

FLEMINGTON BOROUGH
PLANNING/ZONING BOARD SPECIAL MEETING
LOCATED TO THE HUNTERDON COUNTY HISTORIC COURTHOUSE – 75 MAIN STREET, FLEMINGTON
MONDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2018 – 7:00 PM

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 PM by Mr. Cook.

Roll Call:

Present: Mrs. Engelhardt, Mayor Greiner, Ms. Melfi, Mr. Cook, Mr. Budney, Mr. Hain, Mr. Perron, Mr. Townsend, Mrs. Tilly, Mr. Hill, Attorney Gianos, Engineer Clerico, Planner Lelie

Excused: Mrs. Pedrick, Traffic Engineer Rocciola

1. Approval of minutes for October 23, 2018 regular meeting.

Motion to approve the minutes: Melfi, seconded by Hain
Ayes: Engelhardt, Greiner, Melfi, Cook, Perron, Budney, Hain, Townsend
Nays: (None)
Abstain: Pedrick
Motion passed: 8-0-1

Public Hearing: Flemington Center Urban Renewal, LLC - Block 22, Lots 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13 & 14 and Block 24, Lots 1, 2 & 3, and 5 - Continued from October 1, 11, 16 & 23, 2018

Chairman Cook stated that this was the public comments portion of the public hearing to hear input on the site plan based on the current ordinance and redevelopment plan/agreement as they apply to the plan and each member of the public would have 5 minutes for public comments.

Lois Stewart, 26 Spring Street, asked a question of procedure. Mr. Cook discussed.

Ken Miller, 22 New Jersey Avenue, appeared in support of the redevelopment stating that the town was dying and was in desperate need of the project.

Steve Tuccio, 61 Elwood Avenue, appeared stating that the Board should act in the best interest of the people noting that testimony was heard from experts with a lot of 'I do not know' as the answer. Mr. Tuccio stated that it should be easy to reject the plan since it was not fully vetted and stated his concern for the consequences of the project.

Chris Englehart, 180 Main Street, appeared and stated that it was a quality of life issue and stated that the project was too big and would ruin the character of the town with too many questions with no answers from the experts noting that she wanted sensible progress.

Sandy Scott, 5 Broad Street with a business on Main Street, appeared and stated that the plan was better than the last time noting that it was a complete plan that makes sense with a focus of downtown.

Marcia Karrow, 61 Elwood Avenue, stated that she attending all of the meetings and was not given the chance to ask all of her questions and stated her concerns about the project and suggested that the plan be given preliminary approval only tonight noting that there were too many undecided items regarding environmental issues, mass of the buildings, windows and concerns over the potting shed building coming down.

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Lois Stewart, 26 Spring Street, stated that she was not opposed to some redevelopment but was against this specific plan citing inadequate green spaces and would like to see a plan that fits in better with a residential neighborhood. Ms. Stewart listed her concerns with the project. Mr. Cook stated that 5 minutes had passed. Ms. Stewart objected to the time limit and continued to speak. Mr. Cook stated that time was up and asked if there was a policeman in the building.

7:50 p.m. the Board recessed.

7:54 p.m. the meeting resumed.

Colleen Rosetti stated that she would give her time to Lois Stewart.

Ms. Stewart resumed her comments and stated her concerns about the project.

Tony Previtte, 45 North Main Street, stated that if the town would not thrive if it did not adapt noting that the hotel was left to decay and rot and stated that would like to see the project taken to fruition.

Jenn Williferd, Pennsylvania Avenue, stated that the project was a plan of what the town could be where she sat through all the meeting and hoped that it would be successful where a corporation could have come it, a Hunterdon County native has been willing to develop the community.

Elaine Gorman, 34 New York Avenue, lived in Flemington 51 years, chair of the Historic Preservation District formed in 1980, stated that the project was in the heart of the historic district where under a redevelopment plan the HPC did not have jurisdiction over the project. Ms. Gorman read the recommendations from the HPC dated October 3, 2018.

AC Sykes, Flemington, stated that she was unable to ask all of her questions in prior meetings and stated her concerns about the project including the size and did not fit into the center of Main Street.

Rich Cornielson, owner of victorian house on Main Street, stated that it was difficult to attract businesses to rent his renovated building and noted that the business owners and the County Freeholders were supporters of the project adding that the town was at a point to move quickly on the project to revitalize the town and business district.

