

EAST AMWELL PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
7:30 PM East Amwell Municipal Building
May 8, 2013 - Meeting

Call to Order, Attendance and Pledge of Allegiance

This meeting of the East Amwell Planning Board was opened on May 8, 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 May 2, 2013."

Present: Roger DeLay
Fred Gardner
Rob Gilbert
Gail Glashoff
Don Reilly, Chairman
Dart Sageser
David Wang-Iverson
Joe Wolfgang
Linda Lenox – Alt. #1
Gail Skupien – Alt. #2
Attorney Norman
Engineer O'Neal
Planner Slagle

Excused: No one

Citizens' Privilege to Speak on Items not on the Agenda

Chairman Reilly opened the floor to public comment for any items not on the agenda. It was noted for the record that no members of the public came forward so he closed the floor.

Review of Minutes

A motion by Fred Gardner, seconded by Gail Glashoff to approve the Board's 4/10/13 minutes as revised was approved with Mr. Wang-Iverson abstaining.

New Business – Other

Capital Review – East Amwell Township School – Addition

Present for the presentation of the project was: Architect Pete Campisano, School Superintendent Ed Stoloski, School Board President Chuck Miles and School Board Member Carol McGee.

Mr. Stoloski explained that after the Newtown, CT school shootings the school reviewed its own security and believes an enhanced entry is necessary. He noted that currently visitors are buzzed into the school from the main entrance which allows for access directly to the school hallway and all visitors are on the honor system to then come to the school office and officially check in. He remarked that the school is equipped with panic buttons and cameras that allow the police to tap in from their computers. He noted protocols have been upgraded to provide additional security as well. The proposed addition will provide a buzzed in entry directly into a secure office area further enhancing the school's security measures. Mr. Stoloski indicated the County Prosecutor and the State Police have endorsed the school's plans and support the proposed construction layout.

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Mr. Campisano explained that the plans must still go to the State and then will hopefully go to the voters in September. He noted that part of the State package includes a letter of support from the local Planning Board which is why they were here this evening. Mr. Campisano clarified that the proposed 1600 sq. ft. addition will have the same look, feel, character, brick style and windows as the existing school building and will be located right next to the current main office area.

It was noted that there will not be any change to the parking areas or current traffic circulation. There will not be any additional staff. No new landscaping is being proposed and any additional lighting will conform to the Township's ordinances. Planner Slagle asked if any construction materials will be stored on-site. Mr. Campisano indicated they intend to use one third of the large area behind the school for the storage of any construction materials. He noted it will be secure and fenced off during construction. Engineer O'Neal noted that if there is 5000 sq. ft. or more of land disturbance they will need to get approval from the County Soil Conservation District. Mr. Campisano commented that he is aware of the guidelines and stated that when an Engineer is hired for the project they will do the calculations and comply with any necessary guidelines.

Mr. Sageser asked how the new roof on the addition will tie into the existing roof line. Mr. Stoloski said the construction will be blended in. He indicated there is no intention to raise the roof line.

A motion by Gail Glashoff, seconded by Roger DeLay to open to the public was unanimously approved.

Andrea Bonette of 17 Ridge Road came forward and asked for clarification on where the students will enter the school in the morning. Mr. Stoloski explained that the buses drop the students off in front of the building and they enter the school through the front door. He noted that parents who drop their children off use the middle driveway and their children enter through a side door which is monitored by a teacher who allows entry into the building. Ms. Bonette asked if the process is reversed at the end of the day. Mr. Miles confirmed that it was.

Frances Gavigan of 123 Wertsville Road came forward and expressed support for the increased security measures. She suggested that bullet proof glass, cameras or security alarms be considered specifically for the side door. Mr. Stoloski explained that the school already has these items implemented and in place.

A motion by Roger DeLay, seconded by Dart Sageser to close to the public was unanimously approved.

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Mr. Sageser commented on the student drop off configuration. Mr. Miles explained that the process is done single file because if it's doubled you then have students crossing in front of cars. He further clarified that it is dangerous to have parents dropping students off in the same location as the bus drop off because of poor visibility between the buses.

Mr. Gilbert asked for clarification on the installation of bullet proof glass. Mr. Stoloski explained that currently when visitors get buzzed into the school there is an open vestibule with a piece of bullet proof glass between that area and the office with a two way intercom speaker system.

Ms. Glashoff thanked the applicants for doing everything they can to protect the children.

