

The November 3, 2003 regular semi-monthly meeting of the Township of Chatham Planning Board was called to order at approximately 7:30 p.m. by Chairman Bill McCutcheon. The Open Public Meetings Act Statement was read into the record. The agenda for the work session included discussions on parking lots in the rear of structures, Master Plan Committee report, revised checklists, by-laws update, review of the calendar and a review of the downtown goals and implementation strategies. Mr. McCutcheon also welcomed new Board member Jonathan Cohn.

Roll Call

Those present were Mr. McCutcheon, Mrs. Twomey, Mr. Ciccarone, Mr. Cohn, Mrs. Chambers, Mrs. Fair and Mrs. Hoag. Mr. Caprioglio, Mr. Cashman and Mr. Jacobson were absent. Planning Board engineer Marshall Frost, Planning Board attorney Don Malehorn and Planning Board planner Eileen Banyra were also present.

Minutes

Mrs. Hoag moved to accept the minutes from the October 13, 2003 meeting and Mrs. Fair seconded, with all in favor.

Mrs. Hoag made a correction to page 4, line 3 of the minutes from the October 20, 2003 meeting to read, “*LOI if there is no basis for the requirement.*” Mrs. Hoag then moved to accept the minutes as corrected and Mrs. Chambers seconded, with all in favor.

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Discussions

Master Plan Committee

Mrs. Fair gave a brief review of the committee’s deliberations. A summary of the committee’s proposed Master Plan Goals and Implementation Strategies was distributed and it was determined the priority for this year was improvements in the business district. Other goals included the preservation of open space for use in passive and active recreation, protection of environmentally sensitive areas like steep slopes, protection of neighborhood characteristics, development of specific goals for study areas in transition (the Green Village and Loantaka Way area and the River Road area), historic sites and creation of pedestrian walkways and bikeways to connect open spaces. Member of the public and manager of the Noe Pond Club Chuck Barton of Plymouth Road, made comments regarding setbacks in the recreation zone.

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Parking Lots in Rear of Commercial Buildings

Mr. McCutcheon stated there was an opportunity to apply this proposed concept with the pending Peapack-Gladstone Bank application. Mr. Frost distributed a table to Board members showing the four different business zones and each lot within the zones. Using tax maps and information from the GIS, Mr. Frost compared zoning requirements to determine whether or not requiring parking in the rear of commercial buildings would impact a lot’s permitted building size. From this study, Mr. Frost concluded that there would be little negative effect on most of

the existing lots. Because these lots were already constrained, the location of parking did not appear to affect the allowable building coverage.

In reviewing his analysis, Mr. Frost suggested that the Planning Board needed to re-examine the number of substandard lots, especially in the PI-1 and B-1 zones. He indicated that the Board should look at the impact of parking in the rear on redevelopment. Mr. Frost's conclusion was that requiring parking in the rear may work well in some areas such as the two major shopping centers. Mr. Frost also indicated that the many small lots joined for the applicant Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus (Oak Knoll) are zoned differently. Mr. Frost indicated the Board may want to review this for future development issues.

In response, Ms. Banyra agreed that the Board would have to change the existing zoning to permit parking in the rear. Ms. Banyra stated that zoning should take into consideration the existing pattern of development. Regarding the split lot zoning, Ms. Banyra felt this was not an area of concern. Ms. Banyra's point was that a property like Oak Knoll is generally considered a campus. Regarding parking behind the buildings, Ms. Banyra stated most developers were reluctant to place the parking in the rear, but perhaps inducements can be created. Ms. Banyra suggested that the Township's requirements for bank parking (1 space per 100 square feet) and office building parking (1 per 200 square feet) were too high in her opinion and thought these ratios could be reviewed. Another concern for Ms. Banyra was that if there were nowhere to walk to, perhaps it wasn't meaningful to require rear parking lots. There was a discussion of design standards and zoning adjustments. Ms. Banyra stated she felt there were things that could be done to improve the business district.

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Review and Discussion of Downtown Goals

Board members discussed whether or not they felt the business district could be made a pedestrian-friendly area. Board members expressed concern that with continued development in the area, the intersection of Shunpike Road and Southern Boulevard will change significantly. In summary, Board members concluded the greatest positive impact would be the addition of trees, consistent lighting and sidewalks. Ms. Banyra stated she could take the implementation strategies by the Master Plan subcommittee and put a plan together, to which the Board agreed. There was some discussion about the development of the second floor of the business areas for residential use; members thought this might provide required affordable housing but that has not yet been determined.

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Revised Checklist for Site Plan Subdivision

Mr. Frost suggested that the requirement showing compliance for the useable lot area section be included under the “Natural Features” section of the checklist. Mr. Malehorn indicated the whole checklist would have to be redrafted. Regarding wording of the definition, Mr. Frost suggested, “useable lot area shall mean a contiguous area of a generally regular geometric shape that completely encompasses the footprint of the proposed building and/or accessory buildings within the boundaries of the lot that is exclusive of required lot setbacks, wetlands...”

Mr. Frost received a facsimile of Bernards Township’s ordinance regarding computer-aided design, which assists with the input of GIS data. Mr. Frost suggested the Board and Ms. Banyra review the information.

Proposed Streetscape Lights

The Board discussed the acceptability of using PSE&G lights in Dover for the business district. The concensus of the Board members who had seen these lights was that they were too high and too bright. Mr. Frost indicated that the lights could come on poles as low as 12'9" for a total height of between 13 and 14 feet. He indicated that he would try to get JCP&L to set up a mock light for the Board's review.

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Applications

Hagner/Novick

Mr. Frost stated he would like to know the Board's position on the proposed waiver of the environmental impact statement before a final determination regarding completeness is made. The applicant's engineer requested the opportunity to meet with the Board on this issue only. A preliminary review/informal discussion was scheduled for November 17, 2003. Mr. Frost will communicate with the applicant regarding this informal discussion.

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Braemar

Mr. Frost apprised the Board that Braemar has received a "no further action" letter from the Department of Environmental Protection.

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By-Laws Update

Mrs. Hoag prepared a memo outlining proposed updates and changes to the by-laws and asked the Board for comments. The outstanding items to discuss included training; listing of critical dates of each application; should there be reports for site visits; should reports from engineer/planner/attorney be included in the package; definition of duties of the chair, vice chair

and secretary; distribution of reports/applications to the Environmental Commission and Tree Protection; should Board member questions be directed through the Chairperson; is there a need for a definition of a work meeting versus a public meeting; attendance issues; and should a listing of established committees be included.

Meeting Dates

The Board discussed potential conflicts with dates on the proposed Planning Board 2004-2005 calendar. Changes will be made and redistributed.

Review of Applications

In a review of the applications, Mr. Frost stated that additional information was submitted by **Rolling Hill at Candace** but not yet reviewed. Mr. Frost will be in touch with Chairman McCutcheon following review of the submission. Mr. Malehorn was asked to remind the applicant that the extension currently expires on November 30, 2003.

Regarding **SABE**, Mr. Malehorn sent a letter to the applicant regarding the Board's plan to dismiss the application without prejudice if there is no action by December 15, 2003 and has received no response. Mrs. Hoag indicated she would inform the Board of the status of SABE's application to the Board of Health.

There being no further business, the Township of Chatham Planning Board Meeting of November 3, 2003 was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Katherine T. Hollerith
Recording Secretary