

CHATHAM BOROUGH PLANNING BOARD  
March 16, 2022 7:30 p.m.

Chairman Susan Favate called this Regular Meeting of the Chatham Borough Planning Board to order at 7:30 p.m. This was a virtual meeting. Board members and Attorney Loughlin were present by way of Zoom. Chrnm. Favate stated that adequate notices for this Planning Board meeting were given as required by the Open Public Meetings Act.

Names	Present	Absent
Mayor Thaddeus Kobylarz		X
Steve Williams	X	
Council Member Frank Truilo	X	
Vice Chrnm. Wagner	X	
Chrnm. Susan Favate	X	
Bill Heap	X	
Torri Van Wie		X
Curt Dawson	X	
Gregory Xikes		X
Thomas Belding	X	
Vincent K. Loughlin, Esq.	X	

Our thanks to Mr. Williams for serving as the host for tonight's Zoom meeting.

Glen Turi, the Borough Zoning Officer, was also present.

Public Comment

There were none.

Resolution #PB 2022-01

Council Member Truilo made a motion to approve the January 5, 2022 Planning Board meeting minutes as submitted. Mr. Heap seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. The minutes of January 5, 2022 were approved as submitted.

Application Resolutions

There were none.

Discussion Items

Long-term planning issues

Chrnm. Favate welcomed Mr. Turi, the Borough's new Zoning Officer. noted that the Board has been meaning for some time to discuss long term planning issues. They would appreciate any comments from Mr. Turi.

Chrnm. Favate noted that one issue that the Board has brought up off and on is the scale of new homes and the expansion of homes. Some discussion has been held on what should be the

appropriate scale for new homes in the Borough. The Board has also dealt with the issue of proposed subdivisions, particularly when one lot is subdivided into two lots that may be undersized. In these cases, the scale of the homes on these lots can be problematic.

Chrmn. Favate reported that a subcommittee has been formed to work on these concerns. The subcommittee consists of herself, Mr. Williams, Council Member Truilo, Kendra Lelie, the Board's Planner, Zoning Officer Glen Turi, and Attorney Loughlin. Hopefully the subcommittee will come up with some changes to recommend to the rest of the Planning Board. Ultimately, these Zoning changes could then be presented to the Borough Council. The potential changes to be looked at are revisions to be made to the Floor Area Ratio, lot coverage, and the height of structures. Chrmn. Favate noted that the subcommittee will be discussing these issues over the next few months and then report back to the rest of the Planning Board. Council Member Truilo felt that a mechanism could be found to slim down some of the bulk of the newly constructed homes resulting from a tear-down. He didn't want big box-like constructed homes on small lots. Such construction can throw a neighborhood off scale. Construction on corner lots is another issue that should be looked at. Perhaps certain regulations could be established for corner lot homes.

Mr. Heap believed living space maximization is the real issue. Because of this issue, he felt the builders show a complete lack of imagination with regard to the form of the house. Mr. Heap discussed a historic neighborhood called Chatham Arch. Each house is small, but each is unique in its architecture. He suggested a slide show be done on these homes for the Board.

Chrmn. Favate said she had noticed the local homes had become larger since she had moved to Chatham. More living space is being provided in these new homes, not as much as the number of bedrooms being created.

Mr. Dawson was curious to know if other towns had mechanisms in place to avoid these box-like homes built to the max.

Chrmn. Favate didn't believe there were any mechanisms, but perhaps Ms. Lelie can look into it.

Mr. Dawson and Attorney Loughlin brought up the possibility of giving out Design Guidelines for new homes to prevent the box-like construction. Attorney Loughlin believed there were materials available to help with any guidelines. He thought possibly in the mid-west, some guidelines had been created some years ago that would be helpful for this new construction in Chatham. Attorney Loughlin pointed out that these type guidelines would be on a voluntary basis, not necessarily hooked into any ordinances.

Chrmn. Favate asked Mr. Turi, the Zoning Officer, for any comments for the Board.

Mr. Turi reported that he has been reviewing the Borough's zoning ordinances, especially with springtime arriving and more construction starting up. He felt some re-writing needed to be done for these ordinances. Chrmn. Favate agreed some cleaning up needed to be done in that area.

Council Member Truilo discussed the importance of the creation of more open space in a neighborhood.

Chrmn. Favate asked Mr. Turi if there were any applications on the horizon for the Planning Board.

Mr. Turi said there is a possibility of applications in the near future, judging from the number of denial letters he has recently sent out.

Before adjourning, Mr. Heap discussed a Wall Street Journal article about a very wealthy community, Woodside, California. The Woodside residents have declared themselves to be a “cougar sanctuary” in order to block affordable housing construction. The Attorney General in California was not happy about this declaration.

The Planning Board decided to cancel their meeting scheduled for Wednesday, April 6, 2022.

At 7:51 p.m. tonight’s meeting was adjourned.

The next Chatham Borough Planning Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 20, 2022, 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Elizabeth Holler  
Recording Secretary