

HIGHLAND PARK PLANNING BOARD
Highland Park Borough Hall-Council Chambers
221 So. 5th Ave.
Highland Park, NJ 08904
MEETING DATE – August 9, 2018 7:30 P.M.

Call to Order

The August 9, 2018 regular meeting of the Highland Park Planning Board was called to order in accordance with the rules for the Open Public Meetings Act by Chairperson Kim Hammond at 7:36 pm; Ms. Hammond indicated the location of the fire exits.

Roll Call:

Present	Kim Hammond, Rebecca Hand, Paul Lanaris arrived at 7:37pm, Padraic Millet , Judi Shade Monk, Stephen Nolan, Susan Welkovits, Allan Williams
Absent	Scott Brescher, Alan Kluger, Jeffrey Perlman, Bruce Koch, Engineer
Agency Professionals	Jim Constantine, Planner and Roger Thomas, Esq.

Approval of minutes of previous meetings.

May 22, 2018

It was MOVED by MILLET and seconded by WILLIAMS that the May 22, 2018 minutes be approved with changes and with a voice vote from all present seven (7) ayes and one (1) abstention from Mr. Nolan the minutes were approved.

June 21, 2018

It was MOVED by MILLET and seconded by WILLIAMS that the June 21, 2018 minutes be approved with changes and with a voice vote from all present seven (7) ayes and one (1) abstention from Mr. Nolan the minutes were approved.

Memorialization of Resolutions.

Resolution P2018-02

Review of Ordinance Adopting an Amendment to the Highland Park Downtown Redevelopment Plan Relating to Property Commonly Known as 130-134 Raritan Avenue

Mr. Thomas said that there has been a review of these amendments to the redevelopment plan, it came to the Board in an informal way several months ago, there was discussion and those amendments went to the Borough Council where it was formulated into an Ordinance that was introduced on first reading and came back to the Planning Board July 12, 2018. The Board determined that the Ordinance was consistent with amendments as recommended and consistent with the Redevelopment Plan as well as the Master Plan. Tonight's action was simply a memorialization of what was already done. He said that it was his understanding that the Ordinance is scheduled for adoption at the Council meeting on August 14, 2018.

Councilwoman Welkovits indicated that she believed that there would be a neighborhood meeting in September about this property.

It was MOVED by MILLET and seconded by WILLIAMS that Resolution P2018-02 be approved.

ROLL CALL: Ayes – Hand, Lanaris, Millet, Monk, Welkovits, Williams, Hammond
Nays – None
Abstain - Nolan

There being seven (7) ayes, no nays and one (1) abstention, Resolution P2018-02 was approved.

Resolution P2018-03 Review Ordinance Authorizing the Adoption of the
Redevelopment Plan for Property Commonly Known as
31 River Road

Mr. Thomas said there was a review of this matter by the Board at a previous meeting and approved at their last meeting. The Borough Council has introduced the Ordinance and the action by the Board is just memorialization of action that has already been taken. Once the Ordinance is passed on final reading that just means certain things can occur and in order for them to occur there will be a requirement for the applicants to come before the Board for approval, and that will be a further opportunity for the public to have an opportunity to be heard and discuss the application as it comes before the Board.

Jim Constantine, Planner, said that he would go through the changes that were made as recommendations by the Board. He said that there were some housekeeping changes as well as:

Page 11, Landuse and Bulk Standards, section A permitted uses a new section d was added, “the above principal uses shall be provided as a mix of studio, one bedroom, and two bedroom units except for affordable housing required to be three bedroom units.

Page 12, E. Permitted Projections, allowing for covered stoops, porches, verandas and balconies shall be permitted to project into the front yard setback not closer than 7.5 feet from the property line.

Page 12, e, Section 2, Permitted Accessories, added refuse/recycling facilities as an accessory use.

