

**HIGHLAND PARK PLANNING BOARD  
HIGHLAND PARK BOROUGH HALL  
221 South Fifth Ave.  
Highland Park, NJ**

**NOVEMBER 14, 2019  
7:30 PM**

**Call to Order**

The November 14, 2019 regular meeting of the Highland Park Planning Board was called to order in accordance with the rules for the Open Public Meetings Act by Chairwoman Kim Hammond at 7:40 pm; Ms. Hammond indicated the location of the fire exits.

**Roll Call:**

Present	Kim Hammond, Scott Brescher, Rebecca Hand, Alan Kluger, Paul Lanaris, Padraic Millet, Stephen Nolan, Jeffrey Perlman, Allan Williams
Absent	Paul Lanaris, Coretta Pinelli, Susan Welkovits
Agency Professionals	Jim Constantine, Planner, Bruce Koch, Engineer and Roger Thomas, Esq.

**Presentations:**

Presentation of Periodic Re-Examination Report of the Master Plan and Development Regulations of the Borough of Highland Park

Ms. Hammond said this process has almost taken a year, there was a subcommittee made up of people from the Planning Board, some other commissions and committees in town led by LRK and Jim Constantine. Mr. Constantine will give an over view and this is the time for the Board to get into the nitty gritty about the overarching goals, recommendations and then if time permits some of the finer details.

Mr. Thomas clarified that this is not the formal public hearing it is more of a work session for the Board and the members of the public to be able to make comments so that if there concerns or comments they can be dealt with between now and the next meeting which is listed for the actual adoption of this Plan.

Mr. Constantine presented the Planning Board with the re-examination report of the Master Plan Development regulations of the Borough of Highland Park. There will be a short slide show presentation at the next meeting.

Mr. Constantine said that there were two documents being worked on this year, lots of community participation, re-examination report and master plan which needs to be adopted by the end of the year to keep our zoning valid, which is accompanied by the real focus is on the land use element, residential design standards that were identified in the 2003 comprehensive master plan as a short term action item and is something hopefully will get implemented in 2020. Another small ordinance fix and a vision like approach to five corridors and special areas that were identified, downtown, upper Raritan, Woodbridge, Cleveland and River Road. There has been a fairly robust participation almost 600 residents who participated in the online survey, 150 people who came out. We are here to get Planning Board comments as complete as we can, and will put those into the report over the next few days, the sub-committee is meting a week from now and if there are any issues that need further vetting or discussion we will try to get hose resolved then and around thanksgiving we will submit the final draft, which will be posted 10

days prior ahead at Borough hall for you to take into consideration at the December 2019 meeting.

Ms. Hammond suggested going to the re-examination report goals and recommendation they are the overarching structure and the next piece in the land use element the last section. She said that it sort of what has been happening but it does not mean that they are happening it means that it may require the recommendation from Council for an Ordinance change. We want to ensure that this is right direction, which is in accordance with the goals.

Mr. Constantine said land use goals on page 42, and there are seven. These are the major themes and there was a lot of work by the sub-committee. The starting point was the 2003 master plan and this is a more strategic effort. They are color coded so that they reappear elsewhere there is some symbolization that helps them flow through the document.

Ms. Hammond asked if there were any concerns or issues or something that they feel is not representing.

Mr. Nolan said that he thinks this is a very nice summary of the things he thinks about redevelopment in town; it captures a lot of important things.

Mr. Perlman said he agrees with Mr. Nolan. When you look at the types of residents who responded and the household size perhaps we may not have reached everyone including lower income or people living in multi-family and compare that to the 28% were single family households. Mr. Constantine said it was noted that the respondents to the survey tend to live in the single family detached home at a much higher rate than the population as a whole. It just seems to be that we did not capture a lot people with families in survey and you look at the open space recommendations, maybe continue what parks and recreation for children might be needed. The language says adults and there might need some clarification.

Mr. Perlman said one person households and two person households are over represented in the responses, this is a challenge in most municipalities, there is a need for recreation, water parks and stuff and has been bubbling around and didn't get captured here. Recreations and Open Space recommendations to get what some of the family recreation needs might be. Mr. Constantine said that he would go back and take a look at that. Also in the gathering of this information at some point you have to decide, there is a lot of input on the parks in town, we did not put all of that in but that survey data is available to parks and recreation, there is follow up actions.

