

CHATHAM BOROUGH PLANNING BOARD
 October 16, 2013 7:30 p.m.

Chairman Susan Favate called this Chatham Borough Planning Board Regular Meeting of October 16, 2013 to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Chatham Municipal Building. Mrs. Favate announced that all legal notices have been posted for this meeting.

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

Keith Loughlin, Esq., was substituting for his father, Vincent K. Loughlin, Esq.

Open to the Public

No one came forward.

Review/Approval of Minutes

The meeting minutes of October 2, 2013, second draft, were approved as amended.

Resolution

There were none.

New Applications

There were none.

Pending Business Discussion

M Districts

Dr. Blickstein reviewed the recent revisions and deletions made to the M-2/M-3 Amendment to the Master Plan. No change was made to the easement behind the north side of Commerce Street. No change was made to expressly permitting oil distribution facilities as a permitted use. She stressed that this is a vision plan. Vision plans tend not to deal with the exceptional uses. They deal with the future.

Mrs. Cali-Charles and Dr. Blickstein discussed the vision for Commerce Street. Dr. Blickstein noted that no residential uses are being recommended for Commerce Street. The many repair garages currently operating on that street are non-conforming. The amendment will allow these repair businesses to become permitted conditional uses.

Regarding River Road businesses, Mr. DeNave said he has spoken with some owners, like Crown Oil, that are pre-existing non-conforming that do not want to change their use, as well as many business owners that have voiced their approval for the vision as a way to get out of their location or expand their opportunities for future profits. Many business owners feel that with the limited permitted uses, they need to rent out to landscapers to keep positive cash flow.

Mr. DeNave stated that he has stressed to these businesses that the town does not want them to leave the area so long as they follow certain guidelines.

Mayor Harris reviewed the language in the amendment stating that there are businesses activities currently going on in the industrial district which really should be permitted. Standards should be established to better manage the outdoor storage of materials in those districts. A wider range of commercial uses should be permitted. Mayor Harris felt these measures would protect what businesses are already operating in the industrial districts.

Mayor Harris asked Dr. Blickstein about her views concerning the intersection of River Road and Watchung Avenue. Dr. Blickstein felt that a traffic study/analysis of certain parts of Chatham and certain parts of Summit would be a good study for these communities to undertake. River Road and Watchung Ave. are very old streets that must deal with large volumes of traffic. Perhaps this study could be funded by the share of federal money that comes to the North Jersey Planning Organization.

Mayor Harris believed that a portion of River Road needed to be widened at the intersection to provide for left turn and ride turn lanes. Watchung Ave. also may need to be widened. Dr. Blickstein commented that the dedication of a right-of-way has to be carefully considered by the Borough.

Mrs. Favate noted that the next step would be to present this amendment to the Master Plan at the Borough Council Meeting of October 28th. Council Member Fife pointed out that the Public Hearing for this amendment would be held at the Planning Board Meeting of November 13th. Dr. Blickstein reviewed the legal notifications that she and Mr. DeNave will handle for the hearing.

Porticos

Mr. DeNave noted that the big issues with porticos was the fact that the Borough had permitted an FAR exception of up to 25 sq. ft. When residents seek to construct porticos over their existing landings and steps, they are forced to go before the Zoning Board of Adjustment because front yard setback issues comes up.

Mr. DeNave recommending allowing residents 5 feet out from the existing front wall of their house. He believed 5 feet was a reasonable number given the measurements of a typical front door and how it opens.

After some discussion, the Board and Dr. Blickstein revised the wording to read “beyond the outside face of the exterior front wall of a house”.

Mr. DeNave noted that this new portico requirement, if approved, will be added in Section 165-14 Residential District regulations as a paragraph “D”.

Mrs. Favate asked what the next step would be. Dr. Blickstein said this new portico allowance will be put in ordinance form and be forwarded to the Borough Council for their consideration. Mayor Harris suggested having the ordinance ready to be introduced at the November 11th Borough Council meeting. The public hearing could then be held at the November 25th Borough Council meeting.

Dr. Blickstein recommended that the Board’s formal recommendation of this portico requirement be placed on the Planning Board’s agenda for their November 13th meeting.

Future Applications

Mr. DeNave reported that he and Dr. Blickstein had spoken with the applicant of 338 Main Street. Some additional information is needed. A set of plans with more details has to be submitted. Mr. DeNave will be meeting with the applicant again tomorrow to clarify what further information will be needed.

Mr. DeNave reported that 331 Main Street is looking to construct a rear addition and a major parking lot expansion. A Site Plan will be required. This application is still in its early stages.

Dr. Blickstein stated that she will give a presentation on the Borough’s Complete Streets project at a conference at Rutgers University. Mrs. Favate will also be present at this conference.

At 8:35 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Planning Board meeting will be held Wednesday, November 6, 2013, 7:30 p.m., Council Chambers, Chatham Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted:

Elizabeth Holler

Elizabeth Holler
Recording Secretary