

**BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK  
MAYOR & COUNCIL REDEVELOPMENT MEETING**

221 South Fifth Ave.  
Highland Park, NJ  
April 13, 2021 at 7:00 PM

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Regular Meeting of the Highland Park Redevelopment Entity was called to order in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act by Mayor Brill Mittler at 7:00 PM. Mayor Brill Mittler indicated that this meeting is called to order in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice of this meeting was sent to the Home News Tribune, The Star Ledger and the Highland Park Planet on March 15, 2021, and was posted on the Borough website at [www.hpboro.com](http://www.hpboro.com) and on the bulletin board of the Borough Hall, 221 So. Fifth Avenue, Highland Park, NJ on March 15, 2021, and has remained continuously posted as required by law. Mayor Brill Mittler indicated the Borough was using the telephone-meeting format in an effort to mitigate the chance of exposure to COVID-19, as part of the Borough's on-going effort to slow the rate of transmission and avoid overwhelming the treatment centers. The public was invited to attend to participate by way of a call-in number and password: 1-929-205-6099, ID: 977 7760 3560 or <https://zoom.us/j/97777603530>.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Mayor Gayle Brill Mittler, Council Members, Canavera, George, Hale, Hersh and Kim-Chohan  
Absent: Councilwoman Foster  
Professionals: Special Counsel Joseph Baumann, Borough Administrator Teri Jover, Planners Jim Constantine and Chris Cosenza, Deputy Clerk Jennifer Santiago

**Minutes:**

January 26, 2021 Regular Meeting

It was MOVED by HALE and seconded by CANAVERA that the minutes of January 26, 2021 regular minutes be approved.

ROLL CALL: Ayes – Canavera, George, Hale, Hersh, Kim-Chohan  
Nays – None  
Absent – Foster

There being (5) ayes, and no nays, the minutes were approved.

**Discussion Items:**

Draft Downtown Redevelopment Plan

Mayor Brill Mittler indicated that tonight they are taking the next step in protecting the future of Highland Park, for our children and grandchildren. Since 2003, we have been talking about developing the downtown and it is critical that we move in this direction. High taxes in Highland Park are forcing residents, many seniors, to move out of town. Downtown development will help to stabilize the taxes. Highland Park is an interesting town and what we need to do with the redevelopment is showcase all of our advantages. She thanked the Planners, and Councilman Hale and the Borough Administrator/Redevelopment Director Teri Jover for all the work they have put into this very exciting plan. She said that all the surrounding towns have moved forward and now it is our time to save our community and move forward with a downtown that reflects our values, diversity, public art and our future.

Councilman Hale said that tonight is really about a presentation from our professionals and thanked the Planners, Mr. Baumann and Ms. Jover for their tireless work on putting this together. It is not an easy thing to do to take the opinions of Council Members, public, and legal, put it all together in a single document, and incorporate all ideas received into this document. Tonight we will hear a presentation about the redevelopment plan, after that, we will refer to the Planning Board, and they will have their options for review. Ms. Jover will go over the various options for public input in detail. He indicated that their job tonight was to refer this to the Planning Board for their detailed master plan review and hoped that the public recognizes many of the changes that have been made as a result of public comment and public input. You will see in this document that we've designed it as flexible as possible, there is centralized parking concept that we will explore but there are options for non-centralized parking, there are four separate tracks that can move ahead independently of each other, there is discussion in here of ways of creating a public space and input received from the public has been incorporated into this documents in many ways. He said that he will not promise that everything that everyone has asked for is in this document but we have done our very best to try to put forth a document that represents many of the things that we have been hearing. Through the redevelopment process, is how Highland Park gets the development that we want. This is the way we get to have as much control over this process as we want as a community. For the first time in Highland Park, we are owners of some of the redevelopment property that will certainly help our ability to shape and direct where we are going. This is a plan that makes sure that the interests of the community are front and center; we need to bring more people to downtown. Tonight you are going to see a picture frame of that; we have spent several months with the community developing a picture frame that we are still painting and hope that the public is going to be apart of that process. He said that this is a great opportunity for Highland Park, for us to turn the corner as a community.

Ms. Jover, Borough Administrator said that she has received questions regarding the process moving forward, she presented a slide that will be available on the Boroughs website. We have been receiving comments via email and people can send them to her email at [tjover@hpboro.com](mailto:tjover@hpboro.com) and those are shared with the team, including the Mayor and Council and asked that people continue to do that. Tonight there is a resolution for consideration to refer this draft plan over to the Planning Board for their review for consistency with the master plan at their May 13 meeting, it is also an opportunity for the Planning Board to give other comments as they see fit to the Council prior to introduction. . It is also an opportunity for the Planning Board to give comment on the plan as well. On April 14 the plan will go to the Planning Board members and it will also be posted on our website at [www.hpboro.com](http://www.hpboro.com) and a hard copy will be available as well. This will be an open public meeting and the public will be able to provide comment at that point as well. We are tracking towards a June 1 introduction however, we need to see what the Planning Board comments are and we need to see if it is consistent with the Master Plan and depending on what we get, back there may be adjustments needed. If we can introduce the Ordinance on June 1, there will be opportunity for public comment; on June 15, it would be scheduled for public hearing, scheduled for a second vote and again opportunity for public comments prior to the vote. There will be opportunities throughout both those meeting. If significant comments are received between now and introduction we may reevaluate the timeline but will keep you posted. Please feel free to contact me with comments that you want me to hear or questions or something you would like shared with the Mayor and Council or you can reach out to them directly their information is on the website.

Joseph Baumann, Esq. said that he has been doing this for 25+ years and there are couple of things that are striking about this process, cannot recollect a more inclusive robust public participation process then what is being undertaken in Highland Park. We are nine months into