Mr. Kluger said that while the online survey may not picked up families etc., the information that was picked up at the Street fair, Arts in the Park, and from the two in person public meetings. Mr. Perlman said he hopes that some of that gets pulled forward and put into the plan.

Mr. Kluger asked if the Recreation Committee, maybe they have a meeting coming up and can give feedback. Ms. Hammond said there was a meeting Mr. Constantine said that one of the recommendations is to do a detailed open space and recreation plan. Mr. Perlman said that he would put together some language and will have it to the sub-committee before their next meeting.

Mr. Kluger said that there was some discussion when the plan the plan was presented to the Planning whether some people were looking for us to incorporate it into the Master Plan or that may have been requested by SWACC or one of the other committees. He said that in reading through he only sees a few recommendations, although he was not in favor of incorporating the entire plan into the Master Plan. He asked for clarification on how it was incorporated into the plan. Mr. Constantine said on page 15 a synopsis was provided to cover the document, really as if it is a free standing element and is coming back to the Board with a potential resolution for adoption separate from this. From a technical stand point it was adequate for adoption but does not mean that everything in it will be implemented because it is really laying out a vision and potential strategies. With every bike/ped plan every community is shifting through the art and science of implementation.

Mr. Thomas said it is important to an applicant when they are looking for because they tend to look at the goals and objectives because they are seeking to get something, you have to be careful what you put down.

Mr. Perlman said it is likely subject to adoption by the Board in December put that is sort of the shadow and would like to see it adopted as a standalone plan. Mr. Constantine said that there is a resolution coming indicting that the bike/ped plan can be used to help guide further action by the Borough and applicants.

Ms. Hammond said that the Bike/ped plan should have come to the Board 2-3 months ago and could be incorporated into the Master Plan, but it is not an adopted document at this point and probably will not before the master plan is adopted.

Mr. Kluger said his concern is the lack of studies to support the recommendations in the bike/ped plan and to be able to say yes we want to adopt it.

Mr. Perlman said that he thinks the plan should be adopted; it is a plan just like other plans.

Ms. Hammond said that it is referenced and parts of it are being recommended in the plan.

Mr. Perlman said Debra Hartman was before the Board in August, made some comments and we have not heard anything since August. He suggested that information go back to the Borough where is this in the process.

Mr. Kluger asked under land use sections under recommendation are there anything there that would impact the size of homes. Mr. Constantine said back to the initial meeting of the Master Plan sub-committee we did say one of the things that was a goal we wanted to reach people who have not been a part of the this process before and particularly so we had a strong representation of that younger group here and demographics are clearly tipping that way, the second most millennial friendly community in New Jersey, there was a huge number of people who took the survey that are the first generation of family to live here, after working Arts in the Park and meeting millennial couple after and after millennial couple, they all moved here from Princeton, Milburn, New York etc. He said another important point in the survey was why do people want to live here and a large number of people answered access to the train even though this was not a train station community but the fact thousands of people that traverse that bridge. We asked about the mobility improvements downtown, sort of parking which is often the most important thing in a lot of communities is way down the list in Highland Park. You are attracting younger

demographic. In the eyes of your new home steads those are all very encouraging and they are pro development. The percentage of people who want to see the downtown stay the same, Woodbridge Avenue, Upper Raritan is in the single digits in every single place. You have a change voting population that at least took the survey indicating that they are looking for change. The land use element in particular certainly tries to put that vision forward.

Ms. Hammond said when you do your land use goals and recommendations, very nicely done but then we get to economic goals and recommendations a new series of goals but all of the colors are the same and suggested when you get to economic goals there be a different set of colors so there is no confusion. Mr. Thomas said if you have the goals section it's not as though those goals and colors get interwoven into other sections but that would be confusing.

Mr. Perlman recommended a land use goal, in terms of the principals and housing diversity we should mention something about mobility and mention the accessory dwelling units and perhaps the recommendation on exploring the feasibility of accessory dwelling units. Mr. Constantine said that could be added in.

Mr. Constantine said that there was a lot of discussion at the sub-committee when looking at the existing residential zoning and in fact for example in the RV 2 family zone there are very few 2 family homes a lot are RA single family zoning district and we do have 3-4 family apartments not permitted in either districts but exists in both of those districts, it is a challenging pattern but there is missing middle housing, a range of multi-unit housing type that fit the scale of single family neighborhoods, that does exist in a scattered pattern.

