

BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK
MAYOR & COUNCIL CONFERENCE MEETING
TUESDAY, AUGUST 14, 2018

MINUTES

1. Mayor Brill Mittler called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. and 8:50 p.m.
2. PRESENT: Mayor; Council (Councilwoman Foster-Dublin not present for 2nd session; Councilman Fine 6:07 p.m.); Borough Attorney; Borough Administrator; Borough Clerk.

NOTE: Upcoming Meeting schedule:

Aug. 21, 2018	Standing Committee Meetings; Special Meeting if needed.
Sept. 4, 2018	Council Committee Reports 6:00 PM; Agenda Meeting 6:30 PM; Regular Meeting 7:00 PM; Conference Meeting to follow.

3. Agenda Discussion – none.
4. Public Discussion (15 minutes) – none.
5. Memorial or Commendatory Resolutions or Presentations scheduled as indicated:
 - a. Redevelopment Plan – 31 River Road – Jim Constantine, Borough Planner, appeared to give an update. Mayor Brill Mittler noted that the redevelopment plan for this property was approved and memorialized by the Borough last week. There was a neighborhood input meeting with the neighbors. Mr. Constantine noted that the redevelopment area consists of a single lot, approximately 1 acre, and contains a nearly vacant, 11,000 square foot medical office building at the corner of River Road and Walter Avenue. The existing zoning for the Redevelopment Area is PO Professional Office Zone, which permits offices (professional, business and medical) and apartments, if located on the upper floors, as well as single family homes. The purpose of this redevelopment plan is to encourage redevelopment by providing quality multi-family housing options compatible with the scale, density and design of the Borough's existing residential neighborhoods. Development at this location, which is near Raritan Avenue and within walking distance to New Brunswick, could create an opportunity to diversify the Borough's housing stock by targeting empty-nesters and the Millennial generation. These groups have fewer school-age children, less cars and generate less vehicular trips if they live within walking distance to mass transit, employment and restaurants. They want to ensure that any residential development along Walter Avenue be composed of a smaller-scale, limited height and design that reflects the neighborhood. They would limit any larger multi-family building to the River Road frontage. They would like to improve existing traffic, pedestrian, bicycling and parking issues to make the neighborhood safer and more livable. They would like to retain the perimeter buffer vegetation and mature trees along the streetscape. They would like to limit vehicular access to the existing driveways and maintain the location of the parking to the rear. In order to accomplish the redevelopment plan, the Borough would need to adopt new use and bulk zoning controls. The planned development scheme includes attached, semi-attached and multi-family residential units containing any combination of apartments, townhouses, stacked townhouses, duplexes or multiplex dwellings not exceeding 40 units. Of those 40 units, fifteen (15) percent (6 units) will be set aside to be developed as affordable units for low and moderate income households. The units must be built throughout the entire redevelopment area.

6. Ordinances on 1st Reading – no ordinances scheduled for introduction for 9/4/18:
 - a. Multi-Dwelling Ordinance.
 - b.
7. Ordinances on 2nd Reading – no public hearings scheduled for 9/4/18:
 - a. Amending Bond Ordinance.
 - b. Bond Ordinance – Large Diameter Water Meters.
 - c. Bond Ordinance – Water Main Valves & Hydrants.
 - d. Bond Ordinance – Various 2018 Roadway Improvements.
 - e. Bond Ordinance – Acquisition of Police, Fire and Public Works Equipment.
8. Resolutions for Next Meeting - scheduled for 9/4/18:
 - a. Bills List (9/4/18).
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
9. Appointments – none.
10. Borough Attorney's Report – none.
11. Borough Administrator's Report – none.
12. Standing Committee Status Reports – none.
13. Discussion Items.
 - a. Native Plant Reserve Naming and Plans – Councilman George explained that they would like to change the name of the Native Plant Reserve to the Native Plant Sanctuary. The name would give more ambiance to people who use it for meditation and would impress upon the fact that we are trying to preserve it. The request came from the Shade Tree Advisory Committee and the Native Plant Reserve volunteers. There is grant money available for signage and they have agreed on the color and the design of the sign. There are plans for area near Environmental Center to make it more of a meditative space. There are spare benches available at the Department of Public Works. The consensus of Council was to move forward with this project.
 - b. Capital Ordinance – Water & Sewer Needs – Borough Administrator Jover explained that the Borough, in addition to doing routine replacement of small water meters, needs to do some more routine things. They will need to do an ordinance to fund the work and the work will not be done until road repairs are finished. The Borough needs to work on sewer lines, conduct a leak survey, which will help with the creation of an asset management plan. The Borough also needs to do some TVing of the sewer lines. A question was asked whether or not they are going to do another water and sewer increase before the end of the year. It was noted that the Borough is buying water not used and using water not billed. The Borough pays an estimated bill to the Middlesex County Utility Authority and we were put on notice that we have been processing more than what was estimated. They will budget for this next year. It is believed that there are cracks in sewer pipes that affect inflow and infiltration. It has been a very wet summer. She will run scenarios for the 3rd quarter.