this process, beginning with the various presentations, the pictures, the explanations of meetings you are clearly one of the most inclusive community participants, encouraging community participation. This is a really well crafted robust 80 page redevelopment plan, it does speak to how careful and thoughtful the Planner's were with the Mayor and Council's input in terms of trying to craft a redevelopment plan that addresses multiple areas, contemplates individual project or more than one happening at different times creates enough flexibility in that the market place can respond creatively and give us some sort of choices about what might happen but sets the frame within which they can paint their picture and give us thoughts about how the picture could look. This has been an incredible process and most recently, when we decided what was the best way to roll out the plan to the public, we could introduce the ordinance with the plan tonight, which is the most common way. You introduce the ordinance and also adopt the resolution, send it to the Planning Board at the same time, assuming the Planning Board comments are not significant, you can then immediately adopt the plan, but the Mayor and Council concluded that they did not want to presume that the comments would be so easily incorporated that we wouldn't have to introduce a new ordinance. Instead, we took the road slightly less traveled by sending this to the Planning Board prior to introduction. Then we will look to get comments back from the Planning Board and then we will introduce, so we added this additional step, which is contemplated under the statute but not as common. We have done that to give the public plenty of time to respond to the plan, a month is a generous amount of time. If it gets to a point where we think there are significant changes, maybe then it does not get introduced right away. Every step of the way has been an effort to try to engage the public, get comments and as described we certainly have not incorporated everyone's comments. There is a vision in this plan shown in pictures, in text and then it is shown in section five, and directed everyone to section five, bulk standards. Another thing that Teri Jover alluded to that is important to focus on is section seven of the plan, which lays out the process. Once the plan is adopted we take it to the next step and that's what stands out in redevelopment versus municipal land use law because that section requires a redevelopment agreement, between the Borough and the developer for each parcel that's being developed and allows us to get in much greater detail in terms of commencement date, completion date, details about design standards, so much more detail that is not available under the municipal land use law. Then that project will go through the standard municipal land use process, which is the Planning Board for their input so there is a lot of work to be done between now and then. We have done a lot in terms of community input and now we are really getting into the legislative process. There will be many opportunities for input from the public. As the public is reviewing this plan look at the history, it has been 16 years since Highland Park attempted a redevelopment plan to try to jump start redeveloping and that plan did not really produce significant development, which included a significant growth period in the economy. Through this process to try and craft a plan that will achieve our goals but also will be enticing to the development community and taking control of some of the land ourselves is part of that process and we can actually make the now 2021 plan much more effective than perhaps our 2005. We wanted to put together a plan that captures the vision of the community but also the vision of the development community because their vision their creativity without our picture frame is going to make each one of these individually or collectively projects that we could be proud of. He indicated that Jim Constantine would be walking us through this, and a lot will sound familiar to the public because it is what we have been talking about for some time, some was changed because we heard some of their comments and some did not change because after hearing the comments we concluded that it was still the best way to go. We are hoping to end up with a vision and a plan and frame that is going to produce competition among the development community to do projects that we can all be proud of.

Jim Constantine, Planner presented the draft downtown redevelopment plan. There is a lot detail in this plan, and did not think it was fair to dive into that until the everyone has a chance to review it and will get into more detail at the Planning Board meeting in May. There are four tracts involved, Tract A is the gateway redevelopment area, Tract B is 130-134 Raritan Avenue, Tract C is the Borough owned property and Tract D is a combination of North 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue right of way and properties that flank and the largest site and the one we have also looked at as an opportunity for a centralized parking facility. The purpose of this plan is to take a more focused approach and to jump-start the long-held goal of redevelopment to add value to the downtown and having a thriving downtown is the top goal in the Master Plan and this effort builds upon the Master Plan. A couple of things learned in the Master Plan process, with almost 600 participants who took an online survey, a couple of hundred attend the community workshops, and people were asked in the online survey if downtown should stay the same and offered a host of potential changes, and one of the most important statistics that came out of that survey is that nine percent of the community said downtown should remain the same. Some of the elements that are in this plan come right out of that community participation, creation of the town square public space was a hugely popular community endorsed feature. The community also indicated when asked to comment about downtown, address vacant properties and empty storefronts, high turnover in businesses that make the streetscape unpleasant and a sense of neglect. They particularly said that this area from South First up through South Second where we have both Tract A on the left and Tract B on the right was one of the areas that needed that special attention. Tract A is on the left the Gateway site, includes Rutgers Gun and Boat, Classic Cleaners, the vacant parking lots all the way down Bergen Auto owned by the Borough. The vision here is to create a Gateway that enhances the sense of arrival coming into the downtown, some selective additional height terracing back so that the height is not all the way at the street to try to achieve some additional density and incentivize redevelopment. There is potential for mixed use development with urban loft style housing above, including affordable housing, on the ground floor the trick is to try to limit how much additional retail space we create but also expanding the uses and that could include fitness centers, business incubators, creative maker space or perhaps an alternate use that that we have not seen like a boutique hotel that could fit into these blocks and into the scale of development. Zoning has not been changed to allow taller height everywhere; it is selective height in these locations. Another critical aspect about bringing people to live right on the Avenue is it expands the downtown customer base. Tract B completes that bookend set of gateways effect coming into the downtown and everything stated about Tract A also pertains to Tract B. A couple of changes that were made in response to community input is that there would be no parking coming through the neighborhood accessing the rear of the site at Tract B, however we also opened up the ability for potential parking on the left side view on Tract A on the Gateway site where there is a change of grade down to Denison Street. We are allowing developers (see what the market assesses) the potential for parking at the ground level on those buildings in response to community input. Additionally if everyone is living here and parking is 2 blocks away, we have added the ability of some limited on-site parking, which can include a reserve space on Raritan Avenue, which would be available there to accommodate daily needs of residents at these locations. Tract C is Borough owned and the design concept was to create a focal point that terminates the vista, buildings terrace back from the street, frame a small public plaza at the street that would lead to an interior mid-block courtyard that would connect all the way back to Magnolia Street. Community feedback was incorporated into the standards trying to protect the privacy and a little greater setback and potential for convenience parking both on street and in some combination with shared parking. Tract D at the corner of Third Avenue, this location envisions creating a public space combined with a landmark building as well as a centralized parking facility (behind Provident Bank) with a Farmers Market, a landmark building that anchors the corner. There is very few spaces properties or assemblages of properties

downtown that can accommodate the dimensions that are required to have cost-effective structured parking. The parking facility would not be exposed as the existing parking lot, it would be shielded and screened by a liner building in brick that tries to reflect and mimic a little bit of what is at the opposite corner, with the office building and that shields the garage from direct view from the neighborhood. The garage would have a liner space on the ground floor where it would front onto the North Third Avenue with lots of creative opportunities, potential for arts, arts programming for both performances and exhibits. The whole idea of parking at a centralized location we need to improve the first mile last mile connectivity to New Brunswick, Rutgers to the train station across the River not only pedestrian and bicycle improvements but also looking at jitney rideshare bus. This site also includes scale down and on the avenue where we are allowing some selective additional height and density, we have actually scaled that down to hold the match Denison Street in the neighborhood. Also included in the plan, based on community input, that is the centralized parking is not built on tract d that the Borough will have the flexibility to adjust the density development programming on one or more of the tracts, an alternate location or may have redevelopment that doesn't involve a multi-level parking structure. The Master Plan was used as a guide to really help to implement the Master Plan concepts, the Master Plan was finished in December 2019 and we were not able to foresee what we were going to face in 2020 with a global pandemic and we are now facing the reality of that which is things have changed quite dramatically for most communities. In the Wall Street Journal Richard Florida used to teach at Rutgers, and co-author of How Remote Work is Reshaping American's Urban Geography and the big take away was that this remote work is here to stay and changing the geography of communities, creating opportunities now that the workplace can work remote, and communities are looking for a complete live work communities. Highland Park is well positioned in this Master Plan allows us to explore some ways to take advantage of the challenges that we face.

