



AGENDA
HIGHTSTOWN BOROUGH
PLANNING BOARD MEETING

www.freeconferencecall.com
Call in Number: 978-990-5000
Access Code: 845506#

August 10, 2020 – 7:30 P.M.

Meeting called to order by Chairman Fred Montferrat

PLEASE TURN OFF ALL CELL PHONES DURING YOUR ATTENDANCE AT THIS MEETING TO AVOID SOUNDS/RINGING OR CONVERSATIONS THAT MAY INTERFERE WITH THE RECORDING OR THE ABILITY OF ATTENDEES TO HEAR THE PROCEEDINGS. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

STATEMENT: 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 advertised in the Trenton Times and Windsor-Hights Herald as required by law and is posted in the Borough Clerk's Office.

Flag Salute

Roll Call – Planning Board

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes July 13, 2020 Regular Meeting

Public Comment

Hearing:

Application #2016-01 – Windsor Property Associates, LLC – Site Plan Waiver, Block 48, Lot 31, Office Retail Project in Corridor Revitalization Zone in East Windsor

Memorialize Resolution #2020-08 Bank Street Redevelopment Plan

New Business:

Old Business:

Committee and Professional Reports

Chairman and Board Member Comments

Adjourn

Hightstown Planning Board
Regular Meeting – Virtual
www.freeconferencecall.com

July 13, 2020, 7:30 p.m.

OPEN SESSION

Fred Montferrat, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:321 p.m. and read the Open Public Meetings Act statement: “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.”

Flag Salute

Roll Call

	PRESENT	ABSENT	LATE ARRIVAL
Mr. Montferrat, Chairman	X		
Mayor Quattrone	X		
Councilman Misiura	X		
Ms. Asselstine	X		
Ms. Jackson	X		
Mr. Rosenberg	X		
Mr. Searing	X		
Mr. Laudenberg	X		
Mr. Balcewicz, Alt. #1	X		
Mr. Cabot, Alt. #2	X		

Also in attendance: Sandy Belan, Planning Board Secretary, Carmela Roberts, Engineer, Jolanta Maziarz, Attorney and Brian Slauch, Planner.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Montferrat asked for motion to approve the agenda. Motion made by Mr. Searing and seconded by Mr. Laudenberg to approve the July 13, 2020 agenda.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Montferrat, Mayor Quattrone, Mr. Misiura, Ms. Asselstine, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Searing, Mr. Laudenberg, Mr. Balcewicz, Mr. Rosenberg and Mr. Cabot. Motion passed 10-0.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Montferrat asked if there were any corrections or comments on the March 9, 2020 minutes. Motion made by Ms. Asselstine and seconded by Mr. Balcewicz to approve the March 9, 2020 Planning Board Minutes.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Montferrat, Mayor Quattrone, Mr. Misiura, Ms. Asselstine, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Searing, Mr. Laudenberg, Mr. Balcewicz, Mr. Rosenberg and Mr. Cabot. Motion passed 10-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Montferrat opened the floor for any public comments.

There being no comments, Mr. Montferrat closed the public comment.

NEW BUSINESS

1) Bank Street Redevelopment Plan – July 2020 Draft – Brian Slauch, Planning Board Planner

Borough Council Ordinance 2020-04 – Ordinance of the Borough of Hightstown, in the County of Mercer Adopting a New Redevelopment Plan for Tax Block 8, Lots 12-14; Tax Block 18, Lots 8-12; Tax Block 21, Lots 1-14, 20 and 26; and Tax Block 30, Lots 1-13

At this time Ms. Jackson, who resides within 200 feet of the proposed project, recused herself from the meeting.

Mr. Slauch reviewed the Draft July 2020 Bank Street Redevelopment Plan (copy attached). Board members received a copy of this Plan prior to the meeting. Introduced by the Borough Council at their July 6, 2020 Council Meeting.

Tract A Sub-Zone – retain the historic brick mill building and metal footbridge and redevelop the area of the former metal warehouse building (demolished) at the west end of the Tract with residential uses. A maximum of 130 dwelling units (apartments and eight townhouses) are permitted within the Tract.