Mr. Lackemacher, 76 Park Avenue, stated that he was in support of the project and asked the Board to approve the plan tonight.

Dave Hay, 110 Main Street, 47 years in business on Main Street, saw the hotel close and building fall apart except the potting shed, inside on 90 Main hasn't been touched since 1950's stated his support of the project and asked that the application be approved tonight to move Flemington forward.

Michael Harris, 173 Main Street, hoped that the Board approve only preliminary approval tonight so that some items may be addressed in the future and discussed SHPO letters

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distribution to the Board members and traffic study preparation date and noted the accelerated process of the meetings and stated his concerns about the plan and the process.

8:31 pm the meeting recessed.

8:44 pm the meeting resumed.

George Muller, Raritan Township, stated that to sustain a community the town needs to maintain ratables where this project brings long needed ratables to town and stated his support of the plan.

Caitlin Giles-McCormick, 43 Spring Street, called for renegotiations on the project regarding the overall size and traffic impact noting the discord in the community and recommended preliminary approval tonight noting that there was an overdue talk with the community members.

Joey Novick, 11 East Main Street, stated his respect for everyone on the Board and recommended preliminary approval only tonight with some points to be negotiated, not against development but the project was too large in scope.

Joann Braun, 77 Jefferson Court, recommended preliminary approval only tonight and stated her concerns with the project as presented with too many unknown items and unanswered questions and suggested saving the potting shed.

Beryl Doyle, Cherryville Hollow Road, read a letter suggesting a cultural historic park be included in a redesign of the project and discussed the historic items to be included.

Mr. Cook stated that the Board was charged with review of the site plan as presented in accordance with the redevelopment plan and had no jurisdiction to change the redevelopment plan.

Chris Phelan, Hunterdon County Business Development, stated the support and continued support of the project and believed it will move forward and revitalize the Borough.

Rob Wall, 47 Capner Street, stated that the questions had been answered and recommended that the Board take a vote and move forward to approve the plan.

Ron Van Horn, 47 Main Street, stated that he was not opposed to the glass and colors of the building noting that mixed use was a must and that the project will be a great opportunity to revitalize the town and reduce vacancies on Main Street.

Betsy Driver, 40 North Main Street, Council member, discussed discussions with the developer and recommended preliminary approval only tonight with renegotiations on other points.

Lee Roth, 91 Main Street, stated that Flemington does not need a 7 story development in center of town and discussed the economics and interest in the site. Mr. Dilts objected as heresay. Mr. Roth continued his discussion stating that the town needed to look at alternatives.

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Susan Peterson, 20 Pennsylvania Avenue, Council members, business owner on Main Street, stated her concerns with the project and recommended renegotiation.

Robert Shore, 47 Broad Street, stated that he has been critical of what's going on with minor changes can make the project great or awesome, that the plan was an excellent start, the redevelopment plan left latitude for the redeveloper and ignored the HPC, residents, etc. the site plan was probably consistent but the redevelopment plan was flawed and should address operations and details, recommended preliminary approval and stated that new leadership was needed to listen to voters and residents where the plan needed vetting.

Kathleen Lagullo, Pennsylvania Avenue, the project was a vote for potential, town is poised to advance, wanted property values to rise and recommended that the plan be approved.

9:31 pm the meeting recessed.

9:41 pm the meeting resumed.

Attorney Dilts appeared stating that he had been here for 70 years and understood the concerns noting that the applicant was here tonight for the Board to consider preliminary and final site plan approval, that the experts answered all relevant questions and noted that Roger Brooks endorsed the project. Mr. Dilts stated that the Council passed resolutions that the site plan was consistent with the redevelopment plan and that there were 10 pages of conditions that addressed the concerns and comments in the professionals reports and requested by Board members and that the applicant has repeatedly agreed to comply with the Board professionals, Fire Marshal, SHPO letter, all outside agencies including but not limited to County Planning Board. Mr. Dilts listed the site plan design waivers from the ordinance and waivers requested from the redevelopment plan as well as the conditions of any approval which would be coordinated with Attorney Gianos.

Motion to close the public hearing was made by Melfi, seconded by Engelhardt.

Ayes: Engelhardt, Greiner, Melfi, Cook, Perron, Budney, Hain, Townsend, Tilly

Nays: (None)

Abstain: (None)

Motion passed: 9-0-0

Board comments:

Mr. Cook stated that per a comment made at how fast this was happening noted that it had been 8 years.