Page 15, 3. Parking, the resident parking requirement shall be a minimum of one parking space for each unit located on-site or within a 1,000’ of the redevelopment area, added “the distribution and location of resident parking shall be determined to satisfaction of the planning board based on the overall unit mix; added the provision of shuttle service to the New Brunswick rail station, the accommodation of bicycle parking facilities; the provision of shared car parking and similar factors.

Page 15, 4. 4. The provision of resident parking for market-rate units shall be “unbundled” from the cost of units and subject to a separate charge.

Page 15, added 5. Guest parking shall be located on-site or off-site within 1,000 feet of the Redevelopment Area in an amount, distribution and location to the satisfaction of the Planning Board.

Page 15, added 6. On-site parking shall include provision for electrical vehicle charging stations.

Page 15, 7. Added the term “covered” bicycle racks.

Page 15, Section D. Refuse and Recycling Standards. 1. Refuse and recycling facilities shall be provided to adequately accommodate the types of units in a location within each unit, the building or on site. 2. The location and provision of refuse and recycling facilities shall not be visible from the street.

Page 15, Section E. The Planning Board may permit such buildings to be attached if the appearance of multiple buildings is achieved to the satisfaction of the Planning Board.

Page 15, Section E. added 3. Buildings shall incorporate covered stoops, porches, verandas and/or balconies, and utilize front yard terraces and/or patios.

Page 12, under C. Setbacks for Building fronting on River Road, it indicates minimum front yard setback 15’ however, it does not indicate that this applies to both River Road and Walter. The front

yard setback for the larger building, and add on to the 15' from River Road and Walter Avenue so it is clear.

Page 20 at the end of the affordable housing section: add a sentence "The Borough reserves the right to request a waiver from the Court for the bedroom distribution requirements of the UHAC."

It was MOVED by HAND and seconded by NOLAN that Resolution P2018-03 be approved.

ROLL CALL: Ayes – Hand, Lanaris, Monk, Nolan, Welkovits, Williams, Hammond
Abstain – Millet

There being seven (7) ayes, no nays and one (1) abstention, Resolution P2018-03 was approved.

Resolution P2018-04 Cuie He, P2017-02, 405 South 5th Avenue, Block 43, Lots 1 &2
Minor Subdivision and Bulk Variances Approval

Ms. Hammond said that the Shade Tree Advisory Committee report was submitted late and asked if Jim Constantine, Planner would oversee the plantings. The Shade Tree Advisory Committee indicated that the trees that the applicant was intending on planting were invasive and suggested alternative plantings.

Ms. Hand recommended both memos the latest being August 6, 2018. On page 9 remove "incorporates applicants landscaping plan", page 10, paragraph 6 include impervious pavers. All agreed.

It was MOVED by MILLET and seconded by HAND that Resolution P2018-04 be approved as amended.

ROLL CALL: Ayes – Hand, Lanaris, Millet, Monk, Welkovits, Williams, Hammond
Abstain – Nolan

There being seven (7) ayes, no nays and one (1) abstention, Resolution P2018-03 was approved with amendments.

Public comment on any item not on the agenda.

Ms. Hammond opened the floor to the public.

Ira Smith, Lincoln Ave, asked Mr. Constantine if the memorialization tonight took into account the design features of the property. He looked over his notes that he received via e-mail and was wondering if there were two access points still being proposed for this property and two egress points from this property on 31 River Road. Mr. Constantine said that there is the requirement for the ingress and egress on Walter and an optional ingress off River Road, no egress on River Road today people do enter and exit onto River Road but technically, there is no egress, and it is documented in the survey that it is ingress only. They can enter from River Road and cannot exit onto River Road. Mr. Smith said that by doing that you will be creating a lot more traffic on Walter because of the 40 units and he is concerned and asked if there was any way to consider ingress and egress onto River Road.

Ms. Hammond said that would be something that would be discussed during a site plan review. What was voted on tonight does not limit that, the biggest limiting piece of that it is a County road and it is not within the jurisdiction of the board to change a county requirement.

