

**EAST AMWELL PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**  
**7:30 PM East Amwell Municipal Building**  
**April 10, 2013 - Meeting**

**Call to Order, Attendance and Pledge of Allegiance**

This meeting of the East Amwell Planning Board was opened on April 10, 2013 at 7:30 PM. The following notice was read, "In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, this is a regularly scheduled meeting pursuant to the annual meeting notice as published in the January 17, 2013 issue of the Hunterdon County Democrat, a copy of the agenda for this meeting was forwarded to the Hunterdon County Democrat, filed in the Township Clerk's Office and posted on the bulletin board on April 4, 2013."

**Present:** Roger DeLay  
Fred Gardner  
Rob Gilbert  
Gail Glashoff  
Don Reilly, Chairman  
Dart Sageser  
Joe Wolfgang  
Linda Lenox – Alt. #1  
Gail Skupien – Alt. #2  
Planner Slagle

**Excused:** David Wang-Iverson

**Citizens' Privilege to Speak on Items not on the Agenda**

It was noted for the record that there were no members of the public present at the meeting at this time.

**Review of Minutes**

A motion by Fred Gardner, seconded by Gail Glashoff to approve the Board's 3/13/13 minutes as revised was approved with Ms. Skupien abstaining.

**New Business – Other**

**Resolution PB#2013-04 – Steve Lang: Preliminary Major Subdivision Approval – Block 8 Lot 10: 1127 Old York Road**

A motion by Roger Delay, seconded by Gail Glashoff to approve Resolution PB#2013-04 was approved by roll call vote.

**Roll Call Vote:** Roger DeLay: Yes, Gail Glashoff: Yes, Fred Gardner: Yes, Rob Gilbert: Yes, Don Reilly: Yes, Dart Sageser: Yes, Linda Lenox: Yes.

**Discussion – Master Plan Re-examination: Status Update**

Chairman Reilly noted that the Master Plan Re-exam Subcommittee did not meet prior to tonight's meeting because the Planning Board agenda was light and he believed it was a good opportunity for the whole Board to discuss the re-exam. Chairman Reilly suggested the Board discuss the goals and objectives in the Master Plan as well as the 2003 Re-exam Report and determine what the Board wants to focus on or change in this year's re-exam.

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Planner Slagle explained that she would like to highlight the major points so everyone can think about the issues and come back to next month's meeting with some suggestions. She noted that she intends to have a draft of the 2013 Re-exam Report prepared for review at next month's meeting.

Planner Slagle noted the Goals and Objectives are from the 2006 Master Plan. She noted at that time a lot of various planning documents had been prepared from the late 1990's through the Sourland Mountain Ordinance and the 2006 Re-exam attempted to bring all of those various planning documents together. She noted the Goals and Objectives were created as a separate document that encompassed a lot of issues going on within the Township at that time.

Mr. Sageser referred to the statement regarding promoting the utilization of renewable energy sources and suggested language be added to indicate promotion in a manner appropriate to the Township's cultural heritage. Mr. Gardner remarked that the Board cannot change language in the Municipal Land Use Law. Mr. Sageser agreed but commented that he believes it is important to state the local perspective on this matter.

Mr. Gardner added that he believes the Board could comment on the land use provisions under the local goals and objectives. Chairman Reilly clarified that the Board can interpret the provisions relative to the East Amwell Township community.

Mr. Gardner commented on the importance of any mention of water in the Township's vision. He noted there is an intense concern about water availability and quality and remarked that he believes the zoning in the Sourland Mountain depends on it. He also noted that there is no mention of the Village or the Hamlets other than when referring to historic structures and viewsheds and he pondered whether or not there could be more to add regarding the vision of these areas. Mr. Sageser indicated this is a good point and asked if the Township's zoning should recognize the unique characteristics of historic villages relative to hamlets. Chairman Reilly asked what the Board can craft and then remarked that the Board would need to determine how to manage whatever ordinance may be crafted. Mr. Gardner asked if the Township's vision should include something more specific regarding the village of Ringoes, noting he believes it only currently addresses viewsheds.

Planner Slagle commented that there is a statement that says, "...we have preserved the cultural landscape by recognizing historic structures and districts managing change within the historic villages." She remarked that the Board may wish to re-craft this statement using language expressing that the Board encourages protection of these areas. Mr. DeLay commented that it may also be beneficial to focus on preserving the past rather than thinking about future development when reviewing these areas. He stated there may be features or aspects of certain areas in the Township that may need preserving. He asked if a developer could come in and tear down structures such as the Wertsville Store. He pondered whether or not this structure was on the Historic Preservation Register and suggested maybe it should be if it isn't. Planner Slagle remarked that perhaps the Historic Preservation Plan can be reviewed and emphasize that preservation of historic sites is encouraged. Mr. Gardner commented that one element of a vision is to support the things you are interested in doing as well as provide a statement that assists the Township in defending what they have against any potential court challenges. He added that a statement regarding maintaining the small village character of Ringoes, for example, might be an appropriate component of the vision.

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Mr. Sageser commented that the vision could certainly tie into the history of farms within the Township. Planner Slagle remarked that the Master Plan serves as a guide and the goals and objectives are keys to determining consistency when reviewing ordinances. Chairman Reilly added that the Historic Preservation Plan can potentially serve as a means of reviewing the vision for the village areas. Planner Slagle suggested such language as, "...preserving historic sites and structures is important to the Township to preserve our cultural landscapes and to keep our identity as a historic farming community." She said the recommendation could also be made that the Historic Preservation Plan needs updating.

Chairman Reilly commented that the Sourland Alliance has been focused on municipalities adopting stream corridor ordinances and he remarked that he and Planner Slagle have discussed this and Planner Slagle believes that with the language in the Township's existing ordinances along with the State regulations, there aren't any other additional protections that need to be established. Planner Slagle indicated that she will review the Sourland Alliance's model again to confirm this is still the case.

Several board members commented on the success the Township has had with managing large scale development and noted that this consistent management practice has precluded the need for micromanaging the land that's left.

It was noted that Planner Slagle will provide a draft re-exam report prior to next month's meeting so the Board Members have time to review it.

Mr. Sageser commented on farming activities in the Sourland Mountain District and asked if there is something more that can be reviewed in the zoning ordinances to address the recent issues in that area. Planner Slagle commented that there is always a difficulty when there is a zoning ordinance which contains items that are contrary to Right-to-Farm. She explained that the reason the zoning in the Sourland Mountain District was created the way it was is because of the limited resources in that area of the Township and she noted there are simply some land uses that are not compatible with the Sourland Mountain. Planner Slagle stated that the ordinance was crafted in a way that allowed existing farms to continue with new or expanded farms needing to come in for review. She explained that the way CADB works is that under Right-to-Farm, there are certain things commercial farms can obtain direct approval for. She stated that technically CADB has to seek municipal input on applications that are of concern and it's up to the municipality to make their position known. Planner Slagle remarked that the recent issues with farming activities in the Sourland Mountain was more of a communication problem than an ordinance problem.

Mr. Sageser expressed that on a larger level there is the question of where farming is going. He stated that it is likely to move into different directions from traditional farming. Mr. DeLay asked if the Township is meeting the changing definition of farming. He noted that under the conditions of New Jersey as opposed to the conditions of Iowa, farming is vastly different. Planner Slagle remarked that many States are re-assessing what commercial farms are regarding size and activity. She said SADC has agricultural management documents for every imaginable type of farming and noted that it is recognized that farming is no longer just big crop or large dairy farms. Planner Slagle expressed that she believes in the Sourland Mountain the Township isn't as concerned with the type of farm as much as they are concerned with the intensity of the activity regarding impervious surface and water consumption.

Mr. Gardner referred to the correspondence the Board received from Zoning Officer McManus regarding the zoning permit denial of proposed farming activities for a property located on Linvale Road. Planner Slagle commented that she believes this matter is on tomorrow night's CADB agenda and hopes they seek municipal input. Chairman Reilly asked how the communication issue can be addressed. Planner Slagle suggested the Ag Advisory Board keep up with zoning denials and/or all applications going to the CADB. Mr. Gardner commented that if this application gets approved, the zoning established to keep farming activities from destroying the character of the mountain is going to be in jeopardy. He noted the proposed application is seeking 3 times the allowed amount of impervious coverage and a 20 stall barn with an indoor riding arena on what he stated is essentially wetlands. Mr. Gilbert explained that the property was considered for preservation at one point and the assessed value was low because the parcel was considered to have significant wetlands.

It was noted that Ms. Glashoff will attend tomorrow night's CADB meeting as the Ag Committee liaison to the Planning Board.

#### **Oral Reports**

FOSPC – Mr. Gardner commented on the Township budget issues expressing that the recent preservation of the Omick, Lang and Wiedemer properties resulted in 98 acres of preserved land that cost East Amwell \$126,000 which is \$1200 per acre. He noted the low costs are largely due to the Township's participation with Green Acres, County Open Space Trust and private donations. He said, "You get that kind of help when you have an active program." Mr. Gardner informed the Board that FOSPC Administrator Judy Conard will be retiring within the next few months. He also noted that Barbara Hay accepted the offer for the purchase of a development easement on her property.

Agricultural Advisory Committee – No report was given.

Environmental Commission – No report was given.

Wastewater Management – No report was given.

PB Secretary – No report was given.

Chairman – No report was given.

#### **Open to the Public**

It was noted for the record that there were no members of the public present at the meeting at this time.

#### **Presentation of Vouchers**

A motion by Gail Glashoff, seconded by Rob Gilbert to approve the vouchers for payment as listed on the agenda was unanimously approved.

#### **Adjournment**

Chairman Reilly adjourned the meeting at 8:44 PM.

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Maria Andrews, Administrative Officer