Mrs. Engelhardt stated that all conditions should be satisfied prior to permits for demolition or construction. Mrs. Engelhardt listed the conditions she would like to be included. Applicant to submit maintenance and protection manual for local street to be reviewed by the code official til last certificate of occupancy issued; restoration of streets effected by construction

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equipment, proposed documentation of existing condition of streets and restoration or repair any damage to the satisfaction of the Township engineer; escrow to be held for this restoration; the credentials of the historic architect to be submitted prior to any demolition for review and approval to provide adherence to SHPO letters; incorporate a ramp system at Spring Street end of the plaza; prior to demo permit identify project construction management firm and provide contact information to make sure there is a qualified construction management firm to coordinate construction access, noise, etc.

Mr. Cook stated his concern regarding providing a ramp at Spring Street plaza entrance. Mr. Clerico stated that to make the ramp ADA compliant may be difficult.

Ms. Melfi suggested that Council revisit the circulation of the surrounding street to not dump traffic onto Broad Street and make a recommendation to Council as part of the record. Mayor Greiner stated that the Board should send specific recommendations to Council not just to have them look at it.

Mr. Budney stated his concerns regarding limited nature of the traffic study recommending that the complete grid should be looked at for effects on the surrounding street and recommended preliminary approval.

Mr. Cook discussed the authority of the Board over traffic patterns. The Board discussed. Mr. Budney discussed the redevelopment plan, the HPC and how they relate to the architectural standards and SHPO standards as an outside agency. The Board discussed. Mr. Gianos stated that an outside agency requirement could not stop an approval but would be at the applicant's risk to gain the approval of a higher level agency such as State, County, etc. Mr. Cook stated that he would like to see dedicated loading spaces along Spring Street for certain times of the week. Mr. Clerico stated that would be a Council decision in a public street.

The Board discussed the effects of preliminary and final approval where preliminary site plan approval sets most design issues where setbacks and heights cannot be changed and gives the application 3 years of protection and final site plan approval adds another 2 years of protection noting that the conditions for preliminary only are the same as preliminary and final site plan approval. Mr. Cook stated that the Board was not giving an opinion on the plans regarding scale, etc but whether the plan was consistent with the redevelopment plan, which it was not exactly where there was a list of design waivers being requested but no variances were required.

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Mrs. Engelhardt stated that modern architecture was not taboo in historic districts and applauded the education/medical building design and discussed the plaza and potting shed asking if this building was considered to be integrated into the plan or relocated offsite. The Board discussed.

11:00 p.m. the meeting recessed.

11:05 p.m. the meeting resumed

Mayor Greiner noted that it was mentioned during the hearings that Spring Street would be rebuilt, because the utility work would be done from this side. He asked the applicant to confirm that all streets would be left in as good condition as they are at the start of construction. The applicant agreed all streets would be left in as good condition as at the beginning.

Mrs. Engehardt recommended to continue to improve the design and asked the developer to be open to recommendations and include the 78 Main Street building (potting shed).

Mr. Gianos stated the list of conditions and checklist waivers and compliance with the Board's professional's letters where the applicant agreed to the changes and standard usual conditions.

Motion to grant preliminary and final site plan approval and design waivers with the conditions as discussed: Melfi, seconded by Perron.

Ayes: Engelhardt, Greiner, Melfi, Cook, Perron, Hain, Townsend, Tilly

Nays: Budney

Abstain: (None)

Motion passed: 8-1-0

Mr. Cust thanked the Board and stated that the comments was not on deaf ears and would consider them seriously and if can be accomplished will do them.

Motion to add chair items to the agenda was made by: Greiner, seconded by Engelhardt. All were in favor.

2. Chair Items:

Mr. Cook stated that he would like recommendations to send Council regarding traffic directions for various street for the November 5, 2018 meeting.

Mr. Cook stated that tomorrow night's special meeting, October 30, 2018 was cancelled as it was not necessary and that the next regular meeting was scheduled for November 5, 2018 which would located at the municipal building.

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3. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn at 11:33 p.m.: Greiner; second: Hain

Ayes: All were in favor

Motion passed: 10-0-0

Respectfully submitted

Eileen Parks
Planning Board Secretary