

**BLAIRSTOWN TOWNSHIP
PLANNING BOARD
December 19, 2011– 7:30 PM**

MINUTES

The Blairstown Township Planning Board met in regular session on Monday, December 19, 2011, at 7:30 pm at the Blairstown Municipal Building, 106 Route 94, Blairstown, New Jersey. The following members were present: Debra Waldron, Kevin Doell, Jim Sikkes, Rosalie Murray, Bill Seal, Mayor Richard Mach, Paul Avery, David Keller, and Herman Shoemaker. Kevin Doell was absent. Also present were: Board Engineer, Ted Rodman, and Board Secretary, Marion Spriggs. Board Attorney, Roger Thomas was not present.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG: was recited.

ROLL CALL: was taken.

THE SUNSHINE STATEMENT:

Chairman Shoemaker read the following statement:

“Adequate notice of this meeting of the Blairstown Township Planning Board has been provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act (Chapter 231.P.L. 1975)”.

MINUTES: (As distributed prior to the meeting date.)

Minutes of November 21, 2011 regular meeting were approved, as corrected.\

Chairman Shoemaker asked on page 4, under Action, of the 11/21/11 minutes, the word “payable” be added before the Affordable Trust Fund.

Action: A motion was duly made by Mrs. Waldron seconded by Mr. Keller, to approve the November 21, 2011, regular meeting minutes, with the above correction. Roll call vote: Waldron, Seal, Mayor Mach, Avery, Keller, and Shoemaker – yes. Sikkes and Murray abstained.

Chairman Shoemaker pointed out that Roger Thomas, Township Attorney, phoned and indicated that he did not see anything on the Agenda that would require his expertise, and there is nothing that would be worth spending money on, for his services tonight.

PB DEADLINE DATES:

Deb Waldron shared that she mentioned at the last meeting, that at the BOA, so many of the applicants’ attorneys were coming in unprepared for the meetings at the last minute. She actually cancelled meetings for that reason.

Marion Spriggs, pointed out the application reads, taxes must be paid at time of application.

She further stated the problem lies in the fact that the problem is ongoing. She pointed out that taxes have been paid at time of the application but sometimes applications are carried and during that lapse of time, the taxes are in arrears. She explained that the applicants have come in at the last minute, if reminded, to pay their taxes on the afternoon of the meeting.

After an application has been filed, updating taxes becomes a forgotten matter. That is why changing the application will not solve the problem for ongoing meetings. Marion Spriggs pointed out that is why Debra Waldron, as current BOA Chairwoman, requested that this reminder appear on every BOA Agenda, and be read aloud.

Debra Waldron interjected, that unless Marion Spriggs reminds the applicants, they do not submit on time. She stated Marion should not have to tell them. AS BOA Chairwoman, she will not hear them.

Marion Spriggs pointed out another issue is, if there are revisions to maps etc., they are needed 10 calendar days in advance, in order to be mailed out in the Board packets. (PB packets are available 6 days in advance to include BOA approved minutes). She pointed out, upon speaking with the Town Clerk, Phyllis Pizzaia, it was revealed this is more a procedural matter. It does not require an attorney or an Ordinance change.

Ted Rodman stated deadline information on the application is not enough as sometimes applications are requested via phone via a messenger or another. Putting it on the application would not require an Ordinance change.

Mayor Mach suggested adding “and in the event that the Application is delayed in Hearing, taxes must be paid to date at the time of the Hearing”.

A Board member suggested that “and submissions” be added to the suggested wording to encompass the revised plans, etc., needed for updating the file and members.

Action: A motion was duly made by Mr. Keller, seconded by Mrs. Waldron, to include the following wording on land use applications. “In the event that the Application is delayed in Hearing, taxes must be paid to date and **submissions** received, 10 calendar days prior to the Hearing.” Roll call vote: Waldron, Sikkes, Murray, Seal, Mayor Mach, Shoemaker, Avery and Keller – yes.

RESOLUTIONS:

NWRHS Capital Improvements Review

PB#02-11 NWRHS Bd. of Ed., Block 1402, Lot 21.02, 10 Noe Rd, modular classrooms addition.

Action: A motion was duly made by Mrs. Waldron, seconded by Mr. Avery, to approve the resolution for **PB#02-11 NWRHS Bd. of Ed.**, Block 1402, Lot 21.02, 10 Noe Rd, modular

classrooms addition. Roll call vote: Waldron, Seal, Mayor Mach, Avery, Keller and Chairman Shoemaker – yes. Sikkes and Murray – abstain.

CORRESPONDENCE:

BOA Minutes 10/13/11

11/22/11 NJLM Legislative Recap for November 21 (a response to 11/18/11 Urgent Legislative Alert)

OTHER BUSINESS:

RECYCLING ORDINANCE

This matter will be carried.

COAH

Mayor Mach revealed that he met with Theresa Tamburro, MHL, and one of the Committee people. Theresa Tamburro will have a status report on where the Affordable House Trust Fund stands currently. How much money has been committed, how much has been spent. He stated she will try to get some definition as to how much of the unspent funds from July, 2008 in the COAH Trust Fund, are subject to confiscation by the State of NJ in June, 2012. He pointed out the question is, is the entire COAH Trust Fund in jeopardy or, in 4 year increments, as allocated.

SOLAR ORDINANCE – compliance with State Ordinance

This matter will be carried.

