

EAST AMWELL PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
7:30 PM East Amwell Municipal Building
December 10, 2014 - Meeting

Call to Order, Attendance and Pledge of Allegiance

This meeting of the East Amwell Planning Board was opened on December 10, 2014 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 16, 2014 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 December 4, 2014."

Present: Roger DeLay
Gail Glashoff
Linda Lenox
Don Reilly
Dart Sageser
David Wang-Iverson
Gail Skupien – Alt. #1
John Buckwalter – Alt. #2
Planner Frank Banisch

Excused: Fred Gardner
Rob Gilbert

Chairman Reilly welcomed new Planning Board Member John Buckwalter who will be serving as Alternate #2. Mr. Buckwalter provided an overview of his professional background which includes teaching, reporting for the Hunterdon County Democrat and re-insurance work. Mr. Buckwalter said he welcomes the opportunity to do something for the community.

Citizens' Privilege to Speak on Items not on the Agenda

A motion by Gail Glashoff, seconded by Roger DeLay to open to the public was unanimously approved. Frances Gavigan of 123 Wertsville Road came forward and informed the Board that the bridge on Wertsville Road is closed and that some work is being done. She said the expected completion of the project is sometime in the Spring. Seeing no other members of the public come forward, a motion by Roger DeLay, seconded by Linda Lenox to close to the public was unanimously approved.

Review of Minutes

A motion by Dart Sageser, seconded by Roger DeLay to approve the Board's minutes from 11/12/14 with no revisions noted was approved with Ms. Lenox abstaining.

New Business – Other

Discussion: The Village Study – Part 2

Chairman Reilly explained that last month the study was reviewed page by page with a lot of good input being provided by members of the public which resulted in this amended version. He noted that the Board may wish to discuss some of the traffic calming recommendations on page 13 if they feel it's necessary.

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Mr. DeLay asked for clarification on the location of the business referenced regarding the cars parked on Route 179. It was the consensus of the Board to reference the Post Office for better clarity, rather than any other business, since most everyone in the community knows where the Post Office is located.

Ms. Glashoff remarked that she doesn't understand how the State allows all of the current parking on Route 179. Ms. Skupien commented that she works at Princeton Hydro and said they have contacted the landlord regarding the parking boundaries on the street. She said the landlord painted yellow curbing but that the staff of Princeton Hydro parks between the tree and the sign along the curb so as to not hinder the line of site for people pulling in and out of the parking lot. She explained that the on-site parking is simply not sufficient since the Post Office merged with 3 other sites. Ms. Skupien stated that the mail trucks now take up all of the parking in the rear of the building where employees and other staff used to park.

A motion by Gail Glashoff, seconded by Roger DeLay to open to the public was unanimously approved. Frances Gavigan of 123 Wertsville Road came forward and asked for clarification on what the term "road diet" means in the Village Study. Chairman Reilly explained that it essentially refers to the large intersections in the Village where there is a lot of asphalt that the Planning Board would like to see narrowed.

Ms. Gavigan commented that she was on the Township bus tour over the weekend and overheard comments from people living in the Village regarding all of the money they would lose if they tried to sell their homes because they would have to replace their septic even though there is nothing wrong with the system. She asked if there has been any research done on the lack of space on properties in the Village to replace septic systems and questioned how well the mound systems work. Mr. Sageser remarked that he is aware people think that every time they sell a house they're going to have to replace the septic system but he doesn't believe it's necessarily true. Ms. Glashoff commented that it's happening more than it should be. Mr. Sageser remarked that he knows of two people who recently sold their homes and their septic systems were ultimately accepted after originally being challenged. Mr. Wang-Iverson commented that there have been a lot of applications coming to the Board of Health.

Planner Banisch stated that in order to get utility services in the Village you would typically need to find a grant program that would build a sewer plant for a small community or you would need a developer to invest in the infrastructure that would require a sewer plant. In the alternative, Planner Banisch said a water system is typically installed so that people are at least drinking clean water. Chairman Reilly commented that both of these issues have been discussed but have not received a lot of traction and remarked that they will likely come up again.

Ms. Gavigan made a final comment on the need to repair the curbing in front of the Carousel Deli and to cut back the over growth of branches and bushes. She also commented on the lack of enforcement regarding vehicles that are illegally parked.