Mr. Nolan said that we would explore that when a particular plan came in to see if that was something that would work and was doable and is open to that. It is hard to know without seeing the configuration.

Mr. Smith said that they were possibly coming back with the average square footage to get an idea on what these apartments might look like in order to get those 40 units. Mr. Constantine said that he did not calculate one in detail but could fit 40 units within the concept plan demonstrating compliance and part of that square footage is the bedroom mix. Studio could scale down to 500-600 sq. ft., if someone felt there was a market for that, a 2-bedroom unit might be at 1,200 sq. ft. He clarified that the development could not go over 40 units.

Mr. Smith said that from a marketing point of view it is obviously in the Borough's best interest to develop the property as best as can be developed and you want to make as livable as possible for people, and asked if there were plans to increase the pathway's and walkways from that development to the New Brunswick train station. He asked if there were plans to develop walkways across the street that go to the bridge and over bridge to make it more sellable. In the wintertime the Albany Street Bridge does not get shoveled and was wondering who was responsible for shoveling that walkway. Ms. Welkovits indicated that they have met with Mayor Cahill in New Brunswick and the Borough now shares that responsibility with New Brunswick, Highland Park just purchased a small CAT or something similar that would make it across and she believes Highland Park does one side and New Brunswick does the other side.

Mr. Smith said that he was speaking for everyone who has crossed that bridge when it snows and more often than not, you are trudging through 6-7 inches of snow. Mr. Millet said that in reality they would be doing the streets before doing that walkway so if you are going out at 7AM to catch the train the chances are you will be walking through snow because they will be trying to clear the streets first. Mr. Smith said we are talking about empty nesters, demographics, and he is thinking you still need a path to get in and a path to get out.

Mr. Smith asked that the extra parking close by be further defined. Mr. Constantine said an obvious location would be the church parking lot, which has an historic association of use with this property, he did not know the arrangement between Dr. Glasgold and church, but believes it was a arrangement the medical practice used that lot when it was at peak occupancy years ago during the day and the medical office was available on Sunday's or holiday. Ms. Hammond said that this agreement calls for a formal arrangement or contract to the Board's satisfaction.

Mr. Smith asked if there were any ordinances that state in this type of property you would need two entrances from a fire access point. Ms. Hammond said that one of the requirements when they come for site plan review is that the fire department looks at it, and all of that is taken into consideration.

Gabrielle Wilders, 24 Walter Avenue, said that she is concerned with the height of the structure and she feels 40 units seems like a lot and it is going exceed three stories and three stories can easily turn into four stories. She said that there is an opening in the redevelopment plan that they can go to four

stories and asked if there was any way we can cap that. She said if a developer sees that door open they are going to drive a truck through it and they will end up with an oversized structure. Ms. Hammond said that the plan indicates that if they go for the fourth story there is a setback, so from street level you will not see that fourth story. Ms. Wilders indicated that she is behind that, four stories is too big in that area, and that is her concern.

Ms. Hand said that the structure on Walter cannot be four stories, only the one of River Road further down could be four stories potentially if it is setback. When we looked at the way the sun was coming down as it came across Ms. Wilders property because the plan proposes a farther setback between Ms. Wilders property and the Walter Road would begin because of where the ingress would go it would cause less shade on her property then if a single story home because there would be closer setbacks physically to the Wilders property.

Mr. Constantine indicated that a medical office could be built 10' from the Wilders home. There is two other important provisions on that potential going to the fourth floor just on River Road, this was also discussed at the neighborhood meeting in March talking about trying to push as much as we could in that direction. The Planning Board has discretion, they may permit a fourth floor that is setback from the street facing facades with a terrace, you get that fourth level pushed in a little from Walter and River Road, if it is designed in accordance with the following section to the satisfaction of the Board that the building should be designed using some massing, scale, roof type, cornice, projections, recesses, materials, colors and other architectural treatments to minimize the visual impact of the height of such building. There is a lot of discretion placed with the Planning Board if a fourth story is proposed which can only be on the River Road portion of the building not up along Walter. The Board has to be satisfied that this criteria is met to their satisfaction.

