

MINUTES
PLANNING BOARD – REORGANIZATION MEETING
BOROUGH OF NEW PROVIDENCE
TUESDAY, JANUARY 10, 2017

A. CALL TO ORDER BY SECRETARY: 8:02 p.m.

B. PUBLIC NOTICE BY SECRETARY:

This is a Public Meeting of the Planning Board of the Borough of New Providence, County of Union, State of New Jersey. Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231, in that an Annual Notice or Revision was made in conformance with Section 13 of the Act.

C. ROLL CALL BY SECRETARY:

Present: Gene Castagna, William Hoefling, Gary Kapner, John Keane, Robert Lesnewich, Mayor Morgan, Robert Sartorius and Denise Torsiello. Absent: Matt Cumiskey. Also present: Keith Lynch, Director of Planning & Development; and, Margaret Koontz, Secretary

D. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

E. PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS OF APPOINTED & RE-APPOINTED BOARD MEMBERS

The Secretary was advised by the Borough Clerk that the following people were appointed or re-appointed to the Planning Board by the Borough Council, at its annual meeting held in Council Chambers on January 4, 2017:

Matthew Cumiskey was re-appointed as a Class IV Member for a 4-year term expiring on December 31, 2020.

William Hoefling was appointed as a Class II Member for a 1-year term expiring on December 31, 2017

Gary Kapner was re-appointed as a Class III Member for a 1-year term expiring on December 31, 2017

Eugene Castagna as re-appointed as 1st Alternate for a 2-year term expiring on December 31, 2018

Denise Torsiello was appointed as 2nd alternate to fill an unexpired term expiring on December 31, 2017.

The status of the other members is as follows:

Mayor Morgan as a Class I Member whose term expires on December 31, 2018

John Keane as a Class IV Member whose term expires December 31, 2017

Robert Sartorius as a Class IV Member whose term expires on December 31, 2018

Robert Lesnewich as a Class IV Member whose term expires on December 31, 2019

F. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

The Secretary asked for nominations for Chairperson. John Keane nominated Robert Lesnewich for Chairman. William Hoefling seconded the nomination. Mayor Morgan moved to close the nominations. Mr. Keane seconded same. The Secretary cast one unanimous vote for Robert Lesnewich as Chairman of the Planning Board.

ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRPERSON

The Chairman asked for nominations for Vice Chairman. Mr. Hoefling nominated John Keane for Vice Chairman, and Robert Sartorius seconded the motion. Gary Kapner moved to close the nominations and Mayor Morgan seconded same. The Secretary cast one unanimous vote for Mr. Keane as Vice Chairman of the Planning Board.

ELECTION OF SECRETARY TO THE BOARD

The Chairman asked for nominations for Secretary to the Board. Mr. Keane nominated Margaret Koontz as Secretary, and Mr. Hoefling seconded the nomination. Mr. Kapner moved to close the nominations and Mr. Sartorius seconded the motion. Chairman Lesnewich cast one unanimous vote for Margaret Koontz as Secretary to the Planning Board.

G. REVIEW OF RESOLUTIONS

CALENDAR RESOLUTION FOR 2017 & JANUARY 2018

The Board reviewed the calendar of meetings for 2017. Mr. Sartorius moved to approve the resolution and Mr. Keane seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

H. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Morgan moved to go into Executive Session at 8:09 p.m. to discuss Requests for Qualifications for Board Attorney. Mr. Kapner seconded the motion. All voted in favor: None were opposed.

I. MISCELLANEOUS

The meeting on January 17, 2017, will most likely be cancelled unless a meeting is required to address the pending litigation and the results of the Fairness Hearing on Friday, January 13, 2017. The secretary will notify the Board if it needs to meet.

J. OTHER BUSINESS

The Board asked Mr. Lynch for an update on several projects.

62 Livingston Avenue Subdivision (at Sixth Street)

The builder lost interest in this property. Another developer has looked at the 62 Livingston Avenue subdivision and talked to the adjacent property owner on Sixth Street about subdividing his lots as well. The discussion has gone back and forth as to how the existing subdivision and new subdivision would be handled. If the developer decides to take over the 62 Livingston Avenue subdivision, the two lots already created by the approved subdivision will be made larger. This would have to come back to the Board as the houses have to be built to the specifications approved by the Board in early 2016. Mr. Lynch said there would be two subdivision applications if this project proceeds.

