. All present vote in favor.

Mr. Lonergan calls for a break at 8:21 PM. Chair Pearson calls the meeting back to order at 8:30 PM.

Presentation & Discussion on Draft Master Plan

Chair Pearson introduces San Chavan and Paul Cancilla from H2M Architects. San begins by stating that they will conduct this meeting in the form of a full Board working session and anyone with comments can feel free to express them as they move forward. San gives a brief background on the Municipal Land Use Law requirements for the Master Plan. San notes that there was a transferring issue that was noticed by two Board members. She adds that anywhere in the draft that makes mention of Leonia has been adjusted accordingly.

Chair Pearson asks if anyone from the Board has any comments in the Introduction and Background section. Mr. Freschi asks if the goals and objective proposed are similar to what they have seen as planners in other towns, because it seems like there are a lot of them. San notes that they are similar to other Township's they have represented in the past. Mr. Freschi also asks about the formatting and why the demographic analysis would not be before goals and objectives. San notes that under the Municipal Land Use Law the statement of goals and objectives and the land use plan are the two essential elements, and that's why it was formatted in that manner. Mayor Roman notes a comment on page 19, regarding demographics. He asks why generation X was not considered when looking at what each group would want in a community. Paul responds that based on national census and coming of age they would be the ones looking at the housing typology of the Township. San adds that they typically rely on secondary data for these types of analysis and this is what the data shows but they will look into expanding the language for that demographic.

Mr. Hyndman comments that for #4 and #5 he would like to see each area identified with a description and specific elements that would like to be there. San notes that the goal of the plan was to be cohesive and have all the elements be linked and tied together. Mr. Hyndman notes that he feels the Master Plan should give a framework of what the zoning ordinance would look like, and suggests identifying key neighborhoods and adding specific bulk standards. Mr. Katzeff comments that in the old Master Plan there are references to prescriptive elements that would suggest to the governing body that new zones should be created. There is some discussion on variances and non-conforming lots, and what language should be written in the plan. San notes that they have reviewed the 2009 Master Plan and the Township Zoning Ordinance, she adds that they Zoning Board should conduct an annual report in which they would make recommendations to the Planning Board and Township Council on updating any zone changes.

Mr. Hyndman notes there is a large push for sustainable smart growth in appropriate areas, and asks if it would be possible to explore things like transferring development rights for vacant parcels, to be added to recommendations. San notes that those are typically done in municipalities with large lots like farmland properties and Verona is mostly developed. Chair Pearson asks about the presumption on housing and people wanting to age in place, and asks where the data on housing costs was derived. San notes that the data comes from the Uniform Housing Affordability Controls, or UHAC and Census data. Mayor Roman notes that there seems to be an assumption that young families are always looking for a multi-family unit or someone aging in place is always looking for a rental. He adds that it is a function of what is on the market, and every single family home in Verona that goes on the market sells. San notes that they do mention that single-family neighborhoods are an existing character within the Township that should be preserved, but agrees to change the wording to read clearer. There is discussion amongst the Board about cottage clusters and the possibility of H2M looking into including them as a possible housing option. Mayor Roman mentions the affordability section and asks how it compares to other parts of New Jersey. Paul and San agree to put in language noting how it would. San adds she feels there will be other areas that are more or less affordable comparably.

Chair Pearson comments on the Community Engagement sections, noting that only about 1,200 residents or 8 percent of the population responded to the survey and less than 1 percent came to the Community Engagement meeting. She suggests those numbers be added to show the public input data. Mayor Roman asks for further explanation for the PA5 area on page 26.

Chair Pearson asks if anyone from the Board has comments on the Land Use section. Mayor Roman comments that the 2009 Master Plan goes into depth on analyzing existing land use and analyzing on a census block group level, and he does not see that in this draft. San notes that the goal of their plan was to identify land use patterns and how many properties were vacant or developed. She adds that the goal was to provide a vision and discuss underutilized areas, instead of detail on residential areas. Mr. Katzeff comments that he would like to see more tools in the plan to be able to prepare for additional affordable housing obligations in the future. San gives the Board a background on affordable housing and COAH, and notes that the Land Use element acknowledges affordable housing but they did not go through individual neighborhoods identifying areas for it. There is continued discussion on including more specific identifiable parcels for affordable housing in the updated Master Plan and Fair Share Plan.

Chair Pearson comments that on page 32, she disagrees with the GIS data versus the tax records, and the Land Conservancy Plan was dismissed. She notes the data in the Land Conservancy plan shows that the Township has 14 percent open space and this plan states 25. She adds that including the golf course is concerning, and does not think it should be included in open space. Paul responds that the reason for including the Historic Preservation element was that they utilized language from there. San notes that the Board has already adopted the Open Space plan as a separate element but she would agree to refer to it.

Herb Lev from 45 Summit Road- Asks about the southeast corner near the golf club, he notes that part of that is his property and does not want it to be confused as public land. Paul notes that this DEP data is not by parcel, they are just putting the parcels over as a layer.

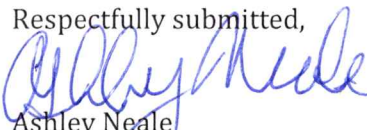
Chair Pearson notes for the record there are 15C properties that are currently listed as publicly owned but are slated for development, but are still 15C in the tax records, Block 2301 Lots 14.01 & 14.02. There is discussion regarding granting of variances and changing bulk standards in specific zones. Mr. Mascera suggests adding language to the

section noting that there are many variances granted and the Governing body has not acted to change the ordinances. San agrees and notes she will include language that any kind of development should be per zoning and not by variance. Mr. Hyndman notes that variances granted by the Zoning Board should be looked at to see where the issues are and how they are affecting the ordinances. San summarizes the discussion and clarifies what language the Board would like to be included. Mr. Hyndman suggests recommendations for the Valente tract blurb, on what could be developed there. San notes they would just recommend that a redevelopment plan should be in place. There is discussion regarding Redevelopment Plans and making specific recommendations. San notes there is a recommendation on page 71 that states the Township should consider utilizing redevelopment tools on existing underutilized site in commercial areas and agrees to reiterate the wording in this section. Mayor Roman suggests making comments on good uses for areas in need of redevelopment instead of calling out specific sites.

Chair Pearson notes this discussion will continue at two special meetings, on August 9 and August 16 at 7:30 PM.

Adjourn

After a motion made by Mayor Roman and seconded by Mr. Lonergan, there was a unanimous vote to adjourn at 10:35 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.