

**CHATHAM BOROUGH PLANNING BOARD  
ANNUAL REPORT  
2015**

**Organization and Administration**

**2015 Planning Board Membership:**

<b>Class I</b>	Mayor Bruce A. Harris
<b>Class II</b>	Municipal Administrative Official, Janice Piccolo
<b>Class III</b>	Governing Body Representative, Councilwoman Victoria Fife
<b>Class IV</b>	Chairperson, Susan Favate Vice Chairperson, Matthew Wagner Environmental Commission Member, John Bitar Board of Adjustment Member, H.H. Montague Secretary, Joseph Mikulewicz Regular Member, James Mitchell, First Alternate, William Heap Second Alternate, Wolfgang Robinson

**Board Attorney,** Vincent J. Loughlin, Esq.

**Recording Secretary,** Elizabeth Holler

**Administrative Secretary,** Cathy Baldwin

**Professional Planner,** Susan Blickstein, PP

**Consulting Board Engineer,** Robert Brightly, PE, Ferriero Engineering

**Board Engineer,** Vincent DeNave, PE, Chatham Borough Zoning Official

**General Activities During 2015**

**MEETINGS:**

The annual reorganization meeting was held on January 7, 2015. All other meetings were held as regularly scheduled on the first and third Wednesday of each month, except for January 21, February 18, March 4, May 6, June 3, July 1, July 15, August 5, September 2, October 7, November 4 and December 9, 2015, which were cancelled due to lack of business. In addition to the above regular meetings, the Planning Board held a joint meeting with the Borough Council on December 2, 2015, to review the *Draft Housing Element and Fair Share Plan*.

## **REORGANIZATION MEETING RESOLUTIONS:**

- 2014-1 - Election of Officers
- 2014-2 - Meeting Schedule
- 2014-3 - Appointed Attorney – Vincent J. Loughlin, Esq.
- 2014-4 - Appointment of Board Planner – Dr. Susan Blickstein
- 2014-5 - Appointment of Consulting Board Engineer – Robert Brightly, Ferriero Engineering
- 2014-6 – Official Newspapers
- 2014-7 – Re-Adopting Rules and Regulations of the Planning Board
- 2014-8 – Re-Adopting Site Plan Waiver Procedures
- 2014-9 – Appointment of the Borough Sign Committee
- 2014-10 – Appointment of Board Engineer - Vincent DeNave, Chatham Borough Zoning Official

## **APPROVED DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS**

2015 was an extremely light year for development applications, with only one new application (change of use) and the other application being carried from 2014:

- 2014-04 – Site Plan: 331 Main Street (JJE3, LLP, expansion of office building parking lot)
- 2015-01 – Change of Use: 236 Main Street (Mode:Green, Inc., electronics showroom to replace former karate studio)

## **ADDITIONAL BUSINESS:**

- Under the direction of Mr. Loughlin, the Planning Board revised its bylaws to clarify certain procedures and be consistent with models of other communities.
- The then-chairman of the Zoning Board of Adjustment, Peter Hoffman, presented the Planning Board with a list of recommended zoning changes, based on the ZBA's experience in hearing and granting variance requests. Under the direction of Dr. Blickstein and a subcommittee of the Planning Board, the Board recommended a series of changes regarding floor area ratio (FAR). These included elimination of open porches, porticos and accessory structures that meet setback requirements from the calculation of FAR. In addition, the Board recommended liberalizing FAR ratios across all zoning districts. Planning Board Chair Susan Favate and Vice Chairman Matthew Wagner attended the September 14, 2015, Borough Council meeting to discuss the proposed FAR changes. At its September 16, 2015, meeting, the Planning Board reviewed Ordinance 2015-14, adopted the proposed changes to the Land Development Ordinance regarding FAR, and determined that the Ordinance was consistent with the Borough's Master Plan. The Borough Council subsequently adopted the FAR changes.

- At its June 17, 2015, meeting, the Planning Board approved Resolution 2015-17, endorsing the filing of a declaratory judgement and for temporary immunity, to allow the Borough to seek judicial approval of its Third Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan.
- At its June 17, 2015, meeting, the Planning Board reviewed Ordinance 15-07, amending Chapter 165 of the Land Development Regulations of the Borough Code to clarify conditional uses in the M-1 District, by deleting adult entertainment, tattoo parlors and body piercing uses. The Planning Board determined that the Ordinance was consistent with the Borough's Master Plan.
- At its June 17, 2015, meeting, the Planning Board reviewed Ordinance 15-08 and Ordinance 15-09, creating a new AFD-4 Affordable Housing District on Bowers Lane and increasing the required affordable housing set-aside in the M-1, M-2 and M-3 districts from 10% to 20%. The Planning Board determined that the Ordinances were consistent with the Borough's Master Plan.
- At its August 19, 2015, the Planning Board discussed the health of retail uses in the downtown, and whether any zoning changes or parking adjustments are needed to ensure an optimal mix of stores and to address vacancies. The Board felt that this was less of a planning issue and more of a marketing and business recruitment/retention issue. The Board declined to take any action but determined that this is something that should be considered as part of the 2016 Master Plan update.
- At its October 21, 2015, meeting, the Planning Board approved a professional services agreement with Dr. Blickstein and Clarke Caton Hintz to update the Borough's Master Plan in 2016. A subcommittee of the Board was formed to lead this effort.

In 2016, it is anticipated that a primary focus of the Planning Board will be updating the Master Plan, which will incorporate public outreach. It is also expected that one or more significant development applications in the Gateway area will appear before the Board, resulting from the 2014 creation of an overlay zoning district in this area.

Respectfully submitted  
Susan Favate  
Planning Board, Chair

REC:cb