Tract B Sub-Zone – retain the existing Hightstown Engine Company building and the historic concrete mill building while redeveloping the remaining area, including the vacant municipal building and the Hightstown East Windsor Historic Society property. A maximum of 258 dwelling units are permitted within the Tract. The public right-of-way of Mechanic Street within this tract shall be vacated, however a public access easement is to be provided to permit access to the parking garage and an alternate access for the Engine Company.

Parking Decks – Tract A – Two Stories; Tract B up to six stories – height limitation four stories. If a fourth story is added to the two Mill Building, it will have to be set back 15 feet off front edge to maintain the historic appearance on Bank Street.

Interest in boutique hotel up to 36 rooms (desire by Peddie School to accommodate visiting parents) – building that fronts on North Main St. (old municipal building and parking lot location). If that occurs the number of apartment units would be reduced (ratio two hotel rooms for each one apartment).

Tract C Sub-Zone – provide for new residential development, recreation/amenity space and public uses. Up to 10 dwelling units may be proposed within the Tract.

Willis House – determined by the PRC Group that the house was structurally unsound. Converting that building is not feasible. Proposing ten townhouses which would face off with the other ten townhouses on South side of Bank St. Single-family house/amenity center with superintendent's apartment, the scale and design will complimentary to the existing North Academy and Park Avenue properties.

Tract D Sub-Zone – provide for the improvement and efficient use of land for governmental, public, quasi-public and community facilities, including the potential relocation of the Hightstown East Windsor Historical Society and the Hightstown First Aid Squad. One dwelling unit may be proposed within the Tract.

Discussion:

Mr. Rosenberg – Is there a mechanism we can use to certify that the building is structurally unsound or get a second opinion on this matter?

Mr. Slauch – The Planning Board can exercise its discretion in the site plan review process to have them provide information on the structural condition of the Willis House, both in report form and sworn testimony.

Mr. Rosenberg - The Master Plan is to protect and preserve the historic character of Hightstown. This is one of the most impressive properties in Mercer County and nothing is beyond saving. I would like to explore the options to work with the developer to save this house.

Mr. Misiura – Developer feels it is structurally unsound for the intended use as a proposed community center which they are proposing.

Mr. Slauch will inform the developer that the Board has an issue with the item and would like further discussion regarding the Willis property which they are proposing to demolish and build amenity center/leasing office.

Parking Ratio:

Townhouse – average of 2.0 parking spaces per dwelling unit;

Multi-family dwelling (1-2-bedroom apartments) units average of 1.25 parking spaces for each dwelling unit.

Similar demographics as with the previous proposed Redevelopment Plan.

Redevelopment of this area is consistent with the Master Plan documents, which sees this property as an area of redevelopment. The uses are consistent, number of units proposed would not exceed 398 in total and that would include all the uses on the site. Unless the Historic Society does move you would not reach this number.

At the present time, there are no plans to move the Department of Public Works and the First Aid Squad, but they will remain in the Redevelopment District.

Tract C Sub-Zone (Page 16) – Permitted Principal Uses: add New Item #5 – Amenity Center/Amenity Space:

5. Amenity Center / Amenity Space shall mean space within the redevelopment area where social, leisure and recreational facilities are offered to residents of the redevelopment area and may include ancillary support services such as leasing and property management offices, storage, business center, conference/meeting rooms and resident services.

Mr. Montferrat expressed concern as to what the redeveloper is doing with the Willis property and the First Aid Squad.

Mr. Slaugh noted they currently have no plans regarding the First Aid Squad. Developer concerned with the deed restriction on this property.

Mayor Quattrone – Would this be decided during the Site Plan Review?

Mr. Misiura – The developer is still very interested in acquiring the First Aid Squad. Concerned about relocating the First Aid Squad.

Mr. Slaugh – The First Aid Squad is in the redevelopment area and are in the redevelopment plan. However, there is no specific concept for the First Aid Squad.

Mr. Slaugh will forward the Planning Board's comments to the developer, so they are aware of the Board's concerns.

Mr. Slaugh – The townhouses front North Academy and Bank Street, parking garage under townhouse (garage under townhouse with two stories on top).

Mr. Rosenberg – Townhouse requirements – building height three stories front North Academy with ten-foot setback from the street. Per the Master Plan – important to preserve the historic character.

Mr. Misiura – These elevations will be reviewed at Site Plan Application. The renderings I have seen are more historic in appearance – turn of the century appearance.

Mr. Slaugh – Garages are below street level.

Consensus of the Planning Board to make the following recommendation to the Developer:

Townhouse – Bulk Standards, Tract A and C - Maximum building height requirement of 2-1/2 stories appearance from any public street.

Mr. Balcewicz – Fire trucks ability to get into and out of the development. PRC and Engineer will review this matter.

Mr. Slaugh will provide PRC with the Board's questions and concerns so they can respond to them during Site Plan Review.

Mr. Rosenberg – what are the effects on the Borough's infrastructure?

PRC will provide additional reports – traffic and community impact.

Mr. Slaugh – Project will add significant tax revenue to the Borough to help with any additional costs incurred. These are suitable questions to ask the developer. Expect all units to be rental.

Mr. Slaugh – PRC reassessed the project in March and redid their financials and they are moving ahead. Project will require DEP approval which will also take time. Most likely this will be a 2021 project.

Mr. Slaugh will review the Board's concerns with the developer: First Aid Squad, Willis Property, fire truck accessibility, community impact – effect on Borough's infrastructure.

Mr. Montferrat open public comment:

Lee Stults, 117 Taylor Ave. – Thanked the Planning Board for addressing this project. Site Plan Review will address many of the Board's concerns. Downtown needs expansion (addition foot traffic). Infrastructure, community impact statement, taxes and PILOT will be addressed. Currently, water & sewer plant are not at full capacity. This is the same building coverage that has been discussed in the past. During Site Plan Review all questions will be addressed.

Neal Glackin – 290 Monmouth St. – Fire Safety Issues – sprinkler system in garages; fire suppression and additional fire hydrants as required.

There being no further comments, Mr. Montferrat closed the public comment.

Ms. Maziarz will also prepare a resolution regarding the Planning Board's approval of this Redevelopment Plan.

Borough Council Ordinance 2020-04 – Ordinance of the Borough of Hightstown, in the County of Mercer Adopting a New Redevelopment Plan for Tax Block 8, Lots 12-14; Tax Block 18, Lots 8-12; Tax Block 21, Lots 1-14, 20 and 26; and Tax Block 30, Lots 1-13

The consensus of the Planning Board that Ordinance 2020-04 (Draft Bank Street Redevelopment Plan) is not inconsistent with the Master Plan Goals and Objectives.

The Planning Board has the following recommendations to the Borough Council:

Tract C Sub-Zone (Page 16) – Permitted Principal Uses: add New Item #5 – Amenity Center/Amenity Space:

5. Amenity Center / Amenity Space shall mean space within the redevelopment area where social, leisure and recreational facilities are offered to residents of the redevelopment area and may include ancillary support services such as leasing and property management offices, storage, business center, conference/meeting rooms and resident services.

Townhouse – Bulk Standards, Tract A and C - Maximum building height requirement of 2-1/2 stories appearance from any public street (North Academy and Bank Street).

Motion made by Mayor Quattrone and seconded by Mr. Cabot.

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Montferrat, Mayor Quattrone, Mr. Misiura, Ms. Asselstine, Mr. Searing, Mr. Laudemberger, Mr. Balcewicz and Mr. Cabot. Mr. Rosenberg abstained. Ms. Jackson not eligible. Motion passed 8-0, one abstention.

Committee & Professional Reports

Mr. Misiura – The Borough was awarded a grant DVRPC – planning study to focus on the downtown (intersection in front of the Fire House).

Ms. Asselstine – Mobility Plan – Data collection has been closed due to the pandemic. Received 235 survey responses. Working on the analysis and will develop summary of those existing conditions and prepare a technical memorandum.

Ms. Maziarz – Governor signed the New Permit Extension Act 2020:

Normally Application must be deemed complete within 45 days – extended to 120 days

Normally Board must act on applications within 45 days - After March 9, 2020 – Board's must act on applications – extended to 120 days

There being no further business Mr. Montferrat asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion made by Mr. Balcewicz and seconded Ms. Asselstine. All ayes. Meeting adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Belan
Planning Board Secretary