Ms. Hammond said that for the most part upper Raritan, Woodbridge, has a lot of the same recommendations and observations. Mr. Constantine said there are some consistent, the transitional issues if you were to re-zone Upper Raritan what happens to those single family homes but some that might be next to current C Zone commercial property.

Mr. Constantine said he had draft language to add as a land use recommendation to promote housing affordability, explore the possibility of accessory dwelling units and other types of missing middle housing many of which exist in Highland Park. Ms. Hammond asked if he has heard a lot of comments about accessory dwelling units. Mr. Constantine said that there were some comments at the public workshops; there has been some discussion in town as exploring it. He said that explore means nothing more than to explore and it is a good place to have it and they do exist we are not introducing something new and most are non-conforming. Mr. Thomas suggested putting in the definitions of those terms as well.

Mr. Constantine said the American Association of Retired Persons, their campaign is about accommodating the needs of households at different generational levels, and kids that are returning home, the boomerang generation and National Association of Home Builders just published promoting missing middle housing, its coming out of a lot of advocacy groups as well. Generally modern zoning disregards it and it is happening and a town like Highland Park for perfect example that it exists but is really hard to codify.

Mr. Williams said that on page 42 and 49 open spaces is almost a forgotten concept, he said that he will forward a more defined concept with what he would like to see. He said that part of the Meadows that people think is the Meadows is not and the Environmental Commission would like to add that on, change the zoning and add that to the Meadows. He said that he would also like

to add some specific recommendation which can be put in the appendix. He said that he would forward his recommendation; the Environmental Commission has been trying to get this changed for 20 years.

Mr. Williams said that he has a lot of cosmetic comments that do not need to be discussed here and the maps in the plan, in the actual document will that be one large page. Mr. Constantine said that this was a challenge if the assumption that most people will look at this electronically the PDF will be set in a way that you will use a full screen, the pages will adjust to that and then there will be a printable PDF which would be the two sided version like this.

Ms. Hammond said that there is land use goals and recommendations; economic goals and recommendations; circulation etc. So when Mr. Williams raised the point that there really isn't an emphasis on open space in the land use goals, then two pages later you're getting a whole lot of goals about a conservation and recreation open space, Its says "these" are major goals yet they are not actually listed as major goals. Mr. Constantine said that the land use goals closest to what Mr. Williams is concerned about is number seven enhance open spaces, and linkages, and he believes they could modify that says enhance open spaces, public gathering places & green/blue linkages.

Ms. Hammond said circulation goals are important and we are calling them out as a series of goals and what the recommendations are for implementation why is that not reflected underneath what the actual main page of the land use goals. Mr. Thomas said that was a matter of perspective your looking at as the land use goal being first and the most important and that is not necessarily the intent, not lesser or greater.

Ms. Hammond said that under circulation recommendations whether there is a certain amount of redundancy and would like to collapse some of that.

Ms. Hammond opened the meeting to the public.

Alvin Chin, South 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue said in reference to open space on page 49 there is a recommendation to prepare the comprehensive open space plan, he assumes that is the open space and recreation plan, and was curious why that also does not mention an open space trust fund which he understands is a prerequisite to received State open spaces funds. Mr. Constantine said that it could be a part of the plan. Mr. Williams said that there is very little open space left and there have been a number of properties where the Borough has talked with the County who do have money and they were just not interested because they are such small packages. He is not sure that the Borough has enough open space or possible purchase of open space that a trust fund would be warranted, he believes that the Borough could handle the cost to pick up properties. Mr. Chin said on a scale of an individual parcel for a pocket park. Mr. Williams said yes, if you look at the maps there just isn't a lot of spots, the largest space that the Borough has is 18 acres, the Meadows, and maybe another 4 acres that the Borough owns that is currently zoned residential which should become open space.