Seeing no other members of the public come forward, a motion by Dart Sageser, seconded by Linda Lenox to close to the public was unanimously approved.

Mr. Sageser commented that he believed the State was no longer inclined to approve small sanitary systems. Planner Banisch explained that the old small scale treatment plants that discharged into waterways will no longer get an approval. Mr. Sageser asked if it is practical to pursue trying to tie into a

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system down the road, perhaps in Raritan. Planner Banisch remarked that the cost of transmission across township lines would be prohibitive and would likely cause East Amwell to consider creating their own treatment facility.

Mr. Sageser suggested creating a subcommittee to follow up on some of the details in the study so progress continues to be made. Chairman Reilly noted this can be a discussion at the Board's re-organization meeting.

A motion by Roger DeLay, seconded by Gail Glashoff to approve the Village Study and recommend it be forwarded to the Township Committee was unanimously approved.

Residual Dwelling Site Opportunity (RDSO) Request: Totten Farm – Block 27 Lot 39

Mr. Wang-Iverson commented that he and Glorianne Robbi, Chair of FOSPC met with Rick Steffey and Bill Millette of the County Agriculture Development Board (CADB) and they explained that when the Totten Farm was originally preserved, they included an option for the RDSO which the Totten's are now seeking to implement. Mr. Wang-Iverson indicated there are a lot of restrictions on the RDSO with the final approval coming from the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC). He stated the County has no issue with the Totten's request and indicated that he didn't believe the Township had any issues either. Mr. Wang-Iverson said the original farm must be at least 100 acres in order to qualify for an RDSO and the subdivided land must go to a family member with the new dwelling being occupied by people who actually work on the property.

It was noted that the Totten's are proposing to utilize the RDSO for Mrs. Totten's granddaughter and her husband who will use the new lot for woodland management and for growing nursery stock. The original farm will remain as a hay and horse farm.

Chairman Reilly remarked that the Totten's are exercising an option that was negotiated back when the property was originally preserved. It was noted for the record that the Planning Board had no issue with the proposed RDSO.

Discussion: Township Committee's Resolution Opposing the Proposed PennEast Pipeline

Mr. Sageser explained that the resolution was drafted by Tracy Carluccio who he said is a member of, and works with, the Delaware Riverkeeper and is also the Chair of the Township's Board of Health. Mr. Wang-Iverson said she wrote it from East Amwell's perspective and said she did a great job. He commented that he had asked for the matter to be on the Planning Board's agenda for review because the resolution makes reference to the Master Plan. It was noted for the record that the Planning Board had no issue with the proposed resolution.

Planning Board's 2015 Budget Request

Chairman Reilly noted that the Planning Board is not requesting any increase from the Board's 2014 budget. He remarked that a matter came up at the Board of Adjustment meeting last night regarding Administrative Officer Andrews' pay. He explained that Ms. Andrews is paid on an hourly basis and has requested to be paid on a salary basis. Chairman Reilly noted he has no issue with the change. Ms. Andrews commented that she is requesting to be paid a salary for personal monthly budgeting reasons and would be grateful for the change. Chairman Reilly stated, "Since the Planning Board has no issue with the request, the Township Committee can take it into consideration when they decide what is in the best interest of the Township and our employee."

Oral Reports

FOSPC – No report was given.

Agricultural Advisory – No report was given.

Environmental Commission – No report was given.

PB Secretary – No report was given.

Chairman – No report was given.

Correspondence

Mr. Buckwalter asked about the email from Planner Banisch regarding COAH. Planner Banisch explained that a builders remedy is what the Supreme Court fashioned as a way for municipalities who aren't producing affordable housing to be forced to. He said, "Typically it is through a 20% set aside of affordable units... in Bedminster a Court determined they needed 819 units and the formula said they needed 4000 (5 x 800)... the prospects of builders remedies being held out by the Court again is a major departure from everything that has happened since 1985 when the Fair Housing Act was written to create COAH for the purpose of creating an administrative remedy rather than a court remedy."

Open to the Public

A motion by Gail Glashoff, seconded by Linda Lenox to open to the public was unanimously approved. Seeing no members of the public come forward, a motion by Roger DeLay, seconded by Gail Glashoff to close to the public was unanimously approved.

Presentation of Vouchers

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

Adjournment

Chairman Reilly adjourned the meeting at 8:25 PM.

Maria Andrews, Administrative Officer