



# Mayor and Common Council Borough of Flemington

December 22, 2016

Historic Flemington Courthouse

## Special Meeting (7:00 PM)

Flag Salute

Roll Call:

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Phil Greiner	Mayor	Present	
John Gorman	Councilman	Absent	
Marc Hain	Council Vice President	Present	
Brooke Liebowitz	Councilwoman	Present	
Michelle Oberst	Councilwoman	Present	
Brian Swingle	Council President	Present	
Kim Tilly	Councilwoman	Present	

### Public Comment: Up to 3 minutes each, for a maximum of approximately 30 minutes

Jen Dudar, 14 Orchard Drive, Raritan Township, said it was disheartening to see the possible destruction of 4 buildings on Main Street, and asked council to consider their value. She said demolition only benefits the investors.

Mike Merchant of Neshanic Station discussed the Historic Preservation Commission report on the Union Hotel redevelopment plans, citing the last sentence saying that several buildings including the hotel should be preserved. He said demolition of any historic buildings would create a gap in the historic district. He asked about applying a historic district review on the redevelopment plan. Mayor Greiner said details like that are worked out in the Planning Board review of the plans.

Mr. Merchant also asked if the redeveloper should do an archeological survey on the site, and if that can be included in a redevelopment agreement. Mayor Greiner said the borough doesn't have an agreement finalized with the redeveloper yet.

Joann Braun, 77 Jefferson Court, Raritan Twp., read parts of a letter to borough council from Katherine Large O'Shea, who grew up in the historic Large House. The county Chamber of Commerce's dedication of the Large House as its new home is historic preservation done right, Ms. O'Shea's letter said. She urged council to take advantage of help available to reinvigorate Main Street with a less invasive plan than that currently proposed by Mr. Cust.

Bob Schwade, Park Ave., asked about a rumor that there would be no caroling at homes Christmas morning. Mayor Greiner said it was a rumor that got started on Facebook, and that caroling would be going ahead.

Gerald Mazetta, 42 Bellewood Park Road in Bethlehem Twp., said he has concerns about fire coverage, water pressure and sewer capacity related to the planned redevelopment. Councilman Swingle said mutual aid agreements with area fire departments assure adequate coverage, and that borough officials are dealing with water and sewer issues according to state guidelines.

Steve Tuccio, 61 Elwood Ave., questioned the trustworthiness of borough officials by calling a special meeting to redesignate Mr. Cust as the hotel-area redeveloper, precluding anyone else from being considered. He criticized council's holding the vote before the new year when a new member will start serving, who is opposed to the project. He also asked what's being done to enforce the borough's maintenance ordinance on the hotel property.

Susan Peterson, 180 Main St., said residents believed they were protected by the revised master plan. She said the borough's been working with Mr. Cust for more

than a year and has reached no agreement; she said she wants the same amount of time for another search for a redeveloper, with a huge Request for Proposals. She said such a weighty development can't be left to locals, or whoever shows up. She said Mr. Cust's plans made her realize what she has to fight for.

Alice Schwade, Park Ave., said she didn't feel council members had hidden anything. She said no one has had any problems with Mr. Cust, and opposition seems to be mostly from people outside the borough. She said compared to Westfield and Summit, where median incomes are \$120,000, the median income in Flemington is \$50,000. She said if people wait another year before anything gets done, property values are going to keep going down.

Michael Harris, Main Street, asked what the emergency was in redesignating Mr. Cust as the redeveloper. He said the action erodes his confidence in borough officials. Mayor Greiner said that it's simply an extension of the current designation. Mr. Harris also asked about the Agway redevelopment and why that had been delayed, to which Mayor Greiner said it's a matter of law that one council can't introduce something that has to be acted on by another council.

Karen Fadool of Whitehouse Station asked when the hotel-area redevelopment plan would be available to the public.

Councilwoman Oberst answered that the plan hasn't been completed yet.

Joanne Elacqua of Raritan Township spoke about putting council in touch with an area architect who could try to arrange a meeting with the national historic trust.

Chris Englehardt, 180 Main St., said council postponed redesignating Mr. Cust as redeveloper in August because there wasn't a full board. She noted Mr. Gorman's absence and said the current meeting didn't have a full board, either. Mr. Greiner said that at the end of August the council barely had a quorum present. He added that if the council were voting this night on a redeveloper's agreement, they would have asked Mr. Gorman to be available by phone.

Patricia Valley, 39 Meadow Lane, Raritan Twp., asked if the borough has received any new plans. Mr. Greiner said there have been a lot of what-if scenarios, but that's all. The Aug. 22 plan is the current version. Ms. Valley also asked about large red Xs on the hotel.

Brian Swingle said taking down construction fences is not an option, because bricks and exterior pieces are falling off the hotel. The Xs are warning signs to residents, he said, and required by law.

Colleen Rosetti, 36 Pennsylvania Ave., said Flemington doesn't have a river like Lambertville or Clinton, and she's concerned that putting up a cookie-cutter building in the middle of town won't move the borough forward. The Cut Glass site is still vacant, she said. She asked why the borough aborted a master plan it spent a lot of money and time on. She said the borough never cast a wide enough net for redevelopers. Mr. Greiner said numerous attempts have been made to redo the Union Hotel, to no avail.

Marcia Karrow said a wide net was cast in 2008, when a small version failed. In 2011 another small version failed. There was never a wide search done for a redeveloper of the whole block around the hotel, she said.

## Resolutions

1. RESOLUTION 2016-203: EXTENDING DESIGNATION OF JOHN J. CUST JR. AS THE REDEVELOPER FOR THE EXPANDED UNION HOTEL REDEVELOPMENT AREA AND AUTHORIZING THE REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATION OF A REDEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Michelle Oberst, Councilwoman
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Brian Swingle, Council President
<b>AYES:</b>	Hain, Liebowitz, Oberst, Swingle, Tilly
<b>ABSENT:</b>	John Gorman

Adjournment: Moved by Ms. Liebowitz, seconded by Mr. Hain; all in favor.