

January 15, 2015
Council Chambers-Borough Hall
221 South 5th Ave.
Highland Park, NJ 08904
The Highland Park Redevelopment Agency
Board of Commissioners Regular Meeting

Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the Highland Park Redevelopment Agency was called to order in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act by Chairperson Baruh at 7:44 pm. Mrs. Baruh indicated the location of the fire exits.

Present	Mrs. Baruh, Dr. Andrews, Ms. McDonald, Mr. Solomon, Mr. Perlman
Absent	Mr. Guttenplan
Agency Professionals	Mr. Baumann, Agency Counsel
Council Liaison	Mr. Phil George, Council Liaison

Approval of minutes of previous meetings

An amendment to the November 6, 2014 meeting was approved. There was a motion from Mr. Solomon with a second from Dr. Andrews to approve the amended November 6, minutes and the December 4, 2014 minutes and with a voice vote the minutes were approved.

Chairperson and Committee Reports

Mrs. Baruh reported on a newly formed cross functional group consisting of borough officials, the borough planner and the chairs for zoning, planning and redevelopment. The purpose of the group is to facilitate development through preliminary overviews of development proposals. Mrs. Baruh discussed the agency's suggestions to update the redevelopment plan with the group.

Mr. Perlman introduced Debra Tantleff, TANTUM Realty a developer and principal of TANTUM Realty.

Ms. Tantleff gave an overview of the current real estate market and discussed a convergence of two age groups young professionals, millennial and older adults, empty nesters. Both groups prefer living in communities with luxury apartments in vibrant downtowns close to amenities, local businesses and mass transportation. Highland Park has many of the qualities and benefits from the proximity to New Brunswick, Rutgers University and Hospitals. Highland Park benefits from a governing body that understands redevelopment.

Ms. Tantleff discussed challenges in developing and constructing projects on a smaller scale and discussed how the Highland Park Redevelopment Agency can assist in the process. Ms. Tantleff suggested designing sustainable buildings and using retail brokers to educate property owners, she suggested community outreach between businesses and developers. Ms. Tantleff recommended creative approaches to parking such as shared parking and calculating a true parking ratio that matches the demographics and trends in an area. Ms. Tantleff suggested fostering a public private partnership and guiding business owners to appropriate industry experts. She also suggested revisiting the redevelopment plan as development trends change. Ms. Tantleff discussed the importance of a shared vision between town officials and a developer early in the process.

Mrs. Baruh thanked Ms. Tantleff for her presentation.

Public Comment

During the public comment Ronald Wong 207 South Adelaide Ave. Highland Park discussed “Community Builders, Inc.” a nonprofit developer of mixed-income housing throughout the United States. Community Builders develops owns and manages mixed use and mixed income properties. Mr. Wong discussed Community Builders’s, Inc. experience in developing small parcels. He discussed the use of green technology to make buildings more sustainable. Mr. Wong also talked about larger projects that were partnered with major retail providers and local brokers.

Action on any other business Mr. Baumann introduced Mr. Anton Popov the owner of 137-139 Raritan Ave. Mr. Popov discussed a proposal for a two story structure with four retail spaces on the first floor and five residential units on the second floor of his property located at 137-139 Raritan Ave.

Mr. Popov reviewed a drawing consisting of two sheets, labeled first floor plan and second floor plan and titled “Proposed Addition & Alteration 137-139 Raritan Avenue, Highland Park, Njew Jersey” prepared by T & T Design Studio, Bogdan Szacillo Architect, dated 12-5-14. Mr. Popov discussed proposals for the retail space and the residential units. Four of the residential units are proposed to be two bedroom 900 square feet units, and one, one bedroom 500 square foot unit. Mr. Popov asked for feedback from the agency for the site. Mr. Popov said that he reviewed the redevelopment plan. There was discussion about the design of the building and ways that it could be flexible in terms of the size of the retail space.

There was discussion about future development of the entire block and the role of this site in assembling a large parcel. There was a brief discussion about parking and upgrades to the side façade. Mr. Baumann summarized the comments for Mr. Popov to consider:

- A third story.
- Off-site parking alternatives
- A flexible 1st floor
- Residential access from the side

The agency will get back to Mr. Popov about what his next steps should be.

Highland Park Redevelopment Agency 2015 Budget

Mrs. Baruh discussed the 2015 budget. HPRA is on a calendar year, the budget was filed with the Department of Community Affairs, Division of Local Government Services. The Division reviewed the budget and before the budget can be approved the state is requesting more information from the agency. The commissioners reviewed page N-4 concerning payment to commissioners. While the Agency does not compensate commissioners the budget form requires commissioners to disclose compensation from other public entities. Mrs. Baruh asked the commissioners to review the form and submit the applicable information to Ms. Reh.

Hearing of New Agenda Items

Resolution HPRA R-2015-01 Bills List

There was a motion from Dr. Andrews with a second from Mr. Perlman to approve the bills list.

Roll call

Ayes	Mrs. Baruh, Dr. Andrews, Ms. McDonald, Mr. Solomon, Mr. Perlman
Nays	None
Abstain	None
Absent	Mr. Guttenplan

Motion approved.

Mrs. Baruh announced that Commissioner Frances McDonald will be honored as the recipient of the Martin Luther King Humanitarian of the Year Award on January 19, 2015 at 7:00 pm in the Senior Center 220 South 6th Ave. Highland Park.

Dr. Andrews announced that a group of his students will present a parking study at our next meeting, February 5, 2015.

Mr. George updated the agency on a meeting with the borough council to discuss the redevelopment plan.

At the February 5, 2015 meeting the commissioners will review amendments and changes to the redevelopment plan for the planning board’s review. Mr. Baumann will send a marked up plan for the agency to review at the February 5, 2015 HPRA meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:26 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Reh,

Agency Clerk