Tide Dry Cleaners

Mr. Lynch has no information as to why the applicant hasn't proceeded with the construction of the dry cleaning facility.

Barth's Market Expansion

Jim Barth expects the addition to be completed at the end of 2017 in time for the holiday season. Mr. Lynch believes 18 months is a more reasonable completion date. The second-floor addition will be completed in September but the kitchen and the rest of the addition would still have to be constructed. The façade will be similar to the existing façade.

Houses next to Our Lady of Peace

A small developer has purchased the property at 125 South Street next to Our Lady of Peace Church and thinks he can build five units on the property. No application, however, has been received.

48 Hickson Drive

The Board of Adjustment approved the demolition of the existing house and the construction of a new house at 48 Hickson Drive. It's a large house. The Board of Adjustment made the applicant move the house back on the lot to help control the mass.

Mr. Lynch added that the Board of Adjustment also recently approved an application for an addition to 97 Pleasantview at the corner of Fifth Street. This will also be a big house. The existing house, as was the case with 48 Hickson Drive, is small.

The Board discussed whether these two applications indicate a problem with the changes to the bulk standards and elimination of Floor Area Ratio (FAR) requirements. Mr. Lynch does not see a problem: The new bulk standards are working well with applicants' stepping in their additions and changing the orientation of roofs to control bulk.

1823 Springfield Avenue

The owner of 1823 Springfield Avenue, which burned, has an agreement from 1976 to construct multiple units on this property. The property owner would like to build four units on the property which is located in New Providence and Berkeley Heights. The property owner currently pays taxes in New Providence and would like to continue to do so with the proposed four units. The question is whether the proposed units become part of Berkeley Heights. The site plan would have to go to both municipalities.

1280 and 1286 Springfield Avenue

The owner has submitted an application to demolish the building at 1286 Springfield Avenue. The building will be razed in the spring. The owner will be responsible for maintaining the vacant lot once the building has been demolished. The façade of the building at 1280 Springfield will be renovated with specs for a restaurant on the first floor. There has been some discussion of extending the building the whole way across the front of the properties to eliminate the driveway on Springfield Avenue, but the owner will have to come to an agreement with the adjacent property owner for access to the parking area in the rear.

Marion Avenue

Two of the 11 units are now occupied. Mr. Parisi has informed Mr. Lynch that he has another buyer. Mr. Parisi knows that he needs to submit new plans for the remaining 11 units as the units as constructed are not marketable.

New Providence Garden Apartments

The apartments on Gales Drive have been sold and the new owner is renovating the apartments. Mr. Lynch believes they will remain rentals and will not be converted to condominiums.

Temporary Cell Tower

Cell equipment will be installed on the PSE&G towers in the spring. The equipment for all service providers will be installed on the PSE&G tower at the same time. Once the equipment has been installed on the PSE&G tower, the temporary monopole on Springfield Avenue will be dismantled.

Lantern Hill - Phase 3

Asbestos abatement at the sales office will begin next week. The building will then be demolished and blasting for the two new buildings will begin. Construction on these buildings is expected to begin by Memorial Day. The neighbors in the area that had concerns about the property have calmed down. Mr. Lynch is not sure of the status of Erickson Living's offer to purchase the Linde property to the west.

Oakwood Park Renovation

The ponds are being expanded to make one pond that will have one side for ice hockey and the other for regular skating. Mr. Lynch was not sure why the picnic area by the bocce courts was bulldozed: It may be a Department of Public Works project unrelated to the Oakwood Park renovation project.

Greenhouses

Mr. Kapner is working to get the greenhouses on Division Avenue removed. He hopes this will happen in February.

K. MINUTES

Mr. Keane moved and Mr. Kapner seconded the motion to approve the minutes of December 6, 2016. The minutes were approved as submitted.

L. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Morgan moved and Mr. Hoefling seconded the motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Margaret Koontz
Planning Board Secretary