Donna Casabonne, 130 Raritan Avenue, said that the first workshop in September was the first time she knew her property was even going to be considered a part of the revitalization. She has seen the building across the street already going up, and didn't know what kind of timeline we were looking at for 130-134 Raritan to be raised and then rebuilt. Her and her husband are concerned because they have lived there nine years and the first time they are hearing it is two

months ago. Ms. Hammond asked if she lived in 130-134 Raritan. Ms. Casabonne said 134 Raritan is abandoned basically, no one resides there, and they have been residing at 130 Raritan Avenue for almost nine years. Ms. Hammond said won't they have been noticed as part of the 200' noticing requirement. Mr. Constantine said no they are renters and the notice would have gone to the property owner. 130-134 Raritan Avenue are owned by the same property owner and is located across from Popov, there was a neighborhood meeting about two months ago here. Ms. Casabonne said that the owner never informed them. Mr. Constantine said that the property has been in the redevelopment plan since 2003 and there was a prior approval, they have not filed their site plan and they are exploring different strategies for off-site parking, there were some recommendations from the Park Place neighborhood that they are exploring. Mr. Casabonne said that they are not saying that they are opposed it, but would just like to know and need to know when they will need to vacate in order for anything to be implemented. Mr. Millet asked if the Borough had any responsibility to notify residents in addition to property owners. Mr. Thomas said that the Borough has a legal responsibility under circumstances under either the Municipal Land Use Law or the Redevelopment Law. He said that he would not be recommending that you expand that. At what point do you say, well we are going to stop because we decided to do it for you but didn't decide to do it for Steve and now you end having the question of have created expectations that can no longer fulfill, and he would like to think that the Borough Attorney would have that same concern. While he understands and sympathizes with this young ladies position the problem is not with the Borough but with her landlord. He said that he does not recommend going beyond your legal obligations for those reasons.

Mr. Perlman asked if there was a formal redevelopment plan for 130-134 Raritan. Mr. Constantine replied no. Mr. Perlman said that there could be a clause regarding a relocation plan. Mr. Constantine said there could.

Ms. Casabonne said that she spoke to Mayor Gayle and Borough Administrator at the workshops about it, because she found out that night that this was happening. Mr. Constantine said that they do intend on redeveloping the property but they are trying to figure out a parking strategy. Ms. Casabonne said that she just does not want to wake up one morning with a wrecking ball sitting outside. Mr. Thomas said it one thing to apply the landlord tenant law for nonpayment of rent, there would be notice provided under that, but not being a landlord/tenant Attorney he is not sure what the noticing requirements are. He said that there is some awareness it would be in hers and her husband's best interest to try to keep abreast of what is going on and monitor through the Borough Administrator.

Erin Kelley, South 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, said that she would like to re-emphasize the point that was made about housing diversity and affordability, she came to Highland Park about 8-9 years ago precisely because it was an affordable place as a graduate student to live and be able to commute to work and planned on settling down here, not that she works at Rutgers full-time and if we want to continue to make this community a place that is attractive to millennials and the elderly who want to age in place the missing middle and housing affordability really needs to be addressed. She said that was one of the things that initially drew her to Highland Park having grown up in a suburban neighbor very unlike this one, very car dependent, very spread out, smaller lot sizes, the sidewalks, the availability of commercial properties where she could do her shopping but sees increasingly people her age and younger are moving away to New York City, Jersey City because those places offer the kind of community that they seek and they are willing to undergo that long commute to Rutgers because they no longer have that sense of community

where they can afford to live here in Highland Park. Mr. Nolan asked if it was her experience that the draw to Jersey City is it because of the price issue or because of the level that Jersey City is a better price point then here in Highland Park. Ms. Kelley said it is comparable to the level of community where they find where they have bars, restaurants that they can access and there is a large number of the Rutgers population that she know who now live there whereas before they lived here.

Eric Broncowski, 66 Cedar Lane, said that he seen on the zoning map, page 62, there portion he believes in owned by Rutgers but it might be owned by Kaplan, it is zoned single family residential and asked what the zoning would entail for that parcel. Mr. Nolan said that was owned by Rutgers so the zoning does not matter.

David Copperman, Hill Street, said the adoption of the bicycle and pedestrian plan which he thinks it was stated that it will be adopted. He said that he attended a presentation of the bicycle/pedestrian plan a few months ago, he thought there were a lot of good ideas but there was no data. Ms. Hammond said that this Board has not spent any time on that and have not asked for any supplemental study or data to decide whether we would feel confident making the recommendation on the entire plan as proposed. Mr. Copperman said that it felt more like feel good stuff then we would do it because we are green and was not realistic without knowing if anyone was going to use it. Ms. Hammond said at this point it has not come to the Board for that kind of recommendation.