Mayor Brill Mittler asked Mr. Baumann to explain how the garage would be funded. Mr. Baumann said that is still to be determined but the various opportunities for funding include the proceeds from the sale of some of our property to redevelopers and to be considered in negotiations financial cash contributions from redevelopment, there is the opportunity for long-term commitments to use the parking garage which is a guaranteed revenue. There are payments in lieu of taxes that could be negotiated and dedicated to the garage. There is infrastructure coming down the pike, we are tracking federal infrastructure bills and clearly there is going to be a lot of money made available to state and local entities including in the transportation area and may be grants in there as well. We have a Bond Ordinance that we could perhaps use some of it so there are many different opportunities to fund the garage. The cash contributions to the extent that we are going to allow density in some of these locations, we are going to look for a community benefit and that could be a contribution to the garage.

Councilman Hale said that part of the frame work for developing a centralizing parking area is that we would do all we can to make sure that the new apartment buildings are the ones that are contributing to that in a significant way.

Ms. Santiago indicated page 2 of the Resolution should read Block 22, Lots 4, 32.02 and 33.01.

**Resolutions:**

**Resolution 2021-01**

Resolution of the Municipal Council of the Borough of Highland Park, in the County of Middlesex, New Jersey Referring the Downtown Redevelopment Plan for Tracts A-D to the Highland Park Planning Board

It was MOVED by HALE and seconded by HERSH that Resolution 2021-01 with corrections be approved.

ROLL CALL: Ayes – Canavera, George, Hale, Hersh, Kim-Chohan  
Nays – None  
Absent – Foster

There being (5) ayes, and no nays, Resolution 2021-01 was approved.

### **Public Comment**

Mayor Brill Mittler opened the floor to the public. Ms. Jover indicated that there were 77 attendees.

Peter Spool, 146 Graham Street, said that he wished Mr. Constantine had indicated which parts of the plan were changed, because it is not clear and would have been nice to see since you talked about an alternative that did not include the parking deck and what that track would be used for instead, where would on-site parking in the other tracks. He indicated that would be something that should be included for completeness and asked that he elaborate on that. Ms. Jover said that the plan would be available on the website tomorrow and it is being referred to the Planning Board, Mr. Constantine did highlight where we made some changes but we did not draw pictures of all the alternatives that are built into the plan, she feels after reading the plan that will hopefully illuminate some of that. Mr. Baumann said that there is an unlimited number of possibilities we actually debated whether to put illustrations at all because of this exact conversation. Within the confines of the bulk standards in section five, as imaginative as you could be there is that many different pictures we could draw. In reference to articulating the differences, the differences are based upon the conversations we have been having amongst the public and the governing body, there was never a written document so it would be impossible for Mr. Constantine to show you a black line for example showing the old plan to the new plan there is no old plan, this is the plan that's been developed through dialogue. Mr. Spool said that he wished this had been released before the meeting so people would have a chance to look at it, it might have avoided some questions. Mr. Hale indicated that this was not a development plan, the buildings that are seen in the plan are not necessarily the buildings that will appear, this is a frame of a plan that will allow the development community to react within the bulk standards with the framework, we will then as a community have the opportunity to review those plans and approve or not approve those plans.

Dan Stern Cardinale, Harper Street said he thinks the framework looks good, the approach for that downtown corridor is appropriate, the density, which is often kind of a scare word, is an affirmative good. There is a lot of research on this that denser communities are more walkable they are more sustainable both ecologically and economically, they are healthier because have less of a dependence on cars. You typically have smaller dwellings for each family, lower per capita greenhouse gas emissions that is obviously really important. There has been a lot of research on denser communities people are actually happier people facilitating just like a happier place to live. For anyone hesitant about this kind of proposal is to visit a place that has a vibrant main street in a suburban community, Summit or Cranford that is pretty close and if you look at these places you have these vibrant maybe only 3 blocks but it will be exactly the kind of thing that's being proposed here with first floor businesses, residents above that for maybe three to five stories but one or two blocks off of these main streets it look just like any street in Highland Park off of Route 27. We are not turning Highland Park into a City, it is not, we want is to have a

strip where it is denser and it has a mixed use while keeping the rest of the town as it is. Mr. Baumann said that he worked on the Cranford redevelopment 20+ years ago, and went through multiple lawsuits contaminated property, it was a parking lot owned by the municipality that we put into the marketplace, went through three developers and cannot tell you how many community pushback and how people felt so strongly that this was going to be a mistake, flash forward 20 years later and at the time it was the people in the north of Cranford did not want it, it ended up in the South of Cranford and flash forward to today South Cranford, south of the railroad tracks is probably the most vibrant section of the town now. It took 20 years but it was that parking garage and that Cranford crossing project that ultimately jumped about the entire project.

David Hughes, South 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, asked who would own the parking structure and who would own the land below it. He agreed with Dan Stern Cardinale, thinks he put things brilliantly, and wanted to make sure that things are moving in fact in the direction towards pedestrian walking oriented development. He had spoken a couple times about mid-block crosswalks and how the people who move into this place and use care less frequently than the average Highland Park resident will want to move around this downtown. He indicated that mid-block crosswalks were critical and recommended mid-block crosswalks between Second and Third Avenues and between First and Second Avenues. We could put in pedestrian operated signals that turn yellow as soon as the pedestrian presses it. He said that the critical thing Joseph Baumann mentioned about parking, you seem to say we are moving away from the centralized parking deck on North Third or coming up with a compromise that would involve some ground level parking in the development on Raritan Avenue and hopes that does not involve creating curb cuts because that would be damaging to the downtown. He said that he would oppose any plan to create new curb cuts no matter how good. He is uneasy about people in this development parking on Raritan Avenue; pedestrian oriented people would be attracted to a bus lane, dedicated bus/bike lane on Raritan Avenue in both directions. The jitney that you spoke about can actually get quickly to the train station. Remove all the parking on Raritan Avenue and replace it with dedicated bus and bike paths. He said he wonders how serious the Borough is about pedestrian-oriented development. We need to think beyond the footprint of this development itself, about the whole transportation corridor. Mayor Brill Mittler said she loved the idea of mid-block crosswalks and will need to work with the NJDOT on that. Mr. Baumann indicated that ownership of the garage is to be determined, as part of the negotiations, making sure it is cost effective and there is a lot of creativity under the redevelopment law and how we can structure that.

Mayor Brill Mittler asked where the parking garage is being considered, it is a big ugly lot with trucks parking there and there's been no enhancement of that property for decades, if a parking garage were put there and there were improvements to that property would that be beneficial in terms of taxes for our residents. Mr. Baumann said a privately owned parking garage is a ratable.

Mr. Baumann said to answer another questions that was asked, the plan is flexible enough, the goal is to have a central parking garage and that is the best choice and where we all think this makes sense but that parking garage is currently slated to be on private property and that will require cooperation with the property owner and so we did not want all of our projects to be captured by the desire for a central parking garage so we built into the plan the possibility of parking individual tracks on the individual tracks. That possibility could come with curb cuts, which we do not want, and everyone is universal on the concerns. We are going to try to make the centralized parking work, we do not want to be captured to that solution for all sorts of reasons including negotiations but we also want to avoid the curb cuts and have a walkable

community at the same time. There is many things we are going to try to pull together. This plan will give us the flexibility to any and all of those things.

