

**EAST AMWELL PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**  
**7:30 PM East Amwell Municipal Building**  
**March 12, 2014 - Meeting**

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

This meeting of the East Amwell Planning Board was opened on March 12, 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 March 5, 2014."

**Present:** Roger DeLay  
Fred Gardner  
Rob Gilbert  
Don Reilly, Chairman  
Dart Sageser  
Gail Skupien – Alt. #1  
Maria Souza – Alt. #2  
Planner Slagle

**Excused:** Gail Glashoff  
Linda Lenox  
David Wang-Iverson

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

Chairman Reilly opened the floor to public comment. Seeing no members of the public come forward, a motion by Fred Gardner, seconded by Dart Sageser to close to the public was unanimously approved.

**Review of Minutes**

A motion by Roger DeLay, seconded by Fred Gardner to approve the Board's minutes from 2/12/14 with no revisions noted was unanimously approved.

**New Business – Other**

**Discussion: The keeping of Non-customary Animals on Residential Properties Throughout the Township – Update from Ag Advisory**

It was noted that Ms. Glashoff was absent from this evenings meeting and since she is the liaison to Ag Advisory there was no update provided. Planner Slagle commented that she had an opportunity to speak with Zoning Officer McManus on the issue and once Ag has provided some guidelines they will speak again.

Chairman Reilly remarked that the Planning Board has asked for guidance on this matter and will follow up with Ag to see if they can expedite their review and input.

**Discussion: Village Study – Update from Subcommittee**

Chairman Reilly noted that Mr. Wang-Iverson is the Chairman of this subcommittee but in his absence, commented that the subcommittee met and is working on a questionnaire and mission statement for the Village Study that will then be mailed out to all property owners within the Village District. Ms. Souza expressed that the questionnaire will be made available in as many venues as possible such as on the counter in the Municipal Building, at Greenfest, on-line and there was mention of subcommittee members

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actually going door-to-door to ensure everyone in the Village receives a questionnaire and understands the importance of their input for the study.

There was some discussion on the Village Study Map that was provided. Chairman Reilly remarked that the core of the study is the Village District as defined by the Township's zoning with other areas potentially being brought into the study. He noted the goal of the subcommittee is to provide recommendations to the Planning Board and Township Committee that enhance and improve the residential and business environments within the Village of Ringoes.

The following timeline for the Village Study was proposed:

April/May 2014 – Public vision meetings

June – August 2014 – Compilation of input from the public vision meetings and the surveys

October 2014 – Planning Board to make recommendations to the Township Committee

Chairman Reilly addressed the members of the public by explaining that the Township Committee had expressed to the Board that they had gotten input from members of the community that there is a sense that much attention and energy has been devoted to other zoning districts, while not much has been devoted to the Village District. He commented that there were a number of issues that have been brought to the Township Committee who now believes a study should be conducted to seek input from the public regarding the things they are concerned about within the Village and it's the Planning Board who has the resources to initiate this. Chairman Reilly remarked that the suspicion is that the solution won't be new land development ordinances but rather the utilization of outside resources. The hope is that the Planning Board can define the issues and identify a means to assist in correcting any problems.

Chairman Reilly stated that he had met with Sue Dziamara and Ken Bogan of the County Planning Board to explain to them what the East Amwell Township Planning Board is doing and what the Village Study is all about. He indicated they were appreciative of the information and would let him know if the County had any resources that may be helpful. Chairman Reilly noted that Mr. Wang-Iverson had planned to go with him to the County but was assisting with collections efforts to help those affected by the recent fire at the Peacock property.

Chairman Reilly suggested the Board open to the public. A motion by Roger DeLay, seconded by Rob Gilbert to open to the public was unanimously approved.

Lora Olsen who identified herself as a Village resident who was previously involved with the 1994 Village Study came forward and expressed some concerns. She remarked that in 1994 the study was driven by the need to establish a designated village center which led to the consideration of possible road upgrades. She asked if the County Economic Development Study was focused on these same issues. Chairman Reilly explained that the County's focus is on Flemington and Clinton because the County views these towns as designated areas. He added that the County specifically said that places like Ringoes are not their focus. Chairman Reilly noted that the 4 river towns of Milford, Frenchtown, Stockton and Lambertville are also on the County's radar. He said the County is looking for redevelopment districts and high density housing areas to address the population trends.