Mr. Constantine indicated that one of the things that could be done without discounting the plan a pop-up approach, the Borough Council could say for a two week period allow one way on these streets, cover up some of the other signs, monitor it. It is really difficult to gage when it is not out there and he thinks that the soft testing that could be done quickly and economically and get the feedback from the people. Mr. Nolan said they did that on Walter Street and he still uses it and it was very successful. Mr. Constantine said that improvement is coming as part of the plan.

Jessica Sweet, 116 Benner Street, said that it was important to get the bicyclist off the sidewalks, she is a runner and a pedestrian and it is so dangerous and she thinks if there were dedicated bike lanes it makes the sidewalks safer and better for everyone else. She thinks the idea of more one way streets perhaps, Magnolia and Benner. She said that they have talked about it in her household and they really like the idea because those streets are not wide enough and there is a pattern already where people park in a certain direction on each of those streets and overall can promote that kind of clever street planning to promote some of the other goals relating to walkability and outdoor recreation. She said on page 49, the pocket parks which she thought was really cool and perhaps it would interesting to talk about a diversity of pocket parks, not to have just one merry-go-round maybe have one that is a skate park, sprinkler park, dog park, a community garden to maximize those little pockets. She asked about historic preservation recommendations on page 51, evaluate designation of River Road as a critical environmental historic site and clarify what that means and what that does. Mr. Constantine said that was a holdover from the 2003 plan and actually there was some conversation at the sub-committee whether that was still valid. Ms. Hammond said that we should check with the County because along the bank of the Raritan it is like a historic, ecological importance to it and Middlesex County has done digs there and maybe there is a way to be informed through the County. Mr. Williams said along the river bank it used to be marshes 200 years ago and in the river bank you can find all sorts of bottles and bricks and in that sense it is historic not sure it needs

investigation as much as it was in Piscataway. Mr. Nolan said sitting here today he doesn't think anyone knows what we would be evaluating, it's a County roadway. The river front has been an environmental space and open space so that is sort of set.

Ms. Sweet said with regards to investigate this potential historic site on a case by case basis and suggested designating historic sites in the master plan element at some point or form a sub-committee so that they are specifically designated. She said that there are a number of historic sites in town including a historic district but thinks it would be worthwhile to at least designate them specifically so the property owners are aware. Ms. Hammond indicated that there is something that speaks to that later in the document but would make a note about that.

Jamie, South First Avenue, said she has lived in Highland Park for about 12 years and is a part of the transient millennial community and wanted to reiterate at this point that the millennials are in their twenties and mid to late thirties at this point and invited them to look back on what they were doing with your lives and planning your lives and housing at that point and maybe a slightly older generation than us, we by in large are living very contingent lives, living with people who are not family members, we are sharing our spaces because we cannot do it our own, they are looking to place like Jersey City. Every time she hears millennial she hears it in the context of commerce, and retail space and investment, developers coming in and building entertainments and what we want, speaking broadly, is affordable housing there is no rent control in town and every year when her rents goes up she questions if it is time for her to leave even though there is a robust community here. We are concerned with a diversity of housing not just different types of housing, accessibility of that housing, we want to make sure members are not fearful of being here and are not discriminated against; landlords need to be held accountable if they are not informing us of the things that they are supposed to be informing us of. More and More developers are large companies with legal staff and that makes it very challenging even when the law is in our favor to be able to do anything about it. She pointed out they are not talking about just one kind of housing she is a bit dismayed that a glossary is needed for some of the terms that were used tonight, this Board deals with this topic and she thinks that perhaps a bit more local education needs to be done to make sure we are all talking about housing in the new and evolving ways that is taking place currently. Ms. Hand said that she does not want her to think that this Board has left the millennial generation out in the cold, as a multi-generational, Highland Park millennial home steader herself, in reference to some of the other discussions we had with some of the other development applications that they have seen over the last few months especially about Walter Avenue because we had a prior Board member who moved out of state, and our new board member we would qualify as the millennial representation along this end of the Board, so when we say millennial it is not a mocking of the generation or the term, it is actually a throwback to prior conversations that they have had about shifting attitudes towards what is needed in the housing stock for apartments, single and two bedroom units and shifts in parking needs and encouraging people to move here who don't need excessive parking spaces or one car family lifestyle. It is not meant towards a mock towards you or a millennials. There has an equivalence with variance and housing stock with affordability, but some of the developments that are building in town, or will be building in town are not affordable for the most part in the way we are speaking about. She does not think necessarily the diversity of housing stock equals affordability of housing stock when talking about what is going on in our developments here in town but one of the points that are coming up is a lot of the older housing stock that might be affordable are being demolished in favor of rebuilds of larger homes on those same spots. You have to balance increase the desirability of living here, and preserving the affordability of the housing it is very difficult balance to maintain, the better you make the town to live in the more