Ms. Wilders said that her stake is a little different than those across the street because they can see River road and the river from their home, so even if the fourth story unit is on River Road it still affects her home and people around her in that area. Ms. Hammond said an applicant comes in and brings their engineers, architects and they make their case at each turn and you could be at that meeting.

Ms. Wilders asked if they could eliminate that fourth story now. Ms. Hammond said based on what was discussed at the last meeting and what is reasonable, and she understood for her home she may not like it, but explained that there are a lot of circumstances where people live near an open lot and you may not love what your neighbor does but it is within their rights to do that, so as a Board we are weighing what is the best thing and it might just be that the 3 or 4 stories in terms of what a façade looks might be the right thing to do on River Road. She said the Board would weigh the facts or agendas for what is best for Highland Park.

Ms. Wilders asked if that was being left in the redevelopment plan. Mr. Thomas responded yes. Mr. Wilders said the only other time that would come up for discussion is when there is a site plan application. Ms. Hammond said yes and that the applicant with a 200' list would notice her.

Mr. Constantine suggested to any potential applicant who purchases the property, because of the redevelopment plan, and level of input that there has been with the neighbors he highly recommended under the Redevelopment Entity to put together a redeveloper agreement, conditional designation,

and highly recommended a neighborhood meeting to look at the design and the site and the development proposal before it comes to the Board with the Developer.

Ms. Wilders asked about the refuse and recycling that it should be not within site, but there is also an odor issue because the homes on Lincoln Avenue backup to that whole area and is concerned about where the dumpsters or receptacles will be placed. She said that there was another development they have had problems with rats on occasion. She asked that once this is memorialized tonight, it goes to the Borough Council and asked what does the Council do at that point. Mr. Thomas said that the Council then has to adopt the Ordinance to make it the law of Highland Park, that is a hearing that will take place on any Ordinance that is being passed, allowing input from public in regards to that Ordinance and at that point if the Council decides they want to adopt the Ordinance they vote and it becomes the "law" of this town. The developer has the right to start development processes that will further the chance the development of that property but in order for that to happen once the Ordinance is adopted the developer will have to file an application for development which then comes before the Board which requires an additional public hearing on all the aspects of the plan which will then be an engineered plan that will show what the building looks like, buffers, parking etc.

Mr. Constantine said that was a redevelopment plan, so the Council acting as the Redevelopment Entity would first have to designate a conditional redeveloper, be satisfied with the plan and there is a redeveloper's agreement that needs to be negotiated so things like making sure the guest parking adequately handled and some of the issues are highly worked through. We have greater control with this plan, under normal zoning a developer could come in, submit a plan walk out with an approval and sell it the next day but under this plan, the developer cannot do that because the Borough is designating them as the developer. The Borough has contractual tools to address a lot issue beyond anything coming to the Planning Board.

Ms. Wilder said that there is a lot of concern with the traffic in that area both pedestrian safety and car traffic, and adding more units is just going to add to that. Is there going to be any kind of formal study about that area. Ms. Hammond said that in a project that size a traffic study is required.

Mr. Millet said that this plan is providing a framework for the public to understand what might happen but also to a potential developer, they are going to see they will have to work within those guidelines and ask themselves if they can make money doing this. If they think, they can work within this plan, and develop successfully; they will provide a traffic study. This is a good thing on both ends because it gives a heads up to potential developers that this is how we are envisioning this property so gets them ahead of time.

Ms. Wilders asked if they would allow a developer to pay for their own traffic study. Mr. Thomas said that developers always pay for their own traffic study and our professionals will review that work.

Mr. Constantine said that he was confident that what is in the redevelopment plan would generate less trips than a medical office at full occupancy, plus if there is not excessive parking provided on site, and the reduced parking provision is going to affect who rents/owns there it will not be friendly to the three car household or many two car households when combined will further push down what you would find in a traffic study in terms of the counts. He said that they are really trying to right size that and promote the walking and back to Ira's point there is a long term improvement to work with

the County to get in the funding queue and get an absolute safety improvement at Walter/River Road intersection.