Attorney Norman explained that a letter or a resolution can be drafted to the school board finding that the Planning Board reviewed the project and supports it. A motion was made by Gail Glashoff, seconded by Roger DeLay authorizing Attorney Norman to draft a letter regarding the Board's capital review of the school's project for Chairman Reilly to sign. The motion was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Chairman Reilly re-ordered the agenda slightly to address his portion of the oral reports because he had a question for Attorney Norman. Chairman Reilly commented that there was an incident at the Ridge at Back Brook where there appears as though a neighbor was target shooting and some bullets struck the golf course. He noted that owner Joel Moore had sent an email to him expressing his concerns and he and Planner Slagle have discussed the matter. Chairman Reilly wanted to confirm that there is no action the Planning Board can take on this matter. Attorney Norman confirmed that this issue is not a land use matter, but rather a police issue. Chairman Reilly suggested that the Township Committee may want to review target practice on properties within the Township.

Another issue Chairman Reilly asked for clarification on was applications that go to the County Agriculture Development Board (CADB). He explained that there is a possibility that something significant from the Planning Board's perspective may go to the CADB as an application and he noted that he intends to go to the CADB meeting and express the Township's desire to have an opportunity to review the application. He clarified that he would like CADB to be fully aware that the Township would like to have the opportunity to review the application and possibly provide input. He asked what the CADB's obligation is in this process.

Attorney Norman indicated he believes it is the CADB's practice to seek Township input. Chairman Reilly commented that this practice has been inconsistent. Attorney Norman stated, "When those issues come up I think you should contact the Township Attorney to find out if this matter is within the CADB's jurisdiction." Chairman Reilly remarked that he wanted to understand the process procedurally because the Township's interest should be protected. He noted that there have been prior applications before the CADB where no one from the Township was represented and the CADB interpreted that as the Township not having any issue with the application. Attorney Norman also noted that the Planning Board or the Township Committee

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could appoint someone to attend the CADB meeting. Chairman Reilly commented that he has spoken with Mayor Kneski regarding this specific matter and he encouraged Chairman Reilly to attend the meeting and speak on behalf of the Township. It was noted that no one was making any judgments on any potential applications, but rather raising awareness about a possible expansion of a conditional use that could significantly impact the zoning that has been in place for 10 years in the Sourland Mountain.

Attorney Norman was excused from the meeting at this time, 8:16 PM.

Discussion – Review of Draft Master Plan Re-examination Report

Planner Slagle commented that the document being reviewed this evening is the first draft of the 2013 Master Plan Re-examination Report. She noted that she tried to incorporate everything from the 2003 re-exam with appropriate updates. Planner Slagle stated there now is a section that requires the Planning Board to review all policy changes that have happened at all levels of government that impacts land use.

Planner Slagle asked Engineer O’Neal if there was any update on the new wastewater management regulations. He remarked that he doesn’t know where the County is on this matter and noted he will follow up. Planner Slagle clarified that the County has taken over drafting the Countywide Wastewater Management Plan and as part of that each municipality is responsible for writing their own chapter. It was noted that East Amwell has complied with this requirement but has not heard anything further from the County.

Engineer O’Neal was excused from the meeting at this time, 8:20 PM.

The following topics of the re-exam report were discussed:

The major problems and objectives relating to land development in the municipality at the time of the adoption of the last re-examination report – Several board members commented on the significantly increased amount of traffic on certain township roads.

The extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced or have increased subsequent to such date – It was noted that the Sourland Mountain District remains a concern for long-term planning. With regard to the AVAD, the Township continues to seek a balanced approach to providing appropriate development in this area while maintaining the rural characteristics associated with the district. The highly valued agricultural resources were noted.

The extent to which there have been significant changes in the assumptions, policies and objectives forming the basis for master plan or development regulations as last revised, with particular regard to the density and distribution of population and land uses, housing conditions, circulation, conservation of natural resources, energy conservation, collection, disposition and recycling of designated recyclable materials, and changes in State, County and Municipal policies and objectives – Planner Slagle noted this area is a large portion of the

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re-exam identifying where there have been significant changes in policies and objectives that have formed the basis of the Township's planning. She explained that within the Township the Sourland Mountain Ordinance was amended in 2003 and the Tree Harvesting and Solar Ordinances were adopted in 2012. At the County level, a Growth Management Plan was introduced in 2007 and on-going work continues to take place with Farmland Preservation and with Sourland Mountain Regional Planning. At the State level, the State Strategic Plan was adopted in 2011 which focuses on: Targeted economic growth, effective planning for vibrant regions, preservation and enhancement of critical state resources and the tactical alignment of government.