expensive it is going to be to live because it is only 1.9 sq. miles there is only so many people we can pack in. We want young families to live here and grow so the next generation of young families will live here and grow. Ms. Hammond said that we also want the families with three generations to not move out; it is not necessarily have control over. The goal of including that type of language and the goal was actually to bring witness to the idea that if all we get are these new developments we are not going to be the town we want to be and that we do have to think about this type of changing to our land use to allow for two family houses, etc. and having more housing in town also helps to balance the affordability.

Alvin Chin, South 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue said as long as we are talking about diversity, one of things that come to mind is some of us live in apartments that are converted but were formally single family homes or two family homes that were converted and conversions of spaces that were not originally habitable into separate living spaces. When talking about diversity he does not mean just new construction he talking about conversation making it easier for an empty nester someone who has lived in Highland Park for 2 or 3 generations and maybe does not have as much family in town to be able to modify his dwelling into something that could accommodate a tenant thus allowing that person to age in place and also making more room for people who are young don't have that much requirement for living space. That is what we are asking for and wanted to ensure that is what is being heard. Not only protecting the missing middle and the 2-3 unit buildings in these single family zones but also allowing or modifying the process to make it easier to create more of this type of housing. He said that they are not talking about tearing down a building, we are talking about the same living space can be used for two dwelling units instead of one.

Mr. Constantine indicated that they would add in promote housing affordability, explore the possibility of accessory dwelling units and other missing middle housing many of which exist in Highland Park presently and we will define missing middle housing.

Mr. Nolan said that on page 56 there is a discrepancy in the number of students the chart seems to suggest that the percentage students enrolled in private school has gone down substantially between 2009-2017 but the text says Highland Park public schools kids has decreased.

Ms. Hammond said that they would now work on the Land Use Element which we talk about the different corridors which we have touched on, and then we get into specifically some land use recommendations. There are general land use recommendations and the appendix speaks very specifically to some design standard formulas.

Mr. Nolan said the design standard was long coming and welcomed it, and asked about the driveway and asked if these guidelines prevent someone from putting parking across the entire front. Mr. Constantine said yes there are provision on driveways and location. Mr. Nolan asked if thought was given to exterior material and whether we want to say there is a preference for natural materials. Mr. Constantine said that in the State of New Jersey you don't have site plan on single family and two family homes, these design standards push the envelope on what would be zoning regarding the building envelope, the driveway is something that is sitting on the building envelope that we are treating and can be regulated by setbacks, unless you are in an historic district. Mr. Thomas said that he agreed and indicated that the Board did not have unlimited power.

Mr. Millet said that the one thing about regulating materials then tend to push up the price scale. Mr. Thomas said that is why you have a lot push back when a municipality wants to do a historic district because it limits the abilities of people think they want to do with a house and pushes up costs.

Ms. Hammond said that there seems to be a paramount of overlap when talking about Upper Raritan or Woodbridge and thinks a lot of the stuff is obviously in terms of what the issues are, and what the wish would be if could start to make improvements. The one thing that doesn't seem to be called out specifically on a couple of the strategies or actual street trees, it talks about in fill and the gateway, the style of housing. Mr. Constantine said something could be added about street trees and streetscape.

Ms. Hammond said that some of the comments received at the two public meetings the idea for the River Road corridor that there is a part of Highland Park that you have risk your life to walk or ride your bike to because it's up Cedar Lane or the new Pulte homes and that we have is this tight little railroad area without a sidewalk or you have to go through the park and it is problematic. Provide a safer path for pedestrians under the railroad trusses and it is the same weight as everything else and would like to highlight it or figure out a way to give that a little weight or more recommendations.

Mr. Constantine said that he wanted to note that a number of the sketches that are in this documents, there are shade trees shown, and streetscape improvements.

