

OPEN SESSION

Hightstown Borough Planning Board meeting September 12, 2005

Call to order

Vice-Chairman Mr. Misiura called the Planning Board meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Mr. Misiura read the open public meetings act.

Flag salute

Roll Call

Name	Present	Absent			
Mayor Patten	X				
Mr. Montferrat		X			
Mr. Sikorski	X				
Mr. Searing	X				
Mr. Cuddy	X				
Mr. Jurgens		X			
Mr. Pratt	X				
Mr. Stults	X				
Mr. Misiura	X				
Alternates					
Mr. Emigholz	X				
Mr. Byrne	X				

Members present: Mayor Patten, Mr. Sikorski, Mr. Searing, Mr. Cuddy, Mr. Pratt, Mr. Stults, Mr. Misiura, Mr. Byrne and Mr. Emigholz.

Members absent: Mr. Montferrat and Mr. Jurgens.

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Mr. Sikorski, seconded by Mr. Stults, to approve the agenda with the suggested changes moving item #9 before item #8 due to another obligation. Roll call vote was all in the affirmative. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Cuddy, second by Mr. Pratt, to approve the minutes of the August 8, 2005 Planning Board Meeting. Roll call vote was all in the affirmative with the exception of Mr. Stults who abstained. Motion carried.

Appointment

A motion was made by Mayor Patten, seconded by Mr. Cuddy, to appoint Kathy Peniche as Recording Secretary to the Hightstown Borough Planning Board. Roll call vote was all in the affirmative. Motion carried.

Informal Presentation

Randy Gottesman of Community Grants and Planning, at last month's meeting, presented to the board, the Master Plan Housing Element and review COAH requirements. Mr. Gottesman advised the board no changes were made to pages 18-24 of the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan and submitted revisions to pages 25-29 of the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan. Mr. Gottesman advised that they are not at a crossroads for the implementation of the plan. There are some financial issues and significant planning decisions that need to be made, and this is best done in a sub-committee form, as recommended by Mr. Rosensweig.

Mr. Rosensweig summarized the timetable, working backwards, in having the Borough Council adopt all necessary resolutions. One endorses the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan, and one petitioning COAH to review and certify. These two resolutions need to be adopted sometime before December 20, 2005.

The board has September, October and November to bring everything together for Borough Council; however it is advisable to try to get everything to the Council by November so they can go through their review process and take action by December 20, 2005.

Applications

Application #2005-08 – Thomas & Susan Juronics, 215 Grant Avenue, Block 9, Lot 13. Applicant is seeking a bulk variance for existing condition of right side of home, which encroaches in the side yard setback by 5.2'. Owner wishes to construct an addition to the rear of the home, which will conform to the current zoning ordinance.

Mr. Thomas Juronics was present to give testimony and was sworn in by Mr. Rosensweig, Board Attorney. Mr. Juronics advised the board that he wishes to construct a 1,356 square foot addition, a 354 square foot deck, and a 410 square foot carport onto his existing home. The additional will be encompassed completely within the setback boundaries of the property, and will not increase the existing non-conformity of the right side of the 60 year old home, which encroaches on the side yard setback by approximately 5.2'.

Ms. Roberts, Board Engineer outlined the application for the board stating that the applicant has an existing condition of encroachment on the ordinance setback requirement, and that in order to construct the expansion, the applicant needs to obtain a variance for the existing side yard encroachment to bring this lot into conformity. Ms. Roberts also stated that the addition would have no negative impact on this property or surrounding properties. Ms. Roberts added that it would not be necessary for the applicant to install a sidewalk and curbing at this site.

The board agreed to let the applicant proceed with the construction of the addition before the Memorialization of the resolution at next month's meeting.

There were no public comments on this application.

A motion was made by Mr. Searing, seconded by Mr. Cuddy to grant the bulk variance as requested. Roll call vote was all in the affirmative. Motion carried.

Discussions

A discussion continued from last month to change the sign ordinance to allow "sandwich" signs in the Commercial and Highway Districts.

Mr. Rosensweig had provided for the board a draft ordinance containing language for the allowance of "sandwich signs" based on the discussion from last month. Mr. Rosensweig outlined the suggested changes he made to the existing ordinance, which included language to allow for an annual permit for the allowance of these signs, location of signs that must allow for 4' clear walking space, hours for signs to be displayed, size of signs being 3' high by 2' wide, and insurance certification. Mr. Misiura provided to the board members, a sign application from Washington State, which addresses sandwich board signs.

Mr. Wetterskog, Zoning Officer, stated he would like to see approved method of stabilization to keep signs from blowing into the roadway. He would also like to see a uniform size in the sandwich board signs.

Mr. Byrne suggested that the signs in the Highway Commercial zone be allowed to be larger than the signs in the downtown area.

The board discussed allowing one sign per street frontage, and decided on an annual fee of \$45.00, which is the current fee for a sign under the zoning ordinance.

Mr. Rosensweig will provide for the board for next month's meeting, additional ordinance containing the following as per this evening's discussion:

Anchorage of signs, exact size of signs to be 3' high x 2' wide, signs must be professionally manufactured, must have 4' walking clearance around sign, insurance certification,

A discussion lead by Carmela Roberts regarding new DEP regulations.

Ms. Roberts advised that this discussion is a follow up to a discussion held in February of this year regarding the Storm Water Management Plan; advising that the Chapter 25 is called "Storm Water Control" which came about by new DEP regulations. The DEP is working on flood control and pollutant reduction through non-structural, or low impact techniques shall be explored before relying on structural best management practices, which is a basic detention basin and inlet pipes. Carmela stated that during a storm, all of the detention basins throughout the state discharge to the same place, at the same time and outlined for the board ways to prevent downstream flooding with storm water detention basins. The DEP also has water quality control. DEP is recommending that in lieu of curbs with inlets, having swales on the side of the road, or porous pavement, etc.

A follow-up discussion about Planning Board Sub-Committees to be formed.

Mr. Misiura stated he would like the board to form sub-committees for the following:

Master Plan Sub-Committee, Architectural Review Committee, Historical Preservation Review Committee, and Informal Application Review Committee.

Mr. Misiura also discussed having a sub-committee to do a thorough review of the residential zoning guidelines, Downtown Partnership Coordination, Development Code Percenters, which is a supplement to zoning, and a Housing Element Review Committee. Mr. Misiura also suggested that some of the sub-committees could be combined.

Mr. Patten asked the board members to contact Ms. Kolo as to what committee they would like to serve on.

A motion was made by Mr. Pratt, seconded by Mayor Patten to appoint Mr. Byrne and Mr. Emigholz as liaisons to the Housing Code Committee. All were in favor.

Mayor Patten appointed Mr. Misiura and Mr. Cuddy to the Housing Element Committee.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Bodine-Kolo