Ira Smith asked if this was going to be 100% rentals or is it up to the developer. Ms. Hammond said that we could not specify that by law. Mr. Constantine said that it is highly likely in the current economy that it will be rental but nothing specifies that.

Jennifer Altman, 31 Walter Avenue said that she is speaking from the ignorance of the process and why she thinks as non-planners we feel that still confused about how they can be involved and not involved. Generally speaking as group, we were not involved for about 12 months, they knew that members of the Planning Board, Zoning Board, Council and Screening Committee knew about this and did not tell any of them but they were formally kept out of the process for a year. Once they were brought in, thanked Jim for bringing them in and running some resident meetings, at that point they were told that if the property ever came up at a formal meeting of any Board or Council of this town they would be told. She said she knows it is not the town's responsibility to do this, it is a small town with a small staff but she is appealing to the Board that is what they were told would happen and they were not told. She said that she was very involved in the beginning and wrote many of the letters, but she did not know about the last Planning Board meeting until 2-3 days before, could not get a sitter, and did not attend. This meeting she found out about 2 days ago because she ran into someone at National Night Out and quickly told her resident friends so no one knew about it and it is our ignorance to not follow that there is a Planning Board meeting but appealing to the Board's sense of heart that this is our lives, this is our street and this matters a lot to us. Whether it is our mistake or not she wants on the record where they stand. She strongly appealed to the Council Liaison that this vote not happen on Tuesday, half of the block is away and did not even know about the meeting tonight, did not know about the meeting last month and because this matters so much to our lives and she knows it does not matter it is just a property unless it is your block but it is their block and their home and where we have all lived a decade or more. She asked that that be considered, she knows that there is a rush to move forward to get the plan down before a developer comes in and she does not know how much leeway there is but it going to appeal to the idea that she does not feel the residents know about this vote and are ready to be involved in that vote. She asked if the three stories was, two stories with a roof or three stories because their homes are two stories with a roof that could be finished into a three story and go no higher than an attic. Is it really three and half stories because we discussed no higher than 35'. She said that she does not think that many of the neighbors think that means 3 ½ with a roof and she is very disturbed about that, and that will change the character of their block. She is still concerned about the 40 units, is the 40 units because you do not feel like you can get a developer if you go any less because if you are appealing to what residents want in this town and what the character of that block is, 40 units will still destroy the character of that block. She asked that the development plan not be passed with a 3 ½ on Walter and 40 units. She said that she is only one person but feels very strongly about that because this is our home and it will change the character of their block.

Mr. Constantine said that 3 ½ stories is not permitted on Walter, 2 ½ stories is permitted within 25' of the street, once you are 25' back from the street you can go to 3 stories not 3 ½. There are few ways to address the design issue, the portion on River Road there is a design revision which says we are looking at massing, scale, roof type, etc. plus terracing if there is a fourth floor.

Ms. Hammond said that it is hard to think about the real design or what something is going to look when your just counting stories and there could be a situation where something is three stories and

has a slightly steeper roof so I could go against the argument that something needs to be lower but makes it tremendously more attractive and actually more keeping in with the character of the neighborhood. There are certain things in the code about what stops something from being a story versus a story and half, so when it says three stories there are ways to control for those three stories.

Ms. Altman said it is in the plan that is two stories but is really 2 1/2. Mr. Nolan said that on page 12 it says massing, scale and height of buildings fronting Walter Avenue, 1. Composed of smaller-scale massing, that reflects the massing of homes across Walter Avenue and shall be limited to two and one-half (2 1/2) stories in height along the street frontage. 2. May increase to three (3) stories in height provided that portion of the structure is set back a minimum of 25 feet from the street.

