

EAST AMWELL PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
7:30 PM East Amwell Municipal Building
June 12, 2013 - Meeting

Call to Order, Attendance and Pledge of Allegiance

This meeting of the East Amwell Planning Board was opened on June 12, 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 June 5, 2013."

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

Excused: David Wang-Iverson
Linda Lenox – Alt. #1

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 5/8/13 minutes as revised was unanimously approved.

New Business – Other

Discussion – Continued Review of Draft Master Plan Re-Examination Report

Planner Slagle commented that the document being reviewed this evening is the second draft of the 2013 Master Plan Re-examination Report. She noted all of the changes and suggestions discussed at the Board's May meeting have been incorporated.

Mr. Gardner asked about the purpose of the re-exam. Planner Slagle explained the re-exam is an important function that allows the Board to incorporate minor modifications into the Master Plan without having to do a full Master Plan amendment.

Mr. Sageser asked if it was possible to impose some type of restriction prohibiting solar arrays from being installed on properties with "Class A" prime soils. Planner Slagle explained that the State views solar as "inherently beneficial" just like hospitals and schools. She remarked that soils don't rise to the same standard of importance. Chairman Reilly commented that solar being installed on prime soil is an issue that the Board may wish to revisit in the future.

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Planner Slagle continued her summary of the second draft of the re-exam report noting that the Township's last traffic circulation plan was done in 1996. There was some discussion about the cost of conducting an updated traffic study. Mr. DeLay asked if any data could be used to update the plan from subsequent studies or reports that may have been done. Planner Slagle commented that she wasn't aware of other studies and suggested grant money may be available at some point to perform a new traffic study. Mr. Sageser remarked that if the State and County roads within the township are removed, he didn't believe there were that many roads left whose characteristics have changed drastically over the past 17 years except for maybe Lindbergh Road.

Chairman Reilly indicated he had shared the draft re-exam report with the Sourland Alliance but had not heard anything back yet. He added that he would like the Board to review the final draft re-exam in September and hold the public hearing in October.

Mr. Gardner brought up the importance of land preservation and Chairman Reilly asked where this could be incorporated into the re-exam. Planner Slagle commented that she will review the re-exam again and work the importance of land preservation in accordingly.

Oral Reports

FOSPC – Mr. Gardner commented that their Open Space Administrator Judy Conard has retired and he believes a good replacement is in the works. He added that FOSPC is working with D&R Greenway on the preservation of the Pearson parcel which would consist of 5 lots along Ridge Road totaling approximately 40 acres. The individual owners, including Pearson, have expressed interest in the preservation project. Mr. Gardner noted that the lots are wooded parcels adjacent to previously acquired Hunterdon County, NJDEP and D&R Greenway land holdings totaling 136 preserved acres. It was explained that this acquisition would enlarge the conservation efforts on the Sourlands Ridge, expand frontage on Ridge Road and provide greater access to all parcels. Mr. Gardner stated that the County grant application requires a resolution from the Township stating support for the project. He indicated FOSPC Chair Glorianne Robbi would be addressing the Township Committee at their meeting tomorrow night for their support and he said he would like the Planning Board to endorse the project as well.

Chairman Reilly commented that from a planning perspective, the Board always supports preservation of land in the Sourland Mountain. A motion by Fred Gardner, seconded by Gail Glashoff to recommend the Planning Board draft a resolution of support for the acquisition and preservation of the proposed 40 acres in the Sourland Mountain was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Roll Call Vote: Fred Gardner: Yes, Gail Glashoff: Yes, Roger DeLay: Yes, Rob Gilbert: Yes, Don Reilly: Yes, Dart Sageser: Yes, Joe Wolfgang: Yes, Gail Skupien: Yes

Agricultural Advisory Committee – Ms. Glashoff noted that the new property owners of 125 Linvale Road (New Market Farm) had attended the last Ag meeting to discuss their proposed project which consists of a large dressage training, sale and breeding business with some new large farm buildings to be constructed on the property. Ms. Glashoff indicated the land owners were currently pursuing an application to the CADB for approval of their project but were attempting to work simultaneously with the Township's Boards and Committees. She remarked that the property owners inquired whether or not re-zoning their property was an option. Ms. Glashoff commented that Ag advised them that re-zoning would likely not happen and encouraged them to address the Planning Board informally regarding their proposed project.

Environmental Commission – No report was given.

Wastewater Management – No report was given.

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PB Secretary – Ms. Andrews noted that the Fall NJ Planning Officials mandatory training schedule is available for any Board Members who need to take the required class.

Chairman – No report was given.

Open to the Public

A motion by Roger DeLay, seconded by Fred Gardner to open to the public was unanimously approved.

Frances Gavigan of 123 Wertsville Road came forward and commented that in researching Township information she has discovered there are 46 properties in the Sourland Mountain that are currently farm assessed that are not wood lots. She remarked that the zoning ordinance limits the pool of properties that meet the farming criteria because there are only a handful of properties that meet the 30 acres requirement.

Ms. Gavigan also updated the Board on tomorrow night's CADB meeting saying she believes someone from the State will be there to express support for municipalities preserving land.

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.

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 8:34 PM.

Maria Andrews, Administrative Officer

Note: These minutes have not been formally approved and are subject to change at the Board's 7/10/13 meeting.