

CHATHAM BOROUGH PLANNING BOARD
October 17, 2012 7:30 p.m.

Chairman Richard Crater called the Chatham Borough Planning Board meeting of October 17, 2012 to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Chatham Municipal Building. Mr. Crater announced that all legal notices have been posted for this meeting.

Name	Present	Absent
Mayor Bruce Harris		x
Chairman Richard Crater	x	
Council Member Vicki Fife	x	
Donna Cali-Charles	x	
Vincent DeNave	x	
H.H. Montague	x	
Susan Favate	x	
James Mitchell		x
Matthew Wagner		x
Joseph Mikulewicz	x	
John Bitar	x	
Vincent K. Loughlin, Esq.	x	
Dr. Susan Blickstein	x	

Open to the Public

No one came forward

Adoption of Minutes

The meeting minutes of September 19, 2012 were approved as amended.

Resolutions

There were none.

Applications

There were none.

Discussion

Application Checklist

Attorney Loughlin reported that he had received a number of suggested revisions for the documents and checklists he had distributed in August. At Dr. Blickstein's recommendation, Attorney Loughlin will refer the documents to the Zoning Board of Adjustment before everything is forwarded to the Borough Council.

Attorney Loughlin noted that he and Dr. Blickstein held a conference call with the Zoning Board of Adjustment Attorney, Patrick Dwyer. Attorney Dwyer informed them that the Board of Adjustment would like Dr. Blickstein to give them a formal presentation of the forms and checklist.

Attorney Loughlin noted that he has included revisions suggested by Mayor Harris. The revisions are before the Board tonight. Attorney Loughlin stated that he also received revisions late this afternoon from Board Member Montague.

Dr. Blickstein said that the final step for this Checklist project is an update and a correlation with the Borough Ordinance.

Mr. Montague reviewed his suggested revisions with Dr. Blickstein and Mr. DeNave. He asked that definitions of terms be included in the checklist. Dr. Blickstein agreed with this request. Mr. Montague and Mr. DeNave discussed how the height of a structure is determined. Mr. Montague questioned why floor area was counted for basements in the business district. Mr. DeNave explained that gross floor area was counted for businesses for parking requirements. He pointed out that the Shehadi Building has a law office operating in its basement.

At Dr. Blickstein's request, Attorney Loughlin explained the steps of the Preliminary Review of an Application. Dr. Blickstein questioned the word "valid" for when an application is initially submitted to the Construction Office. Attorney Loughlin suggested the term "incomplete" when the list of required information is lacking at the time of submission.

Mr. Montague recommended that the term "Board Secretary" be changed to "Administrative Secretary" in the checklist.

Mr. Crater reminded the Board that the Mayor had requested that this checklist be finished in time to be presented at the first Borough Council meeting in November. Hopefully the checklist meets the approval of the Zoning Bd. of Adjustment.

Mr. Crater thanked the Application Checklist Committee for all their hard work – Dr. Blickstein, Attorney Loughlin, and Mr. DeNave.

M Districts

Dr. Blickstein noted that Board members should have her memo dated September 25, 2012 regarding the M Districts.

Dr. Blickstein noted that there is a mix of uses in the M-Districts, many of which are allowed by ordinance. The Board, in the future, may want to have a discussion about expanding additional uses in these districts. The Board may want to decide whether there should be differences between the M-1 and the M-3 Districts.

Dr. Blickstein reported that there are some cases where Borough lands and Borough rights-of-way are being encroached upon. A great deal of vehicle storage is taking place in the M Districts, especially after normal business hours. The Board should think about regulating that situation.

Dr. Blickstein discussed the access situation in the M Districts. There are existing curb cuts which allow vehicles to freely back out onto River Road. Contaminated sites exist in the M Districts. Dr. Blickstein reminded the Board that Watchung Ave. currently doesn't present itself well as a "gateway" for people traveling from Summit into Chatham Borough.

Council Member Fife felt that River Road is almost disgraceful when one drives or walks down that street. However, some local residents have begun successful, attractive businesses in the industrial districts – River Grille on River Road and the Pascarella Brothers Deli on Watchung Ave. Jim Greener, a local architect, renovated a garage on Commerce Street, making it into his professional office. Council Member Fife and Dr. Blickstein suggested a sub-committee be formed to focus on planning efforts and recommendations for the M Districts.

Mrs. Favate suggested a look be taken at creating public access to the Passaic River. Mr. Bitar noted that the Environmental Commission has been working on a possible trail along the River. He offered to serve on the sub-committee.

Mr. Crater questioned whether the Mayor and Borough Council should generate this particular committee. The committee could be composed of residents, Council Members, business owners, and perhaps three Planning Bd. members.

Mr. Crater thanked Council Member Fife and Dr. Blickstein for all their work on this M District Study.

Miscellaneous

Mr. Crater asked for an update on the applications for the Hamilton – Jefferson Apartment complexes.

Attorney Loughlin reported that since both of these properties appear to be in non-conformity in regard to density standards of the ordinance, their applications should be brought before the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Revised plans have been submitted based on the initial reviews done by Planning Board Engineer Hansen and Dr. Blickstein.

Dr. Blickstein added that the Hamilton Apartment Complex is ready to be heard by the Board of Adjustment. The Jefferson Apartment Complex has not yet submitted revised plans.

At 8:40 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Planning Board meeting will be held Wednesday, November 7, 2012, 7:30 p.m., Council Chambers, Chatham Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted:

Elizabeth Holler

Elizabeth Holler
Recording Secretary