Ms. Hammond said the section where it states recalibration of bulk requirements and what the standards setbacks are, there is a real helpful graph where you show but was wondering what informed these formulas. Mr. Constantine said that the majority of the neighborhoods are zoned RA single family, 50' wide by 100' deep lot, but the types of lots vary, some sections they are twice that size and then there are places where the lots are 30' or 35' wide those are non-conforming and the challenge is because the pattern is so varied re-zoning is very difficult so we identified, and this is not the final say, perhaps we need to calibrate some of the setbacks to match what exists in this varied pattern. This is a way to try and add some lens, we have a whole grouping of lots and that's why they did the analysis that are in that 35' wide category they need different setback standards. Ms. Hammond asked if these guidelines based on zoning in other places were you have this type of irregularity. Mr. Constantine said this came from some of the on the ground conditions, it was not a thorough analysis but a snap shot look at what is out there. Also seeing some of the applications that came through zoning board or relief and also looking at what we practice in other communities. In most places and many communities that have these small lots they were zoned into non-conformity decades ago, he noticed this when he was doing the Master Plan in Doylestown 25 years ago, and Princeton has the same issues. He said that you could leave these non-conforming and this goes to housing affordability because 35' wide lot that doesn't have lot area, lot width, setbacks are all in violation and they can't come in for any improvements because they will need variances tend to be at the most affordable price points in the community because of the non-conformities we are trying to suggest bringing those lots into conformity allowing those homeowners to make reasonable improvements and adjustments in the character of the community. The Zoning Board is asking and the governing body in their annual report because they are getting these is as classic hardships, a lot of folks when you tell them they need a variances they abandon their projects, the cost and time is too much for them. He said that Chris Cosenza did his best of creating a snap shot educating people at the two workshops, and felt there was broad community support once people who understood. It is

going to need further discussion, it is similar to some of the recommendations in the bike/ped plan, and we are not saying we figured it out, but what we do know is that you have an incredibly difficult situation because of the variation of all these conditions.

Ms. Hammond said the idea of this section is that at some future point we would go through, have this conversation, refine these and then request the Council codify this. Mr. Constantine said that was correct.

Ms. Hammond opened the floor to the public.

Jessica Sweet, 116 Benner Street said that the real reason she was in attendance is when she saw the recalibration of the bulk requirements and these proposed standards she thought Mr. Constantine has out done himself, this is very progressive and she is the owner of one of those 35' wide homes on Benner Street across from an apartment, next to a lot of historic houses and also new construction and we have a lot of these issue and this is a fantastic idea. One of things as a land use professional is that Highland Park has a reputation of being very hard to develop in, so in the develop community, this has hurt Highland Park in terms of our redevelopment efforts in downtown and it keeps development out. The idea of taking the process and making it more simple and easier to understand and also taking the burden off the backs of homeowners because a majority are non-conforming to make them go through this ridiculous variance process its \$5,000 , just to get a side yard setback. She believes in a Master Plan the more specific the requirements and more through the planning process is at this level the easier it is for the governing body to look at and say we have consulted with the best planners in this State, Planning Board has looked at this and made recommendation, you have had this community vetting process so she thinks it really will spur community reinvestment. It is fantastic work and would urge the Board not to make any changes.

Mr. Constantine said that in the re-exam they did indicate that they have been in a couple year process stream lining the redevelopment review and application processes. The vision for redevelopment, the sketches that we have provided, there is selective in fill redevelopment sketched in, there is activity already happening he met at the site that has been assembled on Upper Raritan that is waiting to do exactly the vision in the Master Plan. Property owners and developers that want to start to implement this.

Mr. Kluger said in regards to the comment about Highland Park's reputation. If there are other examples of why developers or attorneys may feel like we are difficult to get through we are open to hear them. If there are areas that other attorneys or developers like that there are other processes that are getting in the way, we want to hear about it.

There being no one further, Ms. Hammond closed the public portion of the meeting.

Ms. Hammond said that we covered a lot and asked if there were any other questions or comments from the Board. There were none.

**Correspondence and reports.**

Zoning/Building Officer report – Scott - None

Rehabilitation Screening Committee report – Kim - None

Mt. Laurel status update - Roger/Jim - None

Fair Share Housing Obligation report - Jim/chair of FSHO committee - None  
Master Plan Prep report - None

**Action on any other business and work session. - None**

**Adjournment**

There was a motion to adjourn from KLUGER with a second by WELKOVITS and at 9:46 PM, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Santiago, Board Clerk