



## THE BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN PLANNING BOARD

### REGULAR VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2022, 7:30 P.M.

#### OPEN SESSION

Bev Asselstine, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:32 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 on the Borough's website. Due to Covid-19 and self-distancing protocols, this meeting was held remotely through [www.zoom.com](http://www.zoom.com)."

#### Flag Salute, led by Mr. Balcewicz

A moment of silence was had in recognition of the tragic traffic accident that had occurred the previous weekend.

#### Roll Call – Planning Board

	PRESENT	ABSENT	LATE ARRIVAL
Mayor Quattrone		X	
Councilman Misiura	X		
Ms. Asselstine, Chair	X		
Ms. Jackson, Vice-Chair	X		
Mr. Laudenberg	X		
Mr. Searing	X		
Ms. Watkins	X		
Mr. Balcewicz, Alt. #1	X		
Mr. Cabot, Alt. #2	X		
Mr. Gainey		X	
Mr. Yandoli	X		

Also in attendance: Jane Davis – Planning Board Secretary, Scott Miccio – Attorney & Carmela Roberts – Engineer, Brian Slaugh – Planner, George Chin – Zoning Official, Mark Shane – Applicant attorney, Greg Oman – Applicant Engineer, Stephanos Katsifis – Applicant. Late arrivals: Jeff Epstein & Katie.

#### Approval of Agenda

Ms. Asselstine asks for a motion to approve the Agenda as there are no revisions.

Motion made by Mr. Cabot and seconded by Mr. Laudenberg to approve the Agenda for the September 12, 2022 Planning Board meeting.

Roll Call Vote: Mayor Quattrone, Mr. Misiura, Ms. Asselstine, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Laudenberg, Mr. Searing, Ms. Watkins, Mr. Balcewicz, Mr. Cabot, Mr. Gainey & Mr. Yandoli. Mayor Quattrone & Mr. Gainey were absent. Motion passed 9-0; 2 absences.



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### Approval of Minutes

Ms. Asselstine asks for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the regular virtual meeting on May 9, 2022. There being no comments, she asks for a motion to approve the minutes. Motion made by Mr. Balcewicz and seconded by Mr. Searing.

Roll Call Vote: ~~Mayor Quattrone~~, Mr. Misiura, Ms. Asselstine, ~~Ms. Jackson~~, Mr. Laudenberg, Mr. Searing, Ms. Watkins, Mr. Balcewicz, Mr. Cabot, ~~Mr. Gainey~~ & Mr. Yandoli. Ms. Jackson abstained. Mayor Quattrone & Mr. Gainey were absent. Motion passed 8-0; 1 abstention; 2 absences.

### Public Comment

There being no members of the public in attendance of the meeting, Ms. Asselstine opens & closes public comment.

### Public Hearing

Application #2021-02 – Americana Hospitality Group – Preliminary & final site plan – Ms. Asselstine introduces the Application and defers to Mr. Miccio for remarks on the application. Mr. Misiura interjects that he will be recusing himself, turning off camera & muting his microphone. Mr. Miccio explains that the Board will not be continuing with the full hearing this evening. He explains that a portion of the land is being leased to the Applicant from the Borough. As the lease reads that the property is to be used strictly for parking and the Applicant is proposing dumpsters being located on the leased land. He offers two options to on how the Applicant can proceed. The Applicant may seek an amendment to the lease with the governing body and return to the Board for review once it's been obtained or the Applicant may revise the Site Plan to show the dumpster location outside of the Borough leased property. To proceed with the latter option, he asks that the revised plan is submitted within the next couple of weeks and continue with the hearing at October's meeting. The Applicant & the applicant's professionals agree that the drawings will be revised and resubmitted within the next week or so. No notice will be required to continue the hearing to October's meeting.

### Old Business

Downtown Redevelopment Area expansion – Ms. Asselstine recalls this topic that was discussed earlier in the year. The Planning Board had made a recommendation to Council to expand the downtown redevelopment area. Council approved a resolution agreeing & directing the Planning Board to proceed with a study if the area was in need of redevelopment. Since the final budget was approved, the Planning Board & Professionals may proceed. Mr. Slauch explains that the area of interest is considered sub-area 3; on the East site of Main Street (Block 28) and currently encompasses Tavern on the Lake, the Wells Fargo building & the Baptist church lot. A developer has purchased the Wells Fargo lot & is in negotiation to purchase additional lake front property. He continues that the area would need to be designated an area in need of redevelopment and must meet particular criteria. The Planning Board would make this determination based



