

CHATHAM BOROUGH PLANNING BOARD
February 15, 2017 7:30 p.m.

In Chairman Favate’s absence, Vice Chairman Matthew Wagner called this Regular Meeting of the Chatham Borough Planning Board to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Chatham Borough Hall. Mr. Wagner announced that all legal notices have been posted for this meeting.

Name	Present	Absent
Mayor Bruce Harris	X	
Council Member Victoria Fife	X	
Robert Falzarano	X	
Chrmn. Susan W. Favate		X
Vice Chair Matthew Wagner	X	
H.H. Montague	X	
John Bitar		X
Joseph Mikulewicz		X
William Heap	X	
Vincent K. Loughlin, Esq.		X
Dr. Susan Blickstein	X	

Keith Loughlin, Esq., served as the Board’s attorney at this meeting, in his father’s absence.

Public Comment

There was none.

Resolution #PB 2017-11

The meeting minutes of the January 4, 2017 meeting were approved as submitted.

Resolution #PB 2017-12

Resolution of the Planning Board of the Borough of Chatham Approving the Borough Council Hiring a Planner

Council Member Fife distributed a map of the properties that will be under review.

Council Member Fife reported that the Borough has hired a planner to conduct a study to see if the area depicted on the map is in need of redevelopment. The map that Council Member Fife had distributed gives the names of the business and Block and Lot for each parcel that will be included in this study.

At Mr. Montague’s request, Council Member Fife explained why these particular properties were chosen to be reviewed, particularly the Exxon Station. She recalled when the Master Plan was being discussed last year, residents were asked to note which areas in town could use a “facelift.” Right now people are not inclined to change the face of Main Street. Council Member Fife noted that Post Office Plaza is off of Main Street and the plaza’s parking lots belong to the Borough. The Exxon Station and Liberty Drug were added to the study after the

owners of those businesses were consulted to see if they wanted their properties to be part of the study.

Council Member Fife stressed that, at this point, the study is only to deem whether this particular area is in need of redevelopment.

Dr. Blickstein added that the planner's report will be forwarded to the Borough Council. Eventually the Planning Board will hold a hearing on this study.

Mr. Montague asked if this study makes the assumption that the post office will not be remaining in place.

Dr. Blickstein answered that it makes no assumption. She clarified that each parcel of land will be evaluated to see if it meets the criteria in the statute for an area in need of redevelopment. Either the parcels meet it, with a description explaining why, or it doesn't meet the criteria. A detailed report will be sent to the Planning Board.

Mayor Harris clarified that all of the property owners in this particular area have been consulted. They know their properties will be included in the study.

Dr. Blickstein pointed out that there are some Planning Board members on the subcommittee working on this review. Therefore, the Board will be given updates on the planner's findings before the public hearing is held. Mayor Harris noted that the first public workshop will be held on June 15th.

Mr. Falzarano made a motion to approve Resolution #PB 2017-12: Authorizing preliminary investigation to determine whether certain real property within the Borough of Chatham are in need of redevelopment and authorizing professional planning services for such an investigation and a report. Council Member Fife seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. All Board members present voted aye.

New and Returning Applications

There were none at this time.

Discussion

Zoning changes to implement into the Master Plan

Dr. Blickstein noted that recommendations were made concerning the residential zones. These recommendations include revising setbacks in the single family zoning districts. Also, the method of calculating lot widths could be revised.

Dr. Blickstein noted that recommendations have been made for the Garden Apartment district zones. A recommendation has been made for preparation of a Circulation Element. Dr. Blickstein added that a recommendation has been made regarding the downtown design standards for the B-2 and B-4 zoning districts. A fifth recommendation would be to apply to the Residential Site Improvement Standard Board to lower the residential parking requirements with regard to the train station.

Dr. Blickstein stated that the sixth recommendation is to look at the Borough's historic ordinances with respect to maintenance. The Board should make sure they have the proper provisions, and that the provisions for the maintenance of historic structures in commercial areas be enforced.

Council Member Fife asked whether the Circulation Element would be Borough-wide. Dr. Blickstein answered yes, it would be a large undertaking.

Mayor Harris asked whether it would be helpful to have the Circulation Element in place for the Redevelopment Plan.

Dr. Blickstein didn't believe the Circulation Element needed to be in place for a Redevelopment Plan to be successful. She felt that the easier goals at the moment were the proposed changes for the residential districts. Also, the Board may want to re-visit the Garden Apt. district and look at the recommendations in the Master Plan. Dr. Blickstein offered to give an overview, in the future, on how to apply for a special area parking standard to the RSIS Board.

After further discussion, Dr. Blickstein offered to look at the Garden Apt. District situation and the RSIS parking situation and report back to the Board in a month.

Mayor Harris confirmed with Dr. Blickstein that currently no Circulation Element exists. Dr. Blickstein suggested the Mayor ask a few key members of the Traffic Safety Committee, some Planning Bd. members, and the Long-Range Traffic Committee form a committee focusing on a Circulation Element. Mayor Harris pointed out that speed monitoring devices have been installed over time on every street in the Borough. Dr. Blickstein and the Mayor agreed that particular data would be extremely helpful for the Circulation Element. Recent traffic counts would also be helpful. Dr. Blickstein suggested someone from the School Board Administration also be asked to serve on the Circulation Element committee.

Mr. Falzarano said he would add the Circulation Element matter on the agenda for the next Long Range Traffic and Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee.

Future Business

Mayor Harris reported that Borough Attorney Lott has been reviewing the Borough Sign ordinance in light of a recent Supreme Court decision on signs. He has forwarded some comments to Attorney Lott. This matter will be discussed at a Borough Council Meeting in March.

The Board decided to cancel their meeting scheduled for March 1, 2017.

At 8:20 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Planning Board meeting will be held on March 15, 2017, 7:30 p.m., Council Chambers, Chatham Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted:

Elizabeth Holler
Recording Secretary