Land Development Ordinance Review - Discussion

Chairman Shoemaker reviewed his homework assignment of Chap. 19 Land Dev. Ordinance, **Sec. 19-409 & 410**. He went through the bold faced titles under **Sec. 19,-** through **Sec. 19-505**.

Debra Waldron stated what the PB is trying to do now with this review of Chapter 19, will help. It is a very good start.

She pointed out that in 2002, she, Lois Brod and Ray Davis went through the Ordinance Book and each took a section of the Book. She said it never went anywhere because Ray Davis left and all the paperwork was discarded. She felt it would have been beneficial.

Chairman Shoemaker indicated there were a lot of areas applicable under the heading of “What To Do When There Is Nothing To Do”, distributed at the Maser-Dolan seminar. He listed some innumeration items, and asked for volunteers to look into items of their choice. For instance, he noted the following:

Comparing the Censuses of 2000 and 2010.

Reviewing the BOA Annual Report for the last 5 years to see if there are common reoccurring issues which denote possible weakness in the system, that need to be addressed.

He indicated that he would prepare a memo listing the suggested topics and send it to the PB members.

Chairman Shoemaker suggested that the Board members look over remaining sections of Chapter 19 and decide which they would like to research.

Chairman Shoemaker hopes there will be other assignments, moving along that direction.

Debra Waldron applauds the Chairman's efforts and agreed the Board wants to remain pro-active during slower economic times, while they have the ability.

NEW BUSINESS:

None

PUBLIC PORTION:

Anita Ardia, a Blirstown resident, and former Mayor of Blirstown, stated that she has been a Planning Board member collectively, for 13 years.

She stated she was pleased that 3 PB members attended a recent Maser Consulting seminar entitled "What To Do When There Is Nothing To Do".

She wished to call to the Board's attention other things that can be done as cited in the 1975 Municipal Land Use Law. She noted they do require the authorization of the Township Committee. She asked Rosalie Murray, a PB member, to read the list for her.

After the list was read, Chairman Shoemaker commented that many of those ideas are already covered by The State, which gives tax credits and benefits. He revealed that many of the points were mentioned in the Maser Consulting Seminar.

Mrs. Murray pointed out that all the items were already covered in the Land Development Book, Chapter 19, of which all the PB members received a copy.

Article 4-3.2 in the book, pertains to Capital improvement and review of capital projects. Mrs. Murray pointed out, it says "The Governing Body may authorize The Planning Board to prepare a program of municipal capital improvements projected over the term of at least 6 years" and amendments thereto.

Mrs. Murray stated that to her, this is the heart of future planning.

She questioned if Blairstown has an official map. She suggested such a map would be useful in brainstorming.

Ted Rodman said a streets and roads map has been done. He pointed out that The Environmental Committee did this several years ago. This series of maps was located in Town Hall. It was uncertain whether they were lost in the fire. He said the only time the map got changed was when a road was abandoned, or there was a new road the Town took over.

Paul Avery responded these maps could now be put on computer negating necessity of overlays. He said it would be a great planning tool.

Chairman Shoemaker commented that the information at the Maser seminar addressed these issues. He feels as a Planning Board, they are aware and starting to address these suggestions.

Anita Ardia's final comment was that the review of the Master Plan should not be done only at the 6 year mandate but rather as an ongoing endeavor. In 2002, she stated the idea was to review every Ordinance. Chairman Shoemaker replied one thing at a time is being addressed. He thanked Mrs. Ardia for her input and said they are aware.

Land Use Board

Mrs. Ardia is aware that Township Committee is considering a single Land Use Board. She is dead set against it. She said the BOA Agendas for 2011, reveal they are full. She understands the economics behind it. She feels the professionals are not always needed. She declared this puts a lot of authority into the hands of a few. She stated that she understands should things change, reverting back to 2 boards is possible but she pointed out that takes about 2 or 3 months.

Mr. Sikkes, a PB member and former PB Chairman, pointed that it also costs money to form a single land use board. He indicated it puts a strain on the board members. He said there is one in Sussex, NJ. It requires 2 meetings a month. He pointed out since the board members are volunteers, he questioned how many people today can afford the time to go to 2 meetings per month. He also pointed out that most people are trying to survive with their incomes. He said you really don't accomplish anything. There are no savings.

Mr. Sikkes admitted it was very difficult when the Planning Board was busy, and 2 meetings per month were held. He said it was very hard to get enough members to come. He revealed they would not come to a second meeting. His final comment was to form a Single Land Use Board, expecting volunteers to attend 2x per month, would be very difficult.

Deb Waldron, BOA Chairwoman, declared with the BOA's full schedule, they are up to 10pm every night, performing cut-offs for a majority of the meetings. So, the full BOA Agenda, could not take on Planning Board.

Mrs. Ardia pointed out that Frelinghuysen Twp. went to a Land Use Board 6 years ago. She said the people in Frelinghuysen Twp. signed a petition against it. A Referendum took place and both boards were reinstated. It functioned as a single Land Use Board for about 6 months only.

The savings was questioned, when there are 2 meetings a month.

VOUCHERS:

There were no vouchers to approve.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, a motion was duly made by Mr. Sikkes, seconded by Mr. Seal, and unanimously carried, to adjourn at 9:24pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Marion C. Spriggs, Secretary