Randall Solomon, 331 Felton Avenue, said he really liked the plan and the direction that it is headed; he is excited and hopeful that it happens. He reviewed some of the history of how we got here because he thinks it will be helpful for people that are trying to evaluate the plan and especially why we need a parking deck. The previous plan dates back more than 10 years ago and went through a very extensive public process to develop a redevelopment plan for the town, we talked about wanting a better downtown, fewer store vacancies, more vibrancy, more shopping opportunities, and a green and walkable community, lower taxes by having more tax ratable in the downtown. It was decided that we needed a downtown redevelopment that had more people living in the downtown who would patronize the stores, that plan failed in large part because we did not have any large enough parcels that developers could buy and build on and accommodate all the parking that was needed. He was vice chair of the Redevelopment Agency, they talked to many developers, and Highland Park is a challenging town to build in for them to make a worthwhile profitable development. We know the parking deck is proposed as a solution to what was really the intractable problem; it enables developers to building at the size and scale that they actually want to build and that will be profitable to them. The town is not building these things, the town is not proposing specific buildings the town is just creating a plan saying these are the types of things that we would support that would allow you to build, it is up to the developer just to decide if they are going to build it or not. We have a lot of experience that says without this deck the development will not happen. It is not really a choice of would we like the perfect buildings and no parking deck, the choice is really would be like the deck and these buildings or would we like nothing. He said some people are against the parking deck, he's heard from David Hughes speak out against it because it sounds like he's turning around a little bit but because in general Dave is against car storage because it is moving against the goal of a walkable community and others arguing against it because there's insufficient parking in the actual units in the apartment buildings, but he thinks the deck actually starts a nice balance between those two approaches

David Copperman, 120 Hill Street, said he has two points on the central parking garage, it has been the Mayor's assertion that aggregate ownership of cars across all these apartments will not exceed the capacity of the parking deck that will be a requirement, as stated in the past and he assumes that is being adhered to. Mayor Brill Mittler said that she is sticking to what was said in the past, what we have been looking at in terms of the size of the parking deck was assumptions based on how many units we thought each of these building would have and assumptions on the number of cars. She asked the professionals to explain in greater detail. Mr. Constantine said that the important baseline information right now, Highland Park has a much it's existing population has a much lower automobile ownership per household than Middlesex County. Mr. Copperman said that he objects to that, it is a non-sequitur we are talking about specific development in a two-block area of the central business district, please stick to that. Mr. Constantine said that he is trying to provide the prospective about how we made the assumption. With a lower automobile ownership in Highland Park by the way more than half of the community is a no car or a one car household more than half of Highland Park owns one car or less so with that and what we know about what's happening with urban multi-family households in comparable communities, in downtown mixed-use settings and where there is transit that's accessible; we felt comfortable and we have been using one car per unit as a parking ratio for our planning or broad brush planning this stage. Mr. Copperman said so you are not saying that aggregate ownership of cars amongst these new residents will be allowed to exceed the capacity of the parking deck because the assumption is it will not and if it does, it will not be by much, it



is based on assumption. Mr. Baumann said that the redevelopment plan has parking requirements and it is based upon the number of units and you have to meet those requirements and you have to identify how you're going to meet those requirements and those requirements are going to have to be approved. If you need five cars and they are not parking on site you have to show us that you are going to be parking five cars in the garage. Mr. Copperman said that in the plan it states that these requirements are essential to the plan and it states how they will be enforced both ownership and use of the garage for parking to the exclusion of parking elsewhere. Mr. Baumann said it is tied to zoning, the parking requirement is a function of the number of units; there is a formula and you are going to have to tell us how you are going to satisfy that formula and where on-site or through the garage and you have to get all that to happen in order to put your site plan for this site and approval so it is not about owning. It is based on the number of units, which could be a rental, it could be an owner. Mr. Copperman said that he would not want to narrow it too much the point being that cars used by residents in these four buildings will be required to be parked in the centralized parking deck which means that the total number of cars cannot exceed the capacity of the parking deck, that being stated how will both of those things be enforced. The ownership, the aggregate number of cars used only by those residents and how will it be enforced that they will only park in the central deck. He thinks if that is not in detail you are not ready to present this to the Planning Board. In his opinion as a 35-year systems engineer. Mr. Baumann said that he understands but it is what you're describing is impossible to do, if you are saying that the parking requirement is one per unit and this particular household owns two cars, so that the product the landlord has required them to get a parking permit and park on in the garage but that homeowner owns two cars how do we make sure that they only own one car, impossible, so throughout this all the commercial district the employees many have everyone may have a second car, you cannot prevent someone from owning more than one car, there is no way to deal with that issue in any development project, you can only say that each unit has to buy a space for one car based upon what we think people will need for cars and limit the numbers so that is what we did. Ms. Jover said that they are also looking at the possibility of neighborhood permit parking to help manage some of the impacts of the adjacent neighborhoods when the Attorney gets her the RFQ. She said that they are exploring how that would work. Mayor Brill Mittler asked Mr. Baumann that once a development plan goes to the Planning Board they are the ones who generally address the issues of parking. Mr. Baumann said that the Board will have to make sure compliance with the redevelopment plan and the requirements concerning parking, we can impact where they park with their second car if someone owns a second.

Mayor Brill Mittler said that she wanted to reiterate what Ms. Jover said before about our neighborhood parking plans that we have been looking into for other parts of the community as well and this does come up every time that there is a development going on and we want to ensure that people who live in a particular neighborhood will be able to find parking in their neighborhoods.

Mary Forsberg, 317 Denison Street, said that she was stunned at this and was wondering why it is that it took four months to do this plan since you have changed pretty much nothing about it. The parking garage is still a major part, it does not sound optional. With all the things the Borough has been talking about in this plan, you are creating a big concrete canyon on Raritan Avenue and pushing all of the negative things, all the externalities off on the neighboring communities. A parking garage on the Polo's property at Raritan and Denison and North 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue and the festival street, which as far as she can tell no one likes the idea of the festival street and you have not given up that. She said that she cannot imagine what it is going to do to the North side of town, all of those cars will be driving through the Northside and anybody that

thinks they are not going to be affected by that are going to wonder who thought that idea up ten or fifteen years from now, if it actually goes into effect. The fact that with the street closures it is hard to see that the festival street and the parking garage are going to be benefit to her neighborhood at all. She said that she understands that there will not be any feasibility studies at all even though that was in the contract with LRK to do an economic feasibility study to look at what the potential impact of these changes are going to be on the community in terms of the parking, traffic, pedestrian safety and economy. If Highland Park is involved in a parking garage that's no ratable, there are going to be no ratable coming from the parking garage, the majority of parking garages require money from the community in order to keep them going either through fines on parking meters, parking meters have been discussed people in Highland Park do not want parking meters, that is how Princeton finances their garage. All of the places discussed Cranford, how great Cranford is, she went up to look at Cranford they have a train station, Highland Park does not have a train station, Highland Park has nothing that would really require parking except the fact that you are building apartment buildings that are larger than they need to be in Highland Park. What about all of the development over the railroad tracks, how many houses have gone in there and what has that done for ratables.