Municipal Land Use Law – Planner Slagle noted that the MLUL now includes an optional Green Plan Element, the Time of Application Rule, Renewable Energy, Conversion Bill (related to age-restricted developments), 2.5% Non-Residential Development Fee, Wastewater Management Plan, Permit Extension Act, NJDEP Stormwater Management Rules and Affordable Housing.

The specific changes recommended for the master plan or development regulations, if any, including underlying objectives, policies and standards, or whether a new plan or regulations should be prepared – The AVAD design standards were mentioned as well as the development of a possible historic preservation ordinance and continued review of the renewable energy ordinance. Planner Slagle noted the following items for consideration if any ordinance revisions are done: A definition for corner lots, technical corrections to the fire protection systems for major developments, resolution of conflicting Right-to-Farm language throughout the ordinance(s) and the creation of separate checklists for “preliminary” and “final” applications.

The recommendations of the Planning Board concerning the incorporation of redevelopment plans adopted pursuant to the “Local Redevelopment and Housing Law” ...into the land use plan element of the municipal master plan, and recommended changes, if any, in the local development regulations necessary to effectuate the redevelopment plans of the municipality – It was noted that this section is not applicable to East Amwell because the township does not have any designated redevelopment areas.

Planner Slagle concluded her review of the draft 2013 re-exam report and there was some general discussion by the Board. Mr. Sageser remarked that the maintenance of structures on some properties has recently been brought to the Township Committee's attention and he wondered if this was a Master Plan issue. Planner Slagle indicated that it was likely a construction code matter, not a land development matter. Chairman Reilly remarked that structural integrity is the issue and while some buildings around the Township may not be visually appealing, they may in fact be structurally sound.

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Planner Slagle noted that Board of Health Chair Tracy Carluccio had sent an email noting the following items based on her review of the 2003 Re-exam Report: Maintaining the Sourland Mountain, review of forest degradation, surface water quality and water conservation. She also noted some concerns regarding septic systems. Chairman Reilly commented that he will forward Ms. Carluccio a draft of the 2013 Re-Exam Report so she has the most updated information for review.

Mr. Gardner noted that one change over the past 10 years is that developers have actually taken advantage of the 50% bonus provision for clustering housing and he didn't know if that detail should be mentioned in the 2013 re-exam report.

It was noted that the Planning Board will continue to review and discuss revised drafts of the 2013 re-exam report as they are provided by Planner Slagle.

Oral Reports

FOSPC – Mr. Gardner commented that they haven't had their meeting yet this month and noted the NJ Conservation report that had been circulated regarding land preservation was worth reading.

Agricultural Advisory Committee – Ms. Glashoff noted that there was no meeting because Ag Advisory no longer has a secretary and therefore no agenda was posted within the required timeframe.

Environmental Commission – No report was given.

Wastewater Management – No report was given.

PB Secretary – No report was given.

Chairman – Chairman Reilly's report was addressed earlier in the evening.

Open to the Public

A motion by Roger DeLay, seconded by Rob Gilbert to open to the public was unanimously approved. Frances Gavigan of 123 Wertsville Road came forward and provided an update on the CADB agenda for tomorrow night's meeting. She also suggested that wind energy be included in the renewable energy section of the Master Plan re-exam. Ms. Gavigan commented that when the historic districts and hamlets were established years ago the large areas like Reaville, Ringoes and Wertsville were focused on. She noted that there are several other little areas that were overlooked like Unionville, New Market on the top of Linvale and a small hamlet where Rocktown Road crosses Route 31. Ms. Gavigan indicated she has been driving around Hunterdon County photographing the areas that are the exceptions to the rules to support possibly re-reviewing some of these areas.

Ms. Gavigan expressed support for Planning Board Administrative Officer Andrews to serve as the new Secretary to the Ag Advisory Committee in order to keep continuity as well as a close working relationship between the Ag Committee and Planning Board. On a final note, she informed the Board that John Glynn was retiring from the County at the end of June as the Director of Roads and Bridges. Ms. Gavigan suggested that it may be appropriate for the Township to send a letter of appreciation because he has worked closely with East Amwell on a few projects.

Seeing no other members of the public come forward, a motion by Fred Gardner, seconded by Roger DeLay to close to the public was unanimously approved.

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Presentation of Vouchers

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

Adjournment

Chairman Reilly adjourned the meeting at 9:14 PM.

Maria Andrews, Administrative Officer