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on reports prepared by the Planner and pass any recommendations to Borough Council. If Council is in agreement, providing there is a resolution and funding, the Board may proceed with a public hearing. A hearing may be held once it has been noticed 3 weeks prior and again 10 days prior to the meeting date. The Board will need to vote on a resolution, should it be approved, and then pass on to Council. The redevelopment plan would then be adopted by ordinance by the Borough Council via introduction, referral to the Planning Board, Planning Board review & recommendations related to the Master Plan and then it will be returned to Council for final readings & adoption. There is discussion on the benefits to designate an area in need of redevelopment for future developers as well as the Borough. Ms. Asselstine asks the Board for any questions or comments & if everyone is still in agreement with this direction. Mr. Laudenberger agrees that this seems like a good way to move forward.

**Affordable Housing Plan** – Ms. Asselstine refers to Mr. Slauch for an update. He explains the bulk of the work has already been done and the process going forward. The next step would be to draft the Affordable Housing Plan. A spending plan would need to be put together to show what the Borough has available in the COAH fund. The Fair Share portion of the package would need to (annually) have Borough Council designate a municipal housing liaison and an Administrative Agent or entity, as well as develop an affirmative marketing plan. This Housing Element & Fair Share Plan would then need to be adopted by the Board and endorsed by Council. Mr. Misiura wanted to clarify if we had COAH funds available to ensure the Borough had an Affordable Housing & Fair Share Plan in place as a means of protection. Budgeting will be confirmed to determine the best course of action.

## **New Business**

### **Committee and Professional Reports**

Ms. Asselstine asks for any new committee or professional reports.

**Ms. Roberts** – Ms. Roberts reports updates on the road improvement projects. The Hausser Ave, Bennett Place & Prospect Drive project is awaiting final approval and funding from the Water Infrastructure bank; advertisement is expected to be in January 2023. The Borough is waiting for NJDOT funding for Orchard Avenue, Meadow Drive & Clover Lane and sidewalks on South Main Street. Council approved the South Main Street sidewalks in addition to the water & sanitary sewer improvements funded by the infrastructure bank. The Borough is upgrading & painting the 3 water tanks which are expected to be completed in November. The waste water treatment plant is also being repaired, updated and painted; the work is expected to start later in 2023. An application was submitted to the NJDOT for the Maxwell Avenue improvements & work related to galvanized water services is actively moving forward. Mr. Balcewicz asks if the water line replacement will be gratis to the homeowners. Ms. Roberts explains that Council passed a resolution that will spread the costs of lead service line replacements and it will be gratis to the homeowners specifically affected. Mr. Balcewicz then asks about the curbs and Stockton Street improvements. Ms. Roberts explains that this is actively being worked on and awaiting NJDOT, soil erosion & Mercer County approvals;



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advertisement is expected to take place Winter 2023, sidewalks and curb improvements are expected in Spring/Summer 2023. Mr. Misiura asks how the lines water service lines are expected to be replaced. Ms. Roberts explains that methods of replacement are still being considered. Mr. Misiura asks about the asphalt addition on Railroad Avenue. Ms. Roberts explains that Public Works requested the pavement for ease of maintenance around the fire hydrant. In addition, all curbs, sidewalks & roads have been completed on Dey, Center & Railroad Avenue.

Ms. Asselstine asks Mr. Misiura for an update on the Borough Hall project. Mr. Misiura responds that plans are still being worked on and nothing will be started until next year. Mr. Balcewicz inquires about a Police sub-station in the new Borough Hall. Mr. Misiura explains that there will be a sub-station included.

Mr. Slaugh – Nothing additional to report.

Mr. Miccio – Nothing additional to report.

**Chairman and Board Member Comments**

**Chairwoman Report** – Ms. Asselstine reports that we did not receive the Grant for safe routes to school to implement the Rotary at Stockton, Oak Lane & Harron Avenue. Mr. Laudenberger asks if anyone is welcome to join the Safe Streets Committee. Ms. Asselstine responds that is a standing Committee that anyone is welcome to join.

**Environmental Commission** – Mr. Laudenberger explains there have been many ongoing shade tree matters. The Environmental Commission will be running the paddle boats at the Harvest Fair to raise funds for the Commission.

There being no further business, Ms. Asselstine asks for a motion to adjourn. Motion made by Mr. Cabot & seconded by Ms. Jackson. All ayes. Meeting adjourned at 8:36 PM.

Submitted by:

Jane Davis, Planning Board Secretary