Ms. Altman asked if that could be taken out of the Walter Avenue section, she said that she did not understand or like that and the neighbors will be happy with that. Mr. Millet said that this was something that they would have to take up with the Council; this document is pretty much done.

Ms. Hammond said that this was discussed at a previous meeting. Ms. Altman said that she knows there was a meeting but she did not know about it and she was told that they would be told but that was not communicated. Ms. Hammond said that some of the neighbors were at the meeting. Ms. Altman said that they got an e-mail out three days before, and she is disturbed that she missed the last meeting but does not want missing one meeting to ruin where she lives. Ms. Hammond said that the neighbors did a great job representing exactly what her concerns are, it was well represented and the opening statement was you live and care about Highland Park, the Board is made up of resident volunteers with no special expertise in Planning other than the interest and understanding what our roles are here, and we have a lot of the same concerns. One of the things stated at that meeting was that this really was an effort to make a better project at that location without doing some type of plan, a plan that is reasonable, weighing all options and trying to figure out what is best so you don't get some horrible five story office building that would be permitted without any plan at all. It may not be the best for a few but it really was an effort at protecting that corner, and the Board was working towards the best interest of the town as a whole.

Ms. Altman asked why the Board did not make that change. Ms. Hammond said that this will match the Master Plan, a certain density, and infill and it matches some of those other criteria. Ms. Altman asked if it was a push to do more density in that spot. Ms. Hammond said that it was not more density; there were proposals for up to 90 units in that area. Ms. Altman said that this is their opportunity to get as much as they want, and she understands everyone worked really hard to get a better plan and she is trying to make it an even better plan. She said she just wants to know as a resident who is going to live across the street from this why you could not push even further down.

Ms. Hand said that this is not the ultimate plan of what is going to be built on that site; this is a list of parameters that will be acceptable on an outside basis, maximum 40 units, maximum height requirements, and possibilities of additional stories. She said that she is not prepared to limit what could be a beautiful plan and a very thought out site plan because I cannot picture what it might look like. She agrees that they need to be very careful about what is allowed to be developed but is not prepared to say that under no circumstances could a third story not be beneficially used in order to maximize the efficiency of the space and that is why it is still in there. She said that it is not that we are not listening and they very much care about what is going at this location but does not want to cut off what could be a beautiful plan out of ignorance.

Ms. Altman said that she respected what was said, but their fear is that once this plan is final but here is their opportunity to put in some limits that will be bound by law, and we hear about all the steps and appreciate them but does not want to give up this opportunity at this stage to make it the best it can be. She said that she believes that if this is not done now as a town legally every step is going to get pushed by a developer so here is our opportunity to set even more limits.

Mr. Nolan said that there is a danger if the town strait jackets itself in so tight and a developer will say, here is my plan and fits yours exactly and it looks terrible and the flexibility will not be there because we will have locked ourselves in. We are trying to build in flexibility so we can say that works a lot better if we do not do this and we do this. There is no concept on what the site will look like so it is hard to picture, but we are trying to build in options.

Ms. Altman said that the Board came in after hearing about that 70+ unit proposals and she respects that this is a lot better, but the neighbors were not in that conversation, there are 25 people on Walter Avenue so 20 units sounds like a lot to them and she would like to see 3 or 4 homes, there are 5 children and 20 adults on that block for over a decade or more. 10-20 units scares the neighbors, and she knows it is private property and a lot of the neighbors wanted it to stay a medical office, so they have made some concessions in their input and wanted to re-emphasize that they cannot get out of their homes unless they goes towards River Road, it is a one way, and now there will be 100 people living between her and the 50 yards toward River Road, that is only place to park and the only place for her children to play so this is a big deal to the neighbors . She asked why the traffic study was not required before the redevelopment is done; what if the traffic study says that 40 units is ridiculous. On the record she is concerned with the 40 units, her neighbors are concerned but are away on vacation now, and if there is anything that can be done she appealing as their neighbor to do that.