Nora Krieger, 19 North 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, said she lodged the Borough for trying to do something, we have so many empty businesses on the Avenue and it is not good for the community. We are not the only community being hit by this now and we have had the pandemic. There were a couple of things she heard people say in addition to what I wanted to say, parking for each building is very critical and does not know why that cannot be part of the proposal that would go to the developers. She has been to communities where they do not have that and it brings pollution and congestion. We do not have a movie theater here; we do not have other theaters here to bring people in here at night. Festival Street is an issue because from the last meeting Ballard was talking about how she would not have access to park her car for her Real Estate Agency. She likes the idea of establishing a jitney to the train station and back but would have to run on regular hours. She said that you cannot depend on any public transportation here; you never know when a bus is coming. To talk about people giving up their cars in New Jersey is a ridiculous assumption, we are making a lot of assumptions about what is going to happen with the economy and whether people are going to go back to work in the office buildings or other towns for which they need to use cars. She thinks there is going to be a congestion issue with the parking deck. She liked that parking was blocked off with some housing that was more in tune with the neighborhood there, and does not think there will be a problem if the Farmers Market is on Festival Street, then you have the parking deck. She uses the Farmers Market all the time but she drives there because she cannot carry the stuff back, there is not going to be enough parking there for residents and people using this festival street, and if you have all these new apartments, they will have nowhere to park their cars. Edison has residential parking only near the train station which cuts you off from parking anywhere on blocks and blocks and that is a big problem.

Mayor Brill Mittler said that one of the things that comes up frequently is a movie theater, which we have been talking about in Highland Park since 2003, one of the thoughts that came to mind was part of the parking garage on the first floor is supposed to be a community room that could be used for many different things, maybe to have virtually a year-round farmers market, craft market so that the farmers market/holiday or craft market could move indoors into that public space. Mr. Constantine said it is an intent to move part of the parking garage have reserved public parking on the ground floor which would be covered parking on farmers market stays next to the farmers maker for instance in Piketown there is a redevelopment project moving forward and there is several dozen public spaces reserved on the ground floor of a private parking garage

for the downtown business community. Part of the potential for a liner space on the ground floor so that you do not see right into the garage from North 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue is some rather flex space. They have noticed in the plan that we at least envision that at this level it could be perhaps an arts gallery exhibit and entertainment type space. He said that there are examples of garages that have taken the idea of a year-round market into the garage and use the covered garage and he thinks that is a dynamic that people ought to think about. The covered garage, covered parking close to the market, a covered ground floor of the garage that could be used for a more expanded year-round market.

Emma Barker Lazar, 233 Raritan Avenue said she wanted to urge everyone involved in pushing this plan through to please remember disabled residents and even people visiting the town. She lives right on the corner where Tract D is proposed and she parks on 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue because there is no parking on Raritan Avenue at night and that is the closest vaguely accessible spot for her. She is concerned about what will happen when and if all car access to that part of the street is taken away. She would hope that it would be considered, not all pavement is accessible to everyone. She had seen in a previous Council or Redevelopment discussion of cobblestone or cobblestone like pavement on that street and that is incredibly difficult if not impossible for folks using wheelchairs to navigate and it is very hard and dangerous for people with limited mobility to navigate because of fall risks. She understands that redevelopment is a part of town growth and we all want Highland Park to be great but urged the Borough to keep safety and true accessibility in mind. Mr. Constantine said that cobblestone was never proposed, it would be smooth pavement stone and we have also talked about the concept of bringing the sidewalks in the street to the same plane so that actually the accessibility goes up dramatically from what you have today in that location. He also indicated the new housing that would be coming would provide for a huge infusion of accessible housing right along the Avenue and some of the older apartments are not accessible. Within the parking structure, generally there are accessible spaces that are put in the prime locations with shortest distance, so he would suspect you would have accessible parking as well for the Farmers Market that does not exist today. Emma Barker Lazar asked if there would be enough accessible spaces to accommodate people who not only live in the building but also current residents whose parking would be taken away. Mr. Constantine said that it could be accommodated in final planning and one of the strategies is to find people that are parking on the street or in scattered locations and see if they can be additional “customers” for the structured parking so that we can keep everyone’s cars in the that location and try to increase the revenue and the economics of the garage. Emma Barker Lazar said that she does not think paying for parking here is something that she was interested in; she does not think that she should have to pay to park close to her home in Highland Park.

Lois Lebbing, North 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue said that this is not the first time Highland Park Borough was the redeveloper, back in the 1950’s especially when you look at the deed restrictions for the garages at the Highland Montgomery that your possibility of condemning. In the 60’s we were blessed with the lovely park town house down there way down the hill toward the river, the two apartment complexes there set a precedent we know that for height although it sits very low compared to what is planned. If you are copying this height, why not also copy the park townhouse tenant parking that is covered below the building and it is only on the one River Road side for the tenants but the other building at Adelaide Avenue side that building also has a huge garage door where the departments keep the maintenance equipment so it is doable. Tract A has a side street called North 2<sup>nd</sup> and Denison, Tract B is right near 2<sup>nd</sup> with Sunoco on the corner, C has Magnolia behind and D you know about. You received a nice letter from Pastor Seth quite a while ago from the Reformed Church stating that he wouldn’t mind seeing a one or two story parking deck below the planned apartments at the current Farmers Market location which would

help the parish's hundreds and hundreds of participants. Why not plan as they did in the 1960's and place parking under each new apartment building. This plan has been in the public discussion since about October has been brought to us, she was reading the Mayor and others on the Council have certainly been involved since at least 2014 when the Mayor was a Councilwoman, and we are all glad it is nearly over, improvement would be wonderful but is it fair for homeowners near Tract A, me to be badgered with many many phone calls, she has gotten to buy her house, this November brought a gift in the mail with the postage was nearly five dollars from a touching ReMax Realtor very very strange but who put her up to that. Another surprise she just found out a week ago reading minutes at Borough Hall the Realtor interested in her property is a member on the Planning Board. That beats a little gift of textile, beats the culprit who put our house on the market for rent maybe 10 years ago.

Laurel Kornsfeld, 106 North 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, said she was deeply disappointed that the chat that was going on between attendees and panelists has just been disabled for no clear reason; she thinks it is important to continue the dialogue. Ms. Jover said that she did that because we do not usually have chat open by our own policies, I was not aware it was open and based on our conversation with the Attorney she thought it was appropriate to do that. She apologized if she overstepped but that has not been allowed at any of our prior meetings and it has a lot to do with open public records and public meetings.

