

MEETING MINUTES OF PLANNING BOARD/BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT OF HIGH BRIDGE BOROUGH

Meeting Date: February 27, 2017

Meeting Time: 7:30 P.M

Meeting Location: High Bridge Rescue Squad, 95 West Main St, High Bridge, NJ 08829

1. CALL TO ORDER:

This is a regular meeting of the Planning/Zoning Board of the Borough of High Bridge. Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act in that a Notice was published in the Hunterdon County Democrat on December 24th, 2016 and the notice of and agenda for this meeting were posted on the bulletin board in the Borough Hall.

2. FLAG SALUTE: Led presiding officer.

3. ROLL CALL: P = Present, A=Absent

Don Howell, absent; Keith Milne, present; Doug Walker, absent; Brent Dugan, present; John Moskway, present; William Giordano, present; Chris Zappa, present; Steve Dhein, absent; Mark Desire, absent.

Alternate Pablo Delgado sat in for absent Board members. Also present were Board Attorney William Caldwell, Board Secretary Barbara Kinsky, and four members of the public including press. Mayor Desire arrived at 8:34 PM.

Motion to appoint Keith Milne Board Chairman for February 27, 2017.

Motion: Zappa; Second: Dugan. Voice vote: All ayes, motion carried.

4. READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES: December 12, 2016 and January 9, 2017

Motion to dispense with the reading of prior meeting minutes:

Motion: Giordano, Second: Dugan Voice vote: All ayes, motion carried.

Motion to approve the December 12, 2016 and January 9, 2017 meeting minutes:

Motion: Giordano, Second: Dugan Voice vote: All ayes, motion carried.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

It is the policy of the Borough Council that all public comments on an issue shall be limited to one (5) minutes per person and no person may make more than one (1) comment per subject. Comments may be made on any subject pertaining to Borough issues. Comments pertaining to Public Hearings should be saved for that section of the agenda. No debating between residents. Comments should be addressed to the Board.

Michelle Schwartz stated that she attended the Council meeting on February 23, 2017. She commented on the presentation made by Freeholder Lagay and Marc Saluk in regards to the Baby Boomers being supplanted by maturing Millennials. Mrs. Schwartz stated that she feels that the Board and Council should examine the the types of businesses permitted in the Downtown Business zone and consider changing the current Ordinance that deals with this matter, specifically allowing services on Main Street. Board member Keith Milne responded that this topic was on tonight's agenda and would be discussed.

Nancy Hunt informed the Board of an upcoming workshop she felt may be of interest to Board members. This Workshop is titled, "Preservation in Practice: A Primer for Historic Preservation Commissions and Planners" Ms. Hunt gave a detailed description of the workshop. Mr. Dugan asked that a website link for the workshop be sent out to Board members. Planning Board Secretary, Barbara Kinsky said she would send out that link.

6. NEW BUSINESS: Approval of 2016 Planning Board/Board of Adjustment Annual Report

- A. Motion to Approve 2016 Annual Report: Giordano; Second: Dugan
Voice vote: Six ayes. Motion carried.
- B. The Planning Board Secretary will give an overview of the Application Calendar: Deadlines for decisions after Completeness review.
- C. Review of article sent by Attorney Caldwell.
Mr. Caldwell summarized the content of an article that he sent to the Board. This article pertained to ordinance changes during applications. He stated that the ordinance in place at the time of the application would be the one in effect for the application. Mr. Caldwell also reinforced the necessity and importance of an application checklist.

7 OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Board to resume discussion regarding a possible recommendation to Council for a change in Zoning for the Downtown Business District.

The Board had a detailed discussion regarding this possible recommendation to Council. Concerns addressed in the discussion were:

- Monitoring of the current requirement of 25% retail.
- Measurement of the current 25% retail.
- Retail space left vacant for several months.
- Current unrented retail space.
- If adding services, what types would be allowed.
- Potential of empty space
- Promoting a dynamic downtown business zone.
- Would only professional services be permitted?
- Would personal services be permitted and if so would they need State licenses?
- If the Old Borough Hall is left in its current state would the lack of it being ADA accessible prevent a business from operating?

The Board also had the following comments and questions regarding the recommendation of a Zoning change. They suggested reviewing Ordinance #2014-16 to allow services on Main Street. They offered the ideas of a Senior Center Satellite, open campus type technical businesses and a large parking lot behind Main Street being created. Board members asked if all the retail spaces were rented except for the new Construction at 20 Main Street. Councilman Zappa replied that yes they were all being rented. Questions were asked regarding if anyone had shown interest in purchasing Old Borough Hall and a discussion ensued regarding what types of businesses could be in that building if it was left in its current state.. The Board also requested the status of the Old train Station. Mr. Zappa replied nothing had been determined at this time.in regards to the NJ transit train station property. Discussion ensued regarding suggestions for use of the old train station.

Public Comments:

Michelle Schwartz commented that she liked the Boards discussion and felt it was in line with meeting ideas. She also mentioned the EDC and small business administration workshops.

Motion to carryover this discussion to the March 20, 2017 meeting: Moskway; Second: Dugan
Voice vote: Six ayes, motion carried.

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- B. Council has requested that the Planning Board discuss a possible zoning change in the MUC (West Main Street, Mixed Use Corridor) to allow for some conditional residential use.

Councilman Zappa gave an overview of his proposed MUC zoning changes which include allowing residential apartments above businesses. . He described what his proposal detailed. Discussion with the Board ensued regarding Councilman Zappa's proposal.

Questions and Comments:

Mr. Dugan asked if a first floor apartment would be permitted. Mr. Zappa responded that one ADA accessible unit would be permitted on the ground floor with a rear entry, and 20% of affordable housing in the buildings. Mr. Milne asked if it was a maximum of 12 units above the building. Mr. Zappa responded that this was correct

and that it would not include separate buildings for each unit. Mr. Delgado asked if this would replace the current MUC standards. Mr. Zappa replied that the MUC currently has permitted and conditional uses and this would be an additional conditional use.

Mr. Milne asked for clarification regarding having an owner occupied residence above a business currently, Councilman Zappa responded that this was correct.

Mr. Delgado expressed concerns regarding living on Route 513 and increased car traffic. A discussion with the Board regarding this issue ensued.

Mr. Dugan asked if the professionals had looked at this proposal. Councilman Zappa replied that he did speak the Borough planner, Darlene Green.

High Bridge resident, Mike Darmstadt commented that balancing regarding parking and green space being taken into account.

Motion to table this discussion to the March 20, 2017 meeting: Dugan; Second: Moskway
Voice vote: Six ayes, motion carried

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

It is the policy of the Planning Board that all public comments on an issue shall be limited to (1) minute per person and no person may make more than one (1) comment per subject. Comments may be made on any subject pertaining to Board issues. Comments pertaining to Public Hearings should be saved for that section of the agenda. No debating between residents. Comments should be addressed to Chairman and Board members at the public microphone.

10. ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn: Giordano, Second: Dugan Voice vote: Six ayes, motion carried.

Next Meeting Date: March 20th, 2017

Meeting Location: High Bridge Rescue Squad, 95 West Main St, High Bridge, NJ 08829

Meeting Time: 7:30 P.M.