Mr. Constantine said that under building scale and architectural design character section it re-enforces one or two smaller scale buildings on Walter Avenue and one larger scale building on River Road. We are looking for a composition with a little more on River Road and smaller scale on Walter Avenue, which was discussed at the workshop. He said that it goes on to say buildings shall be designed to reflect the Arts and Crafts design character found in portions of the surrounding neighborhood and preferred imagery identified during the Neighborhood Open House, and there are six images that many of you put green dots on in which a lot of you attended. He said that the combination of those sorts of provisions the Borough having the ability to designate the developer, negotiate a redevelopers agreement before anything even reaches the Board, there is a lot to try and work the gray areas and make it fit.

Ms. Hand said that the standards put together here are aiming towards encouraging development for residents who are not transportation minded, more focused on walking, biking and one car maximum household, and she hears the concerns of 40 units and traffic because if it were 40 units with 3 cars per unit it would be chaos. She suggest shifting the focus on to how many spaces within the development is accommodated. The parking has been uncoupled from the units and if this is a rental, you have to pay for your parking separately meaning not everyone is going to have a car and maybe some people will have multiple spaces but they will be paid for because the spaces are limited.

Mr. Constantine said that there is a requirement for high quality covered bicycle parking, so they will spend money to deliver high quality bicycle facilities.

Ira Smith, Lincoln Avenue, said as a point of order, he mentioned for the purpose of communication you have to go through about three steps on the web-site to find where meetings are happening maybe collectively if everyone feels the same way, maybe we can cut down the number of steps to find when

meetings are happening and further more is it possible when doing so can they have an agenda for that evening and what goes on during that meeting because tonight there was meeting planned but no agenda underneath that he could see. Council Member Welkovits said the agendas are posted under agendas on the web site. He asked that it be easier to find for people to know what is going on during a board meeting and what is on the agenda. Ms. Hammond said that she would send a note to the Borough Administrator.

Debra Burns, 235 Wayne Street, said given all that, the Board knows about development, suppose the Council approves the Ordinance, and a developer comes forward, what is the timeline or how long does this take from start to finish. Mr. Millet said that he would think years rather than months, and one thing when a formal application comes before the Board they are responsible for noticing the public. Ms. Hammond said that someone can come and say they are thinking about doing this and they can ask for informal feedback that is not this board convening and they are not required to notice at that time until a formal application comes before the board.

Ms. Hammond said that something new to Highland Park is the Rehabilitation and Redevelopment Screening Committee made up of members from the Planning Board, Zoning Board, and those meetings are noticed.

Ms. Burns asked if there were any developers interested in this plan. Mr. Constantine said yes and they are in due diligence according to what he has been told. He said that the Borough Council acting as the Redevelopment Agency has to designate a developer once they come forward.

Ms. Altman, 31 Walter Avenue asked how they would know if this property comes up how they would be told if they go to the Screening Committee because that happened already and they were not told. Ms. Monk said that the Screening Committee is a safe space for them to come and get general about their idea and the reasons no one was noticed is because we were never going to let that plan out, it was never okay with the Committee. Ms. Altman asked if going forward they would let everyone know that there is a plan that you do not like and you are going to make sure it does not happen. Mr. Thomas said that there is no statutory requirement and what you are asking is that anytime a developer comes into this town, the town is then got to somehow notify everybody around, which is not possible and just does not work. The town cannot do, they do not have the time, staff or money and there is no statutory obligation to do it. HE said that he understands that this is a concern because it has gotten further down the road the reality, and he as an attorney would not recommend his client to end up doing notice on a plan that is so terrible that they are not going to end up giving any recommendations, why would the town want to stir up neighbors on a plan that will never happen.

Ms. Altman said that you might think it does not make sense but in their very small town it made 30 people not trust our Council and Mayor anymore. Mr. Thomas said maybe that is partly because the neighbors need to understand that there are people on these Boards, etc. that are your neighbors who are trying to protect the interest of the town including yours.