Laurel Kornsfeld, 106 North 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue said she knows that the Borough purchased the auto related property next to Ubry's closer to New Brunswick and asked if that was in the redevelopment plan and is there contamination on that site because if the Borough purchased it we become responsible for cleaning it up. Ms. Jover said that the Borough did purchase Bergen Auto at 101 Raritan Avenue. Mr. Baumann said that we have a grant that and did our do diligence on that and the findings were clean. Ms. Kornfeld said that she did want to dissent with a previous speaker who said that this plan with the deck specifically will reduce greenhouse gases contributing to climate change and what she thinks we could end up with is more traffic congestion which could do the exact opposite. She questions having a theater on the lowest level of a parking garage because you've got a lot of exhaust and emissions, a lot people instead of shopping at malls are shopping online that means that there will probably be a lot of amazon and other trucks making deliveries to these residences. She thinks these should all be considered because there's idling and that adds to pollution. She opposes any and all paid parking in Highland Park including for apartment residents, in a time of a pandemic when people are struggling. To ask them to pay for parking including via permits, or meters is unfair and a little out of touch. Most people are really struggling right now.

Sasha Rudy, 247 Cleveland Avenue said she wanted to comment on what Dan said earlier and give insight to the type of person possibly looking to buy or rent one of the new units, she actually lived by the train tracks and moved here from Texas in October. She is a one-half of a childless couple in her early 40's with one car. The town she lived in was 13 square miles and had 3500 people; they protected this dense density fiercely so this was quite a leap for her moving to New Jersey. She said she was looking for a handful of things, proximity to a train station, a safe walkable town to run errands on foot; she does not drive, and did not want to be in New York. When she first arrived in Highland Park, there was a buying frenzy on homes and what she saw was an aging selection of homes that while beautiful needed work done. Buyers were waving inspections and appraisals and she did not feel comfortable with that so she bought a brand new condominium. She did not realize how contentious Heritage at Highland Park was until she joined the Facebook group. She imagines there's a lot of young professionals that absolutely want to live in a town like this but maybe have newer stock of housing that requires

less maintenance or less hoops that the huge attorney process for buying a home. She said she knows people want to protect the town but I also think that it needs to grow and evolve too.

Don Stern, 317 Summit Place, said he was wondering to what extent provisions are being made that development on these various buildings use green materials and be fitted to be energy efficient. Perhaps have solar panels on their roofs and be the kind of new construction that we are all going to need to see more of. Jim Constantine, Planner, said both provisions are in the plan for green infrastructure and green buildings, there is an intent to try to see the elements of green buildings incorporated into this. The specifics of that will come when we get proposals back; it is outlined in section 5, 7, 12 sustainable designs.

Marion Sackowitz, 617 S 5th Ave, said she had reservations about the density of the project. We are currently taking parking spaces that are currently available on North 3<sup>rd</sup>, and on the Farmer's Market site. She is concerned among other things, is the plan to increase the activity on the Avenue and yet we are taking away spaces that now are used by shoppers and other people who come to Highland Park. How is that being addressed, it seems to her that the garage is not going to be to big yet its going to accommodate all the additional shoppers. She thinks we are creating problems for ourselves in terms of parking. Mr. Constantine, Planner said the plan accommodates and recognizes that there is a surface parking lot within the block of Tract C between the Reformed Church where the Farmer's Market is held today so that's recognized. The size and configuration of that is something that needs to come out of the next level of response that we get.

Robert Chapman, 123 Magnolia Street, said that he was very bothered by the garage as its been depicted over and over again. One of the things he sees is that the parking garage and the public space underneath is going to be visible from Denison Street, North 3<sup>rd</sup> and from Raritan Avenue. He does not like the façade of it, if it is going to be visible and the façade is visible if it is not going to be good enough to be put on Raritan Avenue then that façade should not be on North 3<sup>rd</sup> either. He does not understand why you would entertain any sort of development that does not have a frontage building of some sort, another building in front of it with mixed uses that were fronting North 3<sup>rd</sup> particularly if you want to try to entertain some sort of festival street. He does not like the idea of a festival street; we have a great site already at the Farmer's Market that is already like our town square. The festival street is going to be doomed to failure if you are only looking at the side of a parking garage and the side of Provident Bank. He asked why the plan did not address some of the other vacant lots that are already on Raritan Avenue, the Sunoco lot and the BB Big lot which are right next to each other and how does this plan address the timing of the developments if all the parking for lot a, lot b and lot c are supposed to go over to the parking garage but that parking garage developed last then where does the parking go in the interim or is this all hinging on the idea that lot d is developed first. Mr. Baumann said that as described, the chicken and egg challenge that we are faced with which is why we've developed a plan to be flexible, allowing for a project that's not going to have a garage and at the same time we have begun to give some thought to interim parking alternatives. We own property so there may be a need to find interim solutions to the garage but you know that sort of is key to one of the challenges that is being faced through this process, which is how to make a central garage happen while other projects that may be coming at the same time or maybe even before that are going to rely on that garage, how do you make that all work. It is something that is front and center of the challenge facing us as we move forward. The Borough selected properties that they own so we can control the density of that property, so that is easy to move forward, we picked properties that we think we could succeed at and we selected the other two parcels where the property owners that are ready and willing and able to develop their own property. The other

parcels mentioned we have not gotten that same feedback from the property owners. We absolutely expect that as we go through the process more property owners will come to us and perhaps the gas station. We picked something that was not too overwhelming so not to have seven or eight locations, if you are not careful about picking bite-sized pieces you sort of could never get moving so we strategically picked four and two that we control. That does not mean that not all these other parcels described will become available. Ms. Jover said to build on what Mr. Baumann said, she has gotten these questions from property owners in the neighborhood, this is the beginning of the conversation with them and especially what Mr. Constantine alluded to previously, we would like to know who else might be interested in developing and utilizing that centralized structure specifically those in the more adjacent areas. We could easily and this has been discussed before, envision a second plan emerging that might pull together some of those properties. We have been criticized for being too big, too small, so we tried to establish what we could achieve because I would point that the previous redevelopment plan took on a lot of property and we didn't make enough headway so that's part of what the lesson learned we were applying when we were designing this plan.

Jeff Perlman, 16 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, said we have had a lot of discussion about parking and the provisions of parking, and he thinks a centralized parking vision with a festival plaza creates a pedestrian precinct and the impact of pedestrian impacts emanate from that destination. He thinks there is an opportunity to reimagine the streets surrounding the parking garage on the north side but also as it crosses Raritan Avenue to calm those streets. People will be walking to their car from various residential developments and driving away from there. The opportunity to calm those streets to pedestrianize them to bring them speed limits down to 20 mph. He thinks there is an opportunity to do that and referenced the Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan and didn't even envision a parking garage but this now with that centralized parking garage as a receptacle sort of an absorbent of the part you know demand so these parcels can be unlocked and redeveloped. We have an opportunity to really pedestrianize these streets make them really safe for all ages and he asked if depending on the RFQ even though its outside the boundaries to certainly ask developers how they might envision those streets and also take it upon ourselves to use the recommendations in the bicycle and pedestrian plan and start implementing its own before the parking garage, before the redevelopment so that we already have a good pedestrian streets in place.