- c. Affordable Housing Update – Borough Administrator Jover noted that the Borough Council has a lot of work to do with regard to ordinances that need to be adopted by the end of November. The Borough will need to introduce and adopt a Fair Share Affordable Housing Ordinance. They will need to pass a resolution endorsing the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan. They will need to adopt a resolution approving the spending plan. They will need to adopt a resolution approving the affirmative marketing plan. They will also need to adopt a resolution appointing an administrative agent and execute a contract for them to administer the sale, rental and marketing of any new affordable units created in the Borough. Previously, CGP&H was responsible for tracking the Borough's affordable housing units.
- d. Ordinance for Multi-Dwelling and Apartment Buildings – Councilwoman Welkovits explained that currently the State does inspections for apartments that contain more than 4 dwelling units on a 5-year basis. The State is behind in performing those inspections. The Borough wants to go in and do inspections at time of sale. Borough Attorney to draft the ordinance. Borough Administrator Jover asked how would anyone know about the ordinance. Borough Attorney Schmierer advised that the Borough would have to do a mailing to the apartment complexes advising them of the new regulations.
- e. Band Aid Bench Site Choices – Councilwoman Kim-Chohan advised that the bench location is now back at Rite Aid, the original site chosen. The bench needs to be completed by the end of the year. The Historical Commission will have a ceremony when bench is completed.
- f. Resolution to Promote Use of Electric Vehicles – Mayor Brill Mittler and Councilman George noted that there are State Advocacy Groups that proposed a resolution supporting the State's initiative to include electric vehicle planning and to encourage municipalities to pass resolutions in support.
- g. Highland Park Planet – Mayor Brill Mittler noted that the Borough is looking for alternate vehicles of communication other than newspapers. The Public Information Officer offered to put all meeting notices on the website. The Highland Park Planet will publish any press release and this would take the place of the newsletter. She will do this for \$1,500-\$2,000 a year. Need to be sensitive to the needs of seniors and have the information copied or printed.
- h. Plastic Bag Ordinance – Councilman George explained that this ordinance was generated by Sustainable Highland Park as part of their year long project. The State ordinance will give 1¢ to the Borough and 4¢ to the State. Need to have a buy in from the retail market. It is a two phase operation. Doesn't start until 60 days after adoption. Merchants are encouraged to have recyclable bags. At the end of 8 months, single use plastic bags would be banned. 10¢ charge would remain for merchants to supply the bags and discourage people to stop taking bags and bring their own. Discussion about using the Hoboken Ordinance as a model and making produce bags an exception. The bill is still not signed, but there is an October 1st deadline. Significant discussion amongst the Governing Body about whether or not to do an ordinance in Highland Park now versus waiting until the Governor signs the bill. If Highland Park went forward with the ordinance, the Borough would have to hold public meetings to discuss the ordinance. Would need to have Main Street Highland Park's help in arranging meeting with the merchants. It was suggested to have Sustainable Highland Park be involved with the public meetings and the meetings with the merchants. Councilwoman Welkovits noted that she would like to have a letter sent out to all retailