

STRATFORD JOINT LAND USE BOARD  
MINUTES  
AUGUST 23, 2018

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mr. St. Maur at 7:00 pm and the public statement was read that the meeting was advertised in the Courier Post, Central Record and a notice was posted on the bulletin board at the Borough Hall stating the time and place.

The Chairman led the board in the pledge of allegiance and a prayer.

ROLL CALL:

Present

R. St. Maur, Chairman  
A. Santora, Vice Chairman  
J. Keenan, Mayor  
F. Hartman, Councilman  
R. Morello  
M. Mancini  
M. Goldin  
J. Keenan  
T. Kozeniewski, Alternate #1  
T. Hall, Alternate #2  
A. Olizi  
W. Roorda  
S. McCart, Secretary

Absent

P. McGovern

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion was made by Mr. Goldin and seconded by Mr. Santora to approve minutes of the July 26, 2018. All members voting aye. Mr. Hartman and Mr. Hall abstained.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTIONS: Resolution 2018:07 Schmuckler, 109 Longwood Drive, B.112, L.18 Driveway Variance. Motion was made by M Goldin and seconded by Mr. Morello to approve Resolution 2018:07. Roll call vote: Mr. Santora, yes, Mayor Keenan, yes, Mr. Morello, yes, Mr. Goldin, yes, Mr. Keenan, yes, Mr. Kozeniewski, yes, Mr. Mancini, yes, Mr. St. Mawr, yes, Mr. Hartman and Mr. Hall abstained.

Resolution 2018:08 Season's Pizza, 1014 N. White Horse Pike, B.4, L1.01 Sign Variance. Motion was made by Mr. Mancini and seconded by Mr. Keenan to approve Resolution 2018:08. Roll call vote: Mr. Santora, yes, Mayor Keenan, yes, Mr. Morello, yes, Mr. Goldin, yes, Mr. Keenan, yes, Mr. Mancini, yes, Mr. Kozeniewski, yes, Mr. St. Mawr, yes. Mr. Hartman and Mr. Hall abstained.

BOARD ACTION: Mr. Olizi stated this is a public hearing on a determination to consider whether the area in question which is Block 53, Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6 should be considered an area of redevelopment. Mr. James Maley, Maley Givins, Counselors at Law, Redevelopment council for the borough. This process is one in which the governing body has referred to the planning board a request to review if property B. 53, Lots 1 through 6 qualify as a area of redevelopment under the local redevelopment housing law. You qualify for designating as an area if you satisfy one of criteria set forth in the statue. We have Pam Pellegrini who has done the report. We have put notice in paper as required by law and notified property owners within potential area. The JLUB makes recommendation back to the governing body and the governing body makes resolution to designate the area. We are not discussing any plans to go on the lots. That would be the next step.

Mr. Olizi stated we are charged with an investigation. Pam Pellegrini has done the study and will present her report. We are required to review that and consider any testimony by public here or any testimony given us in writing and Ms. Pellegrini's testimony and anyone that is here who wants to speak.

Pam Pellegrini, Borough Planner, was sworn in by Mr. Olizi. Ms. Pellegrino stated she was a licensed professional planner and engineer in the state of New Jersey. She has 35 years of experience and served the town since 2016. Mr. St. Maur accepted Ms. Pellegrini as an expert. Ms. Pellegrini stated the targeted area is Block 53, Lots 1 through 6 along Berlin Road which is a county road. It is also bordered by Arlington Avenue, Coolidge Avenue, a bit Bryant Avenue and a paper extension of Bishop Terrace. The area is zoned Commercial. Lot 1 is a commercial use, lot 2 is a vacant commercial, lots 3 & 6 are privately owned and vacant, lot 4 is owned by borough and vacant, lot 5 is existing non conforming residential use in commercial zone. There is an expanded table in report giving property characteristics of each lot according to the tax rules including improvement values versus land value. We did investigation based on physical evidence, based on tax records, based on photographs, based on master plan documents, county documents, and other planning tools relating to your borough. Across Berlin Road is the Lindenwold Patco and parking lot. The statutory criteria for redevelopment can be found in the Preliminary Investigation Determination of Need Report on page 12 through 14. There was an evaluation of each property. Block 53, lot 2 is a two story built in 1918 what appears to be apartments and is currently vacant. It is in fair condition. The commercial structure is vacant and in disrepair, tax records stated it was gutted and has fire damage. This area meets criteria a, dilapidation and b, vacant commercial structures. Additional this qualifies for criteria d, faulty arrangement and e, improvement value. Lots 3 & 6 are privately owned, wooded parcels and lot 4 is a publicly owned wooded lot, vacant and unimproved. There is quite a large portion which is potentially wetlands but needs a field determination by actual field lineation. This could greatly impact the development of those properties. It would be hard to be financially feasible to develop these lots if not included in a large comprehensive area. This meets criteria c, allows inclusion of property to effectively redevelop an area. Lot 1 and 5 is a daycare and individual home. This is an infill and corner lot and even though the daycare has recently been improved, it still has potential for more improvements to be made. This entire area would meet criteria h, smart growth planning. It provides a gateway into your community on a major corridor. The entire block would qualify as an area of redevelopment. Mr. Olizi asked if lot 1 falls into smart growth category. Ms. Pellegrini stated she wanted to look at it as an important property to complete the entire area. Mr. Olizi asked did you do an inspection of the outside of properties. Ms. Pellegrini state she did but did not go into buildings on the properties. Mr. Olizi asked did you form any opinions as to whether this area does or does not meet criteria for redevelopment. Ms. Pellegrini stated that is the conclusion of our report. This area meets the criteria for redevelopment.

Mr. Mancini asked why lot 1 would be part of area. What criteria did you use specifically to include it? Ms. Pellegrini stated she was not sure why the tax records show the improvement value so low compared to the land ratio. The reason to include it may be an opportunity for them to benefit from the redevelopment. I don't think it is smart to leave out that corner as part of the redevelopment. Mr. Mancini stated you indicated lot 2 is partially residential and lot 5 is residential. Ms. Pellegrini stated the home predated the zoning of commercial. It is considered non-conforming use in that zone. Lot 2 has apartments and could be considered commercial.

Mr. Morello question whether the property is subject to eminent domain. Mr. Pellegrini stated we were instructed that this redevelopment would be non-condemnation. Mr. Olizi stated that a redevelopment area as listed in section 3, 12A-3, and a redevelopment area may include land, buildings or improvements which are not detrimental to the public health, safety and welfare but the inclusion is found necessary with or without changing for the effective redevelopment of the area which they are a part. Mr. Maley stated non-condemnation area, all the designation does, if and when someone wanted to do improvements they can take advantage of benefits.

Mr. Mancini asked about wetlands. Ms. Pellegrini stated the DEP based on soil maps, streams, flood hazards, those types of things, make a determination where wetlands may exist. Wetlands, there is different criteria that has to be met. Seasonal high water has to be above 18", plant types, different criteria would have to be met. DEP makes a general assessment and based on that the buffer width depends on what kinds of species were found. Whoever would develop would have to have a professional come out and map the wetlands. Based on visual inspection there will be some wetlands. Whoever develops would have delineation done, send to DEP, they come out and approve the line and tell them what kind of buffer they

have and then they cannot build in that area unless they need a small area to fit something in. And they can go to DEP for permits for buffer averaging.

Mr. Olizi stated that as part of evidence there have 2 maps: Exhibit A1 would be Aerial map, Exhibit A2 would be wetland map, Exhibit A3 would be report. There are additional maps in the report.

Meeting was opened for public questions:

Steve Gagliardi, 13 College Circle, Is wetlands natural or storm run off. Ms. Pellegrini stated mostly natural, could be some run off.

Michael Price, 105 Stratford Ave, questioned on survey procedure and disclosure. Will there be delineation as to exact size and boundaries and acreage of wetlands. What is the process that is going to determine the impact of disruption of those areas. Is wild life population part of the study and how we would be notified? Ms. Pellegrini stated they would only be able to delineate the limits of the wetlands on their property. They would submit a survey to DEP. DEP has also has records and databases with what species are in the area. They will come out and confirm that it has been accurately delineated. Then DEP would assign a buffer line that would be shown on any site plan. M. Price questioned the swiss cheese effect. Is there a disqualifying percentage that would disqualify this from redevelopment. Mr. Maley stated this determination is not to say this is the best land to be developed. It's a finding that says this land has obstacles and that's what qualifies it for redevelopment.

Mrs. Agnes Moore, 152 Laureba Avenue, asked if the property was already sold. Ms. Pellegrini stated not according to the tax records. Mr. Olizi stated that this board would not have jurisdiction over whether it was sold or not. Mrs. Moore was concerned about density width of road and the entrance location as it falls in Bryant Avenue. Ms. Pellegrini stated this determination would have nothing to do with any prior concepts that the borough may or may not have had. I was asked about something potentially. I was asked to do a redevelopment study and make a determination if area would qualify for redevelopment. The next step would be potential developers presenting to borough. Mrs. Moore asked about a concept that was floating around. Mr. Olizi stated we can still do an area of redevelopment and something may never be built there.

Shirmica Wickramaratne, 102 Berlin Road, I am the owner of Lot 1 and have the daycare and I am not selling my property.

Christine Maisonave, 86 Berlin Road, does Mr. Wickramaratne have to do upgrades? Mr. Olizi stated there is no work in anyway that she would have to do. Ms. Maisonave stated I get a lot of drainage problems. Would the redevelopment interfere with drainage? Mr. Maley stated tonight has nothing to do with any projects that could happen there. If down the road something is submitted, you would get notice when site plans are submitted. There are requirements from this board when they review a site plan and it would have to show storm water controls.

John Gentless, 111 Union Avenue, questioned the wetlands delineation and the map. Ms. Pellegrini stated it was DEP mapping and an estimate. Mr. Gentless stated the delineation was already applied for. Mr. Gentless asked if you walked site. Ms. Pellegrini stated the perimeter. Mr. Gentless asked about lot 3 which is basically woodlands. How is that deemed in need of redevelopment? Ms. Pellegrini stated based on criteria c in NJSA 40A:12-5. How did you find out about project? Ms. Pellegrini stated there was a concept plan sent a while ago but I stated there were issues with the property. Ms. Pellegrini stated the borough asked me to do a determination. Mr. Gentless asked if all the lot holders had been notified. Mr. Maley stated I can verify that they have all been notified.

Carol Colalillo, 149 Laureba Ave., stated if there is an empty parcel, I agree it needs to be cleaned up but why isn't the first step getting it cleaned up without getting a developer to build. Mr. Maley stated the borough doesn't own all the land, so they need cooperation of property owners. One of the interests that most boroughs have is to create ratable to help with residents taxes. This is an area that hasn't been developed in the past that could be develop and for reasons stated, qualifies it for an area of redevelopment. The smart growth is one of the criteria that could make it an area that could need redevelopment.

Mr. Olizi asked if anyone that wanted to come up and give testimony, for or against, can be sworn in.

Ashley Stetser, 1 College Circle, was sworn in by Mr. Olizi. She is for the redevelopment. She stated as a young adult, I want to see the town grow and be great for my kids.

Agnes Moore, 152 Laureba Ave., was sworn in. She was against the redevelopment. There are 150 apartments and 130 homes in a 6 block area. Agrees it needs redevelopment but feels it should stay

commercial. Concerned about children in schools and effect it will have on our schools. Feels current homeowners should be taking care of properties. Does not want borough to continue spending tax payer's money on properties for projects that have not even been approved. Disagrees with trees being cut down. Cuts down on noise from traffic.

Carol Colalillo, 149 Laureba Ave, was sworn in. She was against the redevelopment. Feels too much development in a small area. Is there any plot of land that is being left alone.

Michael Price, 105 Stratford Ave., was sworn in. He is against due to environmental issues and asks that the board look at the environmental impact that would occur in that area.

John Gentless, 111 Union Ave., was sworn in. He read email into record dated March 29, 2018. It concerned a concept plan with 53 townhouses. Would there be an affordable housing component to it? Mr. Olizi stated you would have to ask the borough solicitor about that. Mr. Maley stated developers come in with plans and it gives us an opportunity to go through a process to consider when something comes down the road.

Christine Counts, 109 Stratford Ave., was sworn in. We bought our house because of the lands behind us. She was against redevelopment.

Cheryl Trimble-Pointer, 110 Suburban Terrace, was sworn in. She stated it is already hard to get out of Bryant Avenue. Opposes redevelopment of this area with townhouses but agrees it needs to be clean up and redeveloped with something else. Mr. Olizi stated no decision has been made about homes.

Judith Price, 105 Stratford Ave., stated we were not given notification about meeting. She was against redevelopment. She pointed out the environmental area in this area compared to other side of town. She was concerned about flooding which ebbs and flows according to rainy season.

Alan Rodgerss, 140 Suburban Terrace, was sworn in. He stated his main concern was with public utilities getting overloaded. Commercial development in that area, he was for as long as it doesn't significantly affect traffic.

Steve Gagliardi, 13 College Circle, was sworn in. He was for the redevelopment. The trees will be impacted whether it is commercial or residential. The school taxes should be addressed at the school board.

Pat Giacabetti, 112 Laureba Ave., Wanted to thank the Sterling High School Cheerleaders who were cleaning up the park area today.

Mr. Olizi closed the public portion.

Mr. Santora asked can you explain if we make this a redevelopment, will redevelopment also help if a commercial client wanted to develop that the crowd seems ok with. Mr. Maley stated the designation can assist any property owner in any development that they want to do on their property. Mr. Santora stated we are making this a redevelopment zone so that we can go out and find any developer that would best suit the town. Mr. Olizi stated this is not to make it commercial or residential. It allows something to be done with that property. Mr. St. Maur stated the board is charged with the decision after hearing our planners study and that the results meet criteria for being an area of redevelopment. Mr. Olizi stated that is all we will be voting on. We do listen to all your testimony and take all that into consider should an application come before the board but that is not what we are here for tonight.

Motion was made by Mr. Santora and seconded by Mr. Mancini to approve that we send this back to Mayor and Council that we agree with planner that Block 53, Lots 1-6, within the Borough of Stratford, as a non-condemnation redevelopment area. Roll call vote: Mr. Santora, yes, Mayor Keenan, yes, Mr. Morello, yes, Mr. Goldin, no, Mr. Mancini, yes, Mr. Keenan, yes, Mr. Kozeniewski, yes, Mr. Hartman, yes, Mr. St. Maur, yes.

#### PUBLIC PORTION

CORRESPONDENCE: none

OLD BUSINESS: none

NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Goldin asked about the water run off course. Concerned about big site plans, do we have to know about water run off?

Mr. Mancini wanted to talk about putting email blast out for the agenda for these meetings. Mr. Olizi stated we should put on agenda under new business for September meeting.

Mr. Olizi referenced litigation. We are going to hear the meeting again.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion was made by Mr. Mancini to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Santora. All members voting aye.