

**Meeting Minutes
Hightstown Borough Council
Special Meeting
June 27, 2016
6:30 p.m.**

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Quattrone at 6:30 p.m. and he read the Open Public Meetings Act statement which stated, "Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, pursuant to Public Law 1975, Chapter 231. Said notice was sent to the *Trenton Times* and the *Windsor-Hights Herald*, and is posted in the Borough Clerk's office."

The flag salute followed Roll Call.

	PRESENT	ABSENT
<i>Councilmember Bluth</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Hansen</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Kurs</i>		✓
<i>Councilmember Misiura</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Montferrat</i>	✓	
<i>Councilmember Stults</i>	✓	
<i>Mayor Quattrone</i>	✓	

Also in attendance: Margaret (Peggy) Riggio, Deputy Borough Clerk; Henry Underhill, Borough Administrator; Fred Raffetto, Borough Attorney; Carmela Roberts, Borough Engineer; Tamara Lee, Borough Planner and Kevin McManimon, Special Counsel - Redevelopment

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Resolution 2016-143 Authoring a Meeting that Excludes the Public

Council President Hansen moved Resolution 2016-143; Councilmember Stults seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Councilmembers Bluth, Hansen, Misiura, Montferrat and Stults voted yes.

Resolution adopted 5-0.

Resolution 2016-143

*BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
COUNTY OF MERCER
STATE OF NEW JERSEY*

AUTHORIZING A MEETING WHICH EXCLUDES THE PUBLIC

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown that this body will hold a special meeting on June 27, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. at the Hightstown Engine Co. #1 Fire House Hall located at 140 North Main Street, Hightstown that will be limited only to consideration of an item or items with respect to which the public may be excluded pursuant to section 7b of the Open Public Meetings Act.

The general nature of the subject or subjects to be discussed:

Contract Negotiations – RBG Hightstown LLC (The Mills at Hightstown)

Stated as precisely as presently possible the following is the time when and the circumstances under which the

discussion conducted at said meeting can be disclosed to the public: September 27, 2016, or when the need for confidentiality no longer exists.

The public is excluded from said meeting, and further notice is dispensed with, all in accordance with sections 8 and 4a of the Open Public Meetings Act.

Mayor Quattrone called the public meeting to order at 7:32 p.m. and again read the Open Public Meetings Statement.

The Flag Salute followed roll call.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilmember Stults moved the agenda for approval; Councilmember Montferrat seconded.

Roll Call Vote: Bluth, Hansen, Misiura, Montferrat and Stults voted yes.

Agenda approved 5-0.

Mayor Quattrone explained that changes have been made to R. Black Global's original concept plan. And they are here tonight to present the new plan.

Councilmember Misiura introduced Kevin McManimon, Special Counsel for Redevelopment and Chris Otteau of Otteau Valuation Group.

Mr. Misiura explained that changes have been made to the concept plan and Council wanted the public updated before the Borough enters into the Redevelopment Agreement. R. Black Global has changed architects. The new architect working on the project is Studio Hillier. He introduced Bob Hillier to present the updated concept plan.

PRESENTATION – STUDIO HILLIER

Mr. Hillier stated that the plan originally presented by LRK has not been upset very much. He explained that the Firehouse will be staying, the old Municipal Building will be torn down and a new structure will be built there and the Historic Society will be staying. There will be a new structure built on Bank Street. The common area plaza will contain a fountain. The Bank Street building will contain retail space, underground parking and two stories of apartments. There will be a nature walk along the creek. The plaza will lead down to the nature walk and there will be a public park. There is talk about making Bank Street one way from North Academy and two way from Mechanic to Main. The boiler house that is presently on the property will be torn down and rebuilt. All of the mechanical equipment (i.e. air conditioners; etc) will be situated on the roof tops. The underground parking will have plenty of natural light. Mr. Hillier finished by stating that this is just a concept plan and he has on been on the project for about 1 month.

Mr. Misiura states that the unit count and the parking space count has not changed from the original concept plan. There is still no pilot program or tax abatement. The major change from the original concept plan is that there will be no parking deck and there will be no new firehouse.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Quattrone opened public comment period I and the following individuals spoke:

JP Gibbons, 602 North Main Street – Stated that there are major changes in this plan. There is no parking garage; the retail building on Bank Street was supposed to be new municipal offices, a new police station and a new firehouse. Questioned why we are putting underground parking in a flood zone if we cannot build Borough Hall there. Expressed concern about making Bank Street one way. Stated that the Fire Department should be asked how many spaces they need for their volunteers and informed Council that we should be considering expanding the firehouse as they are in need of another bay for all of their equipment. Ending by stating that he has serious reservations about the new concept plan.

Doug Mair, 536 South Main Street – Stated that he had the same issues as Mr. Gibbons. Where is the Municipal Complex; why are we putting underground parking in a floodplain; What happens when the air conditioning units on the rooftops leak into the building? Stated that he is happy to hear that the Firehouse will be staying, but questioned why the public was told in the past that the building was too old to be refurbished. Ended by stating that he is happy that Bob Hillier want to work with Hightstown.

Rick Pratt, 114 West Ward Street, 214 Stockton Street – Asked about the nature path and a way of getting from one path to the other. Mr. Hillier stated that he would look at it and work it out. Spoke about making Bank Street a one way street. Regarding underground parking, we would know in plenty of time if a storm that could potentially flood the garage was coming and be able to make the necessary arrangements regarding flooding. Regarding air conditioners on top of the buildings, this is done all over the country on every apartment building or office building and it presents no problem.

Eugene Sarafin, 628 South Main Street – Stated that this is a preliminary plan and there are still a lot of things that need to be worked out. Most of the issues that are being brought up right now are insignificant solvable problems.

Scott Caster, 12 Clover Lane – Questioned why there is no decision on the municipal building, police or court. Mayor Quattrone answered that we are still in negotiations and we cannot discuss this in public. Mr. Caster went on to state that he believes this is a wonderful project but the public needs to know where the municipal building, police and court will be. This discussion needs to be had in public, not in negotiations.

Mr. McManimon commented that the Borough has the right to have municipal space in the retail component of the project. Mr. Caster then asked what the Council will ask for. Councilmember Misiura stated that the Borough has retained an architect to look at several options for the Borough to consider. Mayor Quattrone stated that a decision has not been made at this time but when the time does come, the decision will be made in public.

Keith LeProvost, 213 Greeley Street – Questioned how many residential units will there be and how many affordable housing units will be provided. Mr. Hillier stated that there will be between 170 and 180 units. 20% will be studios, 50% will be 1 bedroom units and 30% will be 2 bedroom units. Councilmember Misiura stated the Affordable Housing aspect is still being negotiated but will be included in the redeveloper's agreement.

Frank Rivera, 110 Broad Street – Stated that he feels that Hightstown has found vision again. He reminded everyone that we are listening to a concept plan. This plan is very encouraging. He is very impressed and will stay tuned.

Doug Mair, 536 South Main Street – The concept plan for LRK was supposed to break ground in June. It turned into a breaking ground plan. Now Studio Hillier is a concept plan. Residents just want to make sure that this is still a concept plan before someone starts breaking ground overnight.

Christine Roznick, 119 Cole Avenue – Stated that she is very encouraged by this plan. She likes the parking plan and is happy that the Firehouse is staying.

Brent Rivenburgh, 26 Meadow Drive – Stated that he thinks this is a fantastic plan.

Ryan Rosenberg, 135 South Street – Stated that this is an amazing plan. Let's keep it going.

Gail Gasper, 39 Norton Avenue, This plan reminds her a little bit of Robbinsville and she exited to see how it happen. With only 30% of the residential units being 2 bedrooms, there will not be a lot of children therefor she does not see that affecting our school tax amount. Asked that if possible, please make the walking path wide enough for bicycling.

There being no further comments, Mayor Quattrone closed the public comment period

MAYOR/COUNCIL/ADMINISTRATIVE COMMENTS

Councilmember Bluth – Reminded the public that this was still a concept plan. Thanked everyone for their comments. There will be some very good comments that hopefully will be taken into consideration when a final plan is drawn.

Councilmember Montferrat – Thanked everyone for coming out. Thank you Mr. Hillier for a well thought out presentation. He likes that the concept is not losing sight of open space and sustainability.

Councilmember Misiura – Thank you Bob Hillier for the presentation. The LRK plan the plaza also served as a parking lot. The great thing about this plan is separating the pedestrians from the vehicular. Thinks this an interesting concept.

Council President Hansen – Stated that she loves this plan and it is an innovative process. There are a lot of things that need to be considered but we have a good working relationship with the developer. This is a long process but we have great professionals that are guiding us along the way.

Councilmember Stults – Thanked Mr. Hiller for taking the LRK plan to the next step. He is very impressed with the plan. Likes the idea of hiding the parking underground. He informed Council and the public that parking is a permitted use in flood zones. He stated that he feels this concept of the plaza is better than LRK's. Thanked everyone for coming and for their questions.

Mayor Quattrone – He is not on the subcommittee, his role is to keep everything as transparent as possible and to protect the interest of the Borough as best he can. It is difficult during negotiations to keep things private before they can go to the public. We are negotiating a lot of factors right now. The committee reports to him and the administrator is actively involved in the process.

ADJOURNMENT

Council President Hansen motioned to adjourn at 8:46 p.m. Councilmember Misiura seconded. All ayes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret M. Riggio
Deputy Borough Clerk