Ms. Souza commented that the aesthetics in the town have been discussed so Kat Cannelongo was invited to the subcommittee meeting because of her historic background and spoke about the importance of fixing the Clawson House. It was also noted that grant money may be available as well to individual residents.

Chairman Reilly indicated that the goal is to identify the concerns of the Village residents and then determine whether or not there are resources available to address the problems within the County and/or the State because the Township doesn't have the resources to provide financial assistance.

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

**Discussion: Planning Board's Participation in Greenfest**

Mr. Sageser noted that there was some idol thought that the Planning Board should be involved in Greenfest but FOSPC and the Environmental Commission are taking the lead. He said open space preservation has been the topic of much discussion and the thought was to demonstrate the consequences of a property that gets developed with 25 houses vs. getting it into preservation. Mr. Sageser commented that they would like to rekindle the spirit of the Township's long standing preservation efforts.

Chairman Reilly commented that when Mr. Sageser contacted him asking for this discussion to be added to the agenda, he began thinking about how many subdividable lots are left in the AVAD. He provided the Board with a chart of properties he and Glorianne Robbi compiled. Chairman Reilly stated that the bottom line is that there are still about 2000 acres that can be subdivided in the AVAD. He said there are 33 total lots with 18 that are over 50 acres and 5 that are over 100 acres. It was noted that theoretically there could be 191 lots out of the 2000 acres but a developer would likely cluster develop which could result in 280 lots. That number translates to approximately 600 people and possibly 60 to 80 children. The point being that this could have some real consequences to the Township specifically in regard to policing, roads and schools.

Mr. Gilbert commented that the impact this type of development would have on the schools should be of great importance to the Planning Board. He stated that the East Amwell School is fantastic and is like a private school with low enrollment and great teachers. He said the school building is a wonderful structure and Chairman Reilly added it is also in a beautiful setting overlooking a horse farm.

Mr. Gardner remarked that even though FOSPC and the Environmental Commission are taking the lead on Greenfest, he would not discourage any members of the Planning Board from participating in the event.

Mr. Sageser commented on the fire at the Peacock property. He indicated Mr. Wang-Iverson has been marshalling the collection efforts for the families that were displaced. Mr. Sageser stated that he has spoken with the property owner Jeffrey Robertson. He said he wants to replicate the structure that was destroyed in the fire. Mr. Sageser commented that Mr. Robertson is an interesting man who used to live in Hopewell and bought the Peacock property from Paul McConaughy years ago. Currently he resides in Oregon and owns an energy solutions company and wants to rebuild a very eco-friendly energy efficient building on the site.

Ms. Skupien commented that her only concern with the site is that the original structure was too close to the road. She remarked that the location is very busy with traffic often cutting the corner of the intersection as they fly through to Princeton. Mr. Sageser indicated that one of his discussions with Mr. Robertson was regarding the portion of the building that came out toward Wertsville Road because a better use of the property may be to have that area kept as outdoor space, or possibly shift the entire structure to create more outdoor usable space.

**Oral Report**

FOSPC – Mr. Gardner commented that there are no major new issues. He indicated that FOSPC is interested in staying in the loop with any future discussions on the grant money available for clustering of non-contiguous properties which was discussed at a prior Planning Board meeting.

Agricultural Advisory Committee – No report was given.

Environmental Commission – Mr. Sageser commented that the New Market Farm application was reviewed.

PB Secretary – No report was given.

Chairman – No report was given.

**Open to the Public**

A motion by Dart Sageser, seconded by Fred Gardner to open to the public was unanimously approved.

There being no members of the public coming forward, a motion by Roger DeLay, seconded by Rob Gilbert to close to the public was unanimously approved.

**Presentation of Vouchers**

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

**Adjournment**

Chairman Reilly adjourned the meeting at 8:41 PM.

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Maria Andrews, Administrative Officer