Scott Sussman, 113 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, said he agreed with one of the earlier callers that there were not a lot of changes in the plan. He feels that the building on Denison by the parking deck, a lot of our streets do not have driveways, as Joe said earlier there's certainly no way to monitor whether someone would have more than one car and if people are parked over there we are going to lose all this parking and he doesn't think that is reasonable in anyway. On the January call, Teri mentioned bringing in a consultant to look at parking and it seems like many questions are dealing with parking and no answers because we do not have a consultant on parking. This is a huge problem, the foot traffic and driving traffic will not make our streets safe, it will make our streets unsafe because people will be just driving around in squares trying to look for parking. He thinks this is a huge problem, there have been a few times tonight that we have spoken about comparing us to other towns and he thinks it would be really advisable if we didn't compare ourselves to any town that has a train station.

Monica Day, 427 Cedar Avenue, said like many of the other speakers she has questions about the parking. The quality of life for many people in Highland Park would be in this area would be degraded by having to fight even harder for parking. She questioned the assertion about the expectation of how many cars in families in these units would own and there was an assertion

that Highland Park has a lower than average vehicle ownership and she would like to see that broken down by age. Many senior citizens in Highland Park do not own cars and do not drive. She asked if the car ownership in Highland Park for the demographic that you expect in these apartment buildings going to be similar to the demographic of the auto ownership by demographic of Highland Park residents. Mayor Brill Mittler asked Mr. Constantine if there was a breakdown. Mr. Constantine said there was no breakdown but the millennial generation car ownership across the nation not just in Middlesex County is lower. Mayor Brill Mittler said it is interesting the two demographic age segments in Highland Park that seem to be growing at the fastest pace are both baby boomers and millennials and those two segments are looking for walkable downtown communities.

Debbie Patrisco, 113 North 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, when you say that you got an email from so and so, she feels those emails should be posted so that everyone understands the information that is out there. She feels sometimes this is like to siloed maybe some people have an answer to something other people might have a worry or a question that has already been answered so she feels there should be some stakeholders comments posted or all the emails to the town to be posted so it is more transparent. Ms. Jover said that we did create a frequently asked questions document, which is on our website of a cast of all questions that we have gotten so if you have not seen that I would take a look at that, it does a good job synthesizing some of the typical questions we got. She said that she would have to defer to the Attorney on the appropriateness of sharing all communications we received by private individuals. Mr. Baumann said we do not generally post every email that comes into the Borough and he does not think any public body does. There are not emails that we are responding to we are just gathering information so it is just people giving comments just as people are doing here.

Mayor Brill Mittler said Teri raised a good point about the frequently asked questions, the reason we did put that together was to share information that we have been giving out based on questions that we are receiving and suggested looking at that. Mr. Patrisco indicated that she did look, just thought it would be more transparent if it were the emails. She said that there was a comment tonight about the historic aspect of the redevelopment agency, and then it was dissolved now Council has that ability. It seems like Council did this but without the Agency which was made up of community members, and now community members somewhat feel that their voice is lost in this; that maybe in hindsight there should have been some hybrid process that if when you had the agency and you were not happy with that then you moved that to the Council but Council moved this so swiftly that the community is at odds. Maybe there should have been some hybrid model where the community could have had more input before it got to this point where you passed this and now it goes to the Planning Board. She said that the parking deck is big almost permanent step that this community will take although she does hate comparisons to Cranford or Somerville because we do not have a train station. She said she does think of the Brunswick Wolfson deck came down that this is a big step to put up a concrete monstrosity and five year, eight years do we need it. The apartments or whatever that going to be built are very different demographics, millennials or baby boomers that are empty nesters I do not see how. Mr. Baumann, Esq. said that it is so unfair to not suggest that this has been an extraordinary amount of input from the public in the community, I mean seven or nine months, it is almost unprecedented the amount of input from the community that is going on here, so to suggest that is not happening is not right, it's not fair. He said that he had to speak up because you have had an incredible amount of community input to this process, and if you had an agency, it would be no different.

Steven Hambro, Grant Avenue, said that he was going to piggyback on some of the previous comments in terms of the process to some extent. He said that he represents two property owners who are joining tract d, we did have meetings in early December with Mr. Constantine, Teri Jover and Matt Hale and it was expressed at that point in time one of those property owners would like to be involved in the process and the redevelopment and there was some follow-up on our end. We were acknowledged and stated we are going to meet with you but then nothing happened and they are not included. This is a major property on Raritan Avenue, vacant lot next to Blue Horse café in between the Chinese Restaurant and Blue Horse Café and it was certainly expressed that the property owner wanted to be involved and wanted to explore it and nothing happened despite several months of requesting involvement. So there may have been public input but there is has been amendment to the plan and it goes back to some of the previous questions and comments as well from Mr. Baumann. This seems to me like the plan was this, is what it is, we are really not going to change it very much we are going to hear you and listen to what you have to say but we are really not going to change the plan because there has not been amendment to the plan. I have another property he represents who expressed consternation about the festival street and the closure of the entire North 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue who had already gone through the redevelopment process back in 2005, spent a ton of money and redeveloped the property and that's the Park Eye Center, Parikh building. Now the street is going to be closed down preventing access for many of his patients and clients. He is not quite sure that he agrees with those comments about amenability of the plan certainly and the process being transparent and asked for someone to address that. And the amendment because now we are going to the Planning Board, it seems it is a fair complex, its done and the only way that this is going to change is if there is another redevelopment plan. It seems to be a big process to go through when there is opportunity to have amendments to the plan, which might be beneficial to the community. Mayor Brill Mittler said that Mr. Baumann spoke earlier about the page that outlined some of the changes to the plan when this was first brought up earlier in the evening. Mr. Baumann said people are looking for black lined copies of the old plan to the new plan, that does not exist because this is our first draft, and there have been many changes to the vision and the plan in terms of how it was officially described and depicted and to where we ended up today. This is the first time you will see the plan so there has not been changes to it but to Mr. Hambro's specific question, he is not foreclosed in participating in redevelopment in Highland Park at all, we welcome it, if his property is in a redevelopment area, it is certainly in the rehab area there will be opportunities to expand the plan to do other parcels there may be standalone plans there may be another plan that it takes a bunch of site, it is best to pick what you can and go with it and then that doesn't foreclose the next project that comes along if he has an idea for his property he should meet with us right away we might be able to do a plan just for his property, and we have done that before. If he has a vision for his plan we will take the time and meet with him find out what he would like to do on the property. Please do not think because we have picked four and we are working hard on four does not mean that other people that have visions and real plans, they should meet with us and we will move that process forward. Again, what we are doing here does not foreclose that and again I struggle with this concept that we are not being transparent it's just not fair and for people to say that when we have nine months of meetings, we have revealed the plan today, there has to be a first time to reveal. There is a month to think about it, it goes to the Planning Board. The Planning Board is an independent body in Highland Park, they will listen to your comments, give us some comments, we will digest those and then we will move from there. The Board is going to see the plan and have time to review it and he would be surprised if they didn't have comments so it is unfair to call it not transparent, it's transparent, it is not fair to say it is not community involvement, there is tons of it.



