

BERNARDS TOWNSHIP

PLANNING BOARD

MINUTES

Regular Meeting

May 7, 2019

Chairwoman Piedici called the meeting to order at 7:34 PM.

FLAG SALUTE

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT

Chairwoman Piedici read the following open meeting and procedural statement:

"In accordance with the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Law of 1975, notice of this regular meeting of the Planning Board of the Township of Bernards was posted on the bulletin board in the reception hall of the Municipal Building, Collyer Lane, Basking Ridge, NJ; was sent to the Bernardsville News, Whippany, NJ, and to the Courier News, Bridgewater, NJ, on January 9, 2019; and was electronically mailed to those people who have requested individual notice.

The following procedure has been adopted by the Bernards Township Planning Board. There will be no new cases heard after 10:00 PM and no new witnesses or testimony heard after 10:30 PM.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present: Damurjian, Esposito, Harris, Hurley, Piedici, Zaidel

Members Absent: Asay, Coelho, Crane, McNally, Mastrangelo

Also Present: Board Attorney, Jonathan E. Drill, Esq.; Township Planner, David Schley, PP, AICP;
Board Planner, David Banisch, PP, AICP; Board Secretary, Cyndi Kiefer

Moved by Mr. Hurley and seconded by Mr. Zaidel, all in favor and carried, that the absences of Ms. Asay, Dr. Coelho, Mr. Crane, Mr. McNally and Ms. Mastrangelo be excused.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 16, 2019 – Regular Session - On motion made by Mr. Zaidel and seconded by Mr. Hurley, all in favor and carried, the minutes were approved as drafted.

2019 MASTER PLAN REEXAMINATION REPORT DISCUSSION

Mr. Banisch stated that the Master Plan Reexamination Report process should be conducted as a high-level review rather than a line-by-line examination. Should the report recommend that the Master Plan be revised either in part or in its entirety, a detailed evaluation would then be warranted. The results of a straw poll established that the Board wished to proceed with this high-level approach.

In reference to the two (2) new amendments to the purposes of the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL), the Board determined that new purpose "p," which advocates the use of flexible zoning techniques, should be added to the "General Objectives." The Board confirmed that the second new purpose, which deals with development around military installations, should not be included since there are no such facilities in the Township.

Mr. Zaidel commented that not all the objectives were very well integrated or aligned with the goals. By straw poll, the Board unanimously decided that the goals should be designated first and then the objectives should be developed to articulate a variety of means and strategies to achieve those goals.

The Board agreed that Lyons Mall should be specified as a site for evaluation for potential zoning incentives to encourage positive development. They also agreed that evaluating other sites for development options including future affordable housing should be a *separate* goal/objective.

Mr. Banisch suggested that the zoning ordinance should be revised to adhere to the federally mandated shortened timeframes for local approvals of new 5G cellular telecommunications facilities.

In reference to housing conditions, Mr. Hurley opined that none of the existing housing types provide any choices for retired residents looking for less taxed options. He felt that the needs of families and those requiring affordable housing are being addressed however there are no efforts to create housing for retired residents who want to remain in the township or to attract young professionals to the township. Including all these demographics would create a multi-generational community which he opined would be beneficial. There was unanimous agreement that this changing demographic and its effect on housing should be identified in the report.

It was decided that the traffic congestion on South Finley Avenue from Lyons Mall to the high school during peak hours should be added to the specific areas already cited as areas of concern in the traffic and circulation objectives.

The issue of invasive species displacing native vegetation in conservation easements was discussed, however Mr. Zaidel opined that the more important issue is hazardous trees. It was noted that most of these easements are subject to New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) restrictions. Mr. Drill suggested further review.

Since quality of life issues such as increased traffic are of specific concern, there was consensus to include a comment embracing limitations on future growth by managing development through changes in zoning.

The Board agreed that the current zoning ordinance adequately addresses the issue of solar photovoltaic electric generating systems utilizing solar panels.

Mr. Drill stated that during the last reexamination, the development of the quarry could not be addressed because the Board was actively involved in litigation with the quarry owners. A straw poll confirmed that the Board wanted to include a comment encouraging development of the quarry that would preserve open space and return the area to productive use.

David L. Russell, 35 Fawn Lane, suggested that objectives be quantified to make progress easier to ascertain.

COMMENTS FROM STAFF - None

COMMENTS FROM Board MEMBERS

Chairwoman Piedici asked Mr. Banisch to send a memo to the Board addressing the next discussion items, Section D of the Master Plan Reexamination Report and the Land Use Plan Element.

In response to a comment from Mr. Damurjian about the placement of new trees in parks, Mr. Zaidel advised him to attend a Shade Tree Commission meeting or submit photos of the areas of concern.

ADJOURN

By unanimous Voice Vote, the meeting was adjourned at 8:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Cyndi Kiefer, Secretary
Township of Bernards
Planning Board

Approved as written 05-21-2019

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