

**TOWNSHIP OF WEST MILFORD
PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES**

December 3, 2020

Regular Meeting

Virtual - Via Zoom

Chairman Christopher Garcia opened the December 3, 2020 regular meeting of the West Milford Planning Board, held virtually via Zoom, at 7:00 p.m. with a reading of the Legal Notice followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: Linda Connolly, Robert Nolan, James Rogers, Geoffrey Syme, Chairman Christopher Garcia, Alt #1 Michael DeJohn, Alt #2 Michael Chazukow.

Absent: Steven Castronova, Councilwoman Ada Erik, Councilman Warren Gross, Glenn Wenzel, Board Attorney Thomas J. Germinario, Board Engineer Paul Ferriero, Board Planner Jessica Caldwell.

Also Present: Alison Kopsco, J. Caldwell & Associates.

Chairman Christopher Garcia requested alternates Michael DeJohn and Michael Chazukow to sit on the Board for the absent Board members, and advised that a quorum was present to hold this regular meeting.

PUBLIC PORTION

The public portion was opened by Chairman Christopher Garcia. With no members of the public wishing to address the Board, the public portion was **closed** on a **motion** by Geoffrey Syme with a **second** by Linda Connolly.

APPLICATIONS - None.

MEMORIALIZATIONS – None.

NEW OR ONGOING BUSINESS

Highlands Sustainable Economic Development Plan – Alison Kopsco of J. Caldwell and Associates, was present to provide a powerpoint update to the drafting of the Highlands Sustainable Economic Development Plan, funded by a grant from the NJ Highlands Council, and being developed with the assistance of the Planning Board's Master Plan Committee. Ms. Kopsco reviewed the responses that she received through the resident and business surveys, as well as the public outreach efforts, and noted that she had received 978 responses from residents, representing 4% of the population, but she had received very few from local businesses (4). The responses in the surveys indicated several disadvantages within the Township, including a poor selection of business offerings, high prices, and poor appearances. Some of the suggestions from the surveys included more marketing of the businesses, increased phone shopping, and more local events. The general opinion from the surveys is that recreational activities and tourism should be offered and/or promoted.

Ms. Kopsco reviewed some of the stakeholders that she had been in contact with, including the Economic Development Committee, the Environmental Commission, the Heritage Committee, Long Pond Ironworks, and Friends of Wallisch Homestead. Some of the weaknesses identified at her meetings with stakeholders were the lack of parking facilities at the various trail heads, few passive recreation available, and no public boat launches for Greenwood Lake. She noted that the Environmental Commission had recommended that the Greenway, approved by the Commission and included in the Open Space Plan, should be incorporated into plans for the center of the Township, encompassing the central business district with a surrounding greenway of open space and connecting trails and walkways, with access to commercial and residential areas.

Some recommendations that are under consideration include prioritizing year round recreation, promoting local businesses, streamline communications between various local organizations, create connectivity with the trails and the Greenbelt, promote underutilized sites, and organize certain historic preservation sites to serve as tourist information centers.

Ms. Kopsco observed that she has not received a response from the Chamber of Commerce, and Chairman Christopher Garcia stated that he would assist her in obtaining business responses. Ms. Kopsco also noted that she met with the Rotary Club but has had no follow-up response from them. Board member Jim Rogers suggested that she email the Chamber the powerpoint presentation on the HSEDP and they may become more inclined to provide responses to the business owner's survey. Board member Robert Nolan suggested that Ms. Kopsco contact Marilyn Lichtenberg since she has contact with many of the local organizations. He commented that it was disappointing that there was such a minor response from local businesses, and Board member Geoffrey Syme concurred, adding that 4 responses from local business was not good, especially since the plan is being developed to help them. Ms. Kopsco remarked that she could not make assumptions for the business community on such a small number of responses, so the plan will be deficient unless more businesses respond and provide input. Board member Michael Chazukow is a member of the Economic Development Committee and he noted that the Chamber participation has been dwindling and it is difficult in the current economic climate to keep organizations thriving. Mr. Nolan commented that banks and other corporate-run businesses may have to get approvals from their superiors to respond to surveys. Ms. Kopsco recommended that other towns could provide evidence of how various groups stay connected and communicate. She will hold the business surveys open until the end of December, and asked the Board to provide suggestions or business contact information to her, as well as encourage businesses to respond to the surveys. Chairman Garcia will provide contact information to her from a business database that he obtained, and the Board suggested that the Autumn Lights Chairman be contacted for local business names. The Board Chairman recommended that an incremental approach should be used with the local businesses in order to encourage responses and input. Ms. Kopsco noted that she would send the powerpoint presentation to the Board members and would provide updates at subsequent meetings.