Johnathan Lerner, 228 Magnolia Street, said he hates to beat a dead horse on the parking issue but there seems to be so many questions as it relates to parking and he does not understand how we can be submitting a plan to the Planning Board when so many uncertainties and there are so many unknowns. The uncertainty of the lot ownership is a huge issue, how do you put out a plan without having an understanding of who is going to own this lot, at one of the tract meeting he attended it was discussed that there would be a requirement that the renters in his apartments use the lot and not park on the street and has that been addressed and is that part of the plan. Tonight somebody addressed the neighborhood lot stickering and the Administrator Ms. Jover said that you are committed to exploring that issue and he doesn't understand how you could be submitting a plan with all these things, we're committed to exploring uncertainty about ownership, are the tenants going to be required to not park on public streets as it is today. He does not understand how a plan can be put forward and he does not think it is fair to the residents in the area that are going to have to live with this change in their neighborhood. Mr. Baumann said that he thinks the problem is the use of the word plan, the redevelopment law call this a redevelopment plan we have no choice about that, that is why we call it a redevelopment plan but this is a zoning ordinance. So if we've been calling it a zoning ordinance all this time maybe it would make more sense to folks because they know what a zoning ordinance looks like, they know that as zoning ordinances is regardless of who owns the land, they know the zoning ordinance doesn't accommodate a specific project it just accommodates bulk standards. So while its called the redevelopment plan, it's a zoning ordinance effectively but it comes with all these other benefits that we have described so he feels if people are thinking of it as a plan meaning build this specific building on this lot, it is going to have number of units, that can look like this that is not what this is, it is a redevelopment plan because the law requires it but it's a zoning ordinance, so think of how the zoning for downtown forget about the plan what's the zoning today. It is not dependent on who owns the land; it is an outline of the bulk standards associated with each lot. If people don't think of the plan the way I think of it and everyone else does which is much more than a zoning ordinance and it is in some ways, it's equivalent of a zoning ordinance which again doesn't really account for the specific projects or specific ownership. In regards to the parking, you will see that it does describe how much parking you have to have and how the parking would have to be accommodated and through the redevelopment agreement, we will ties down those items.

Mr. Lerner said that he hates to disagree with the characterization; he does not think the zoning board would not grant ordinances so dramatic without knowing answers to all these questions. He does not know if the answers provided answer those questions in the plan that hasn't been addressed but there is just so many questions about parking he does not understand how there could be a plan put together without answers to those.

Harold Sackrowitz, 617 South 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, said he had a question about the parking, many meetings ago it was implied that the new residents in the new buildings would not be permitted to park at least very long on the Borough streets that if they wanted to park they would have to go to the deck, is this still true. Mr. Baumann said the plan accommodates onsite parking or a deck. The plan accommodates either on the particular tract or in the garage and as has been discussed here and Teri is accurate we are going to be engaging a parking consultant to talk to us about how to regulate parking so that the issue that you described doesn't occur and a Ms. Jover described that it is on it our plate to ensure the scope of services is crafted and sent out. It has not happened quite yet but it will.

Mr. Sackrowitz said it might be something like all the other residents currently in town would have to have a parking permit and so then not anybody without a parking permit would be

allowed to park there. Mr. Baumann said that there are people who literally all they do is this and we have to get those people involved is the best way to do it. Ms. Jover said the reason she said we were exploring, she was not trying to be evasive. We know that there are neighbors there and we have talked about this before in other neighborhoods where there was not uniform embrace of on street permit parking. We want to have the conversation so that everyone knows what would be involved but we need the counsel of a professional who lives and breathes this type of work and they can present kind of the framework that we need to look at and with the support of professionals we intend to do that. Mr. Baumann said it goes beyond what we are doing here, if you're an employee of one of the stores you can park in front of the store I think all day long and now a customer can't park there and that's not a great use of the parking space, so there is a lot to be thought about through this process not just these projects. Mayor Brill Mittler said additionally from a retailers perspective from 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and South there are people who actually from our town and from other towns who actually come and park their cars on Raritan Avenue all day long then walk across the bridge to take the train and people who want to shop. Storeowners are complaining to us they cannot have their shopper's park in front of their stores because you have all day people parking in front of some of the retail stores, for free they can take the train over in New Brunswick. Mr. Baumann said regulating parking is not about generating money it is about making sure that the right people get the benefit of the parking to encourage the downtown's success and not a commuter to New Brunswick but a patron in the Dunkin Donuts and that is what we are trying to get to.

Mr. Sackowitz said the he would like to point out people who like walking and biking do own cars, liking to walk or bike does not mean you do not have a car. I am going to really be very interested in how you estimate how many parking spaces are going to be needed because that deck, if this plan goes through is key. Your estimates had better be right.

Dan Stern Cardinale, Harper Street, said thank you for staying late. In terms of we can't develop because we don't have a train station, the New Brunswick train station is walkable from Highland Park, he knows a lot of people that either commute either on foot or on bike into Rutgers for work or they go to the train station. As the Mayor just said people park here and walk to the train station on a regular, if it was not walkable that would not be the case so like we have a train station its in New Brunswick at the other end of town. There is the Edison train station right there; we are smushed between two very close train stations. Being a resident doesn't give you veto power over the demographics that move into your neighborhood, you've heard a bunch of people say oh well you know do you really want millennials moving in, you do not get to limit who gets to move here based on what age group they are in, that is super exclusionary and that has no place in a discussion about development. Most importantly on-site parking minimums are bad and there shouldn't be on-site parking minimums required, parking is wasted space, it makes development harder because you are taking space that could be used for residence or retail and making it worthless, it mostly just sits empty or it gets taken up by someone who is going to walk to the train statin in New Brunswick. Designing for cars is a choice, it is not a requirement, we have been designing cars in New Jersey decade after decade but it does not have to be that way. We can choose to design the town differently if we want to, you show people what kind of developer they want and it is actually illegal to build that kind of development in most places because parking minimums. The stuff people like doesn't involve lots of off-street, on-site parking it is different from that and then the last thing, status is not an option the choices are to develop in some way or for the downtown to continue to wither and just speaking personally instead of everyone kind of throwing up their hands and saying well we don't know how the parking would work we don't have a train station. He really appreciates that the Redevelopment Entity is trying to figure this out and come up with plans that are really

workable we can have a vibrant walkable downtown if we decide to do it, if we decide it is to much trouble because we might lose a street for driving or we might have parking deck then we are going to be having the same conversation 15 years from now. The only difference is going to be that there are going to be more vacant storefronts along Raritan Avenue but nothing will have changed. Thank you all for all the effort you are putting in. He noted that all of the members of the Redevelopment Entity are also residents.

Mayor Brill Mittler thanked everyone for staying throughout the evening, the redevelopment entity and the professionals for all the work that you have been doing on this. We are at the very beginning we need to do this not only for us but also for our children and their children in the future.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, there was a motion by HERSH and seconded by GEORGE the regular meeting adjourned at 9:26 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Santiago  
Deputy Clerk