Mr. Millet said Highland Park, not specifically in this area, is in need of development, we pay very high taxes because we don't have a lot of commercial properties and part of the reasons we do not have a lot of commercial development on the downtown is that it is a very difficult process to go through and part of the reason for the Screening Committee was to bring someone and not waste their

time so they didn't show up at a meeting with 60 sets of prints and told to hit the road. He said what they are trying to do is to encourage good development because that is the only thing to help keep the property taxes at bay. He said that it is always a balance and they want to encourage good development that has to be a more fluid process.

Mr. Nolan said that if there were a notice every time someone had an idea to do something you would be noticed 3-4 times a week.

Ms. Hammond said to Ms. Monk's point, which should be heard, nothing was going to happen it did not develop because it was not a plan that was going to going anywhere and there was nothing to know about, and it was never going to become anything.

Ms. Monk said that Ms. Altman's comment about no longer trusting the Borough is misplaced, and that it does not make sense to call a mob onto something that will never be a reality.

Mr. Constantine asked what was different before, one is there was a contract purchaser, and could have gone to the Zoning Board on the use variance which would have been a worse situation and as the planner he would have been trying to defend the Master Plan against the proposal for 75-100 units, we also did not have a plan to direct someone, we did not have the Borough's control which we have now to designate a developer, qualify them, see that they have done quality work in other communities and therefore we are willing to allow you to move forward.

Ms. Hammond thanked everyone for coming out and emphasized that they are being heard, and they are working with the comments. In regards to notice, we do have to put the responsible on the resident but you can call Jen and she can help you, the meetings are posted and suggested that if it is something you are interested in but you can call or e-mail someone at Borough Hall and keep checking in.

There being no one further Ms. Hammond closed the public discussion.

Correspondence and reports.

Zoning/Building Officer report – Scott Brescher – None.

Rehabilitation Screening Committee report – Kim Hammond/Judi Monk

Mr. Williams reported that Jim Polos owns the marsh adjacent to the river, he wants to build two houses, and one lot would be 5,000 sq. ft. and the other 22,000 sq. ft. and includes the whole Marsh, which cannot be built on. It is believed that there is an environmental easement that was never finalized by the Borough or the Planning Board back in 1998 or sometime around that time. He wants to continue to control the Marsh so it is not developed and he wants to move forward but the timing is not clear when that would be. Mr. Constantine said that Mr. Polos was not opposed to a trail pushed closer to the water, the application would be a major subdivision, will definitely come to the Planning Board, issues raised to try and get addressed and provide more information. Some members thought it might be better to have two reasonable lots and let the Marsh go to the County but he did not seem to agree with that. Mr. Polos mentioned that possible future plans to take down the building where TeTe's is and build new one but it is a very rough concept at this point.

Mr. Constantine said that once things slow down a bit, he would like to get together with Mr. Polos and some of the other owners on that block to look at some of the issues, make parking more efficient and rectify some of the inefficiencies among the properties, and it will be a coordinated effort.

Mt. Laurel status update/Fair Share Housing Obligation report - Jim/Padraic Millet - Executive Session Discussion.

It was MOVED by MILLET and seconded by NOLAN to go into closed session to discuss the status of Mt. Laurel-Fair Share Housing Obligation.

ROLL CALL: Ayes – Hand, Lanaris, Millet, Monk, Nolan, Welkovits, Williams, Hammond
Abstain – None

There being eight (8) ayes, and no nays, the Board went into closed session.

Master Plan Prep report – Steve Nolan.

Mr. Nolan said that they have a working group for the master plan refresh process; the Borough is going to talk to Jim Constantine a scope in terms of cost, and what would be included and hoping to start that process in early 2019. He said that idea is not to completely redo the Master Plan but to identify some areas that are important and refresh the data.

Sustainable Highland Park – Judi Monk – None.

Action on any other business and work session.

Adjournment

There was a motion to adjourn from Williams with a second from Millet and with a voice vote by all present; the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,


Jennifer Santiago, Board Clerk