ORDINANCES FOR INTRODUCTION – None.

ORDINANCES REFERRED FROM COUNCIL – None.

BOARD PLANNER'S REPORT – None.

BOARD ATTORNEY'S REPORT – None.

BOARD ENGINEER'S REPORT – None.

MISCELLANEOUS

Invoices

The Board professional's invoices for the prior months were **unanimously approved** on a **motion** by Geoffrey Syme, with a **second** by Jim Rogers.

2021 Meeting Dates

The 2021 Meeting Dates for the West Milford Planning Board were reviewed and **approved** on a **motion** by Robert Nolan, with a **second** by Geoffrey Syme, with an abstention by Michael Chazukow.

MINUTES

The Minutes from the November 5, 2020 regular meeting, were **unanimously approved** by all members present at the meeting on a **motion** by Geoffrey Syme and a **second** by Michael Chazukow.

CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

The following correspondence items were reviewed by the Board:

Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act Correspondence

1. None.

NJ Department of Environmental Protection Correspondence

1. Public Notification Fact Sheet, dated October 27, 2020, from Acadis U.S., Inc. and Chevron Environmental Management Company (CEMC), regarding the Former Texaco Service Station #211126, 1457 Union Valley Road, Block 7601; Lot 2, NJDEP PIN #451229, NJDEP Case #85-05-2004-00, advising that the current remediation to address chemical contaminants detected has been ongoing since 1987, and is expected to be completed by May 2023, with groundwater monitoring at the site, quarterly monitoring of the POET

systems at four houses, and annual monitoring of 13 private wells offsite of the subject property.

2. Hudson Essex Passaic Soil Conservation District (HEPSCD) certification, dated September 2, 2020, regarding a soil erosion and sediment control plan for Monteforte Rocky Point Road SFD Reconstruction, Block 3405; Lot 8.

3. NJDEP - No Further Action correspondence, dated November 9, 2020, received for 123 Kitchell Lake Drive, Block 4801; Lot 17, regarding removal of a 1000 gallon #2 HO UST.

4. Suspected Hazardous Substance Discharge Notification, dated November 24, 2020, received for Suez Water NJ, Block 5308; Lot 1 and Block 5501; Lot 21 regarding excess nitrogen (17.7 mg/l) on an allowance of 10 mg/l. Plant discharges to groundwater.

5. NJDEP Freshwater Wetlands Permit #11, dated November 24, 2020, received for Kingwood Flex, LLC, Block 6401; Lots 1 & 3, regarding authorization of the construction of an outfall structure and restoration of a transition area in association with a building addition and reconfiguration of an existing parking lot.

Miscellaneous Correspondence

1. NJ Planner – Sept-Oct 2020.

ADJOURNMENT

Prior to adjourning, Chairman Garcia and the Board members congratulated Michael Chazukow on being elected to the Township Council beginning in 2021.

Ada Erik advised that the recently installed carpet in the main meeting room and offices on the main floor will be replaced by vinyl plank flooring to address any possible Covid-19 issues.

The Board members reviewed the upcoming meeting dates that are scheduled for December 3 and 17, 2020.

With no other matters to be brought before the Planning Board, Chairman Christopher Garcia **adjourned** the regular meeting of December 3, 2020 at 7:55 p.m. on a **motion** made by Robert Nolan with a **second** by Jim Rogers.

Approved: January 7, 2021

Respectfully submitted by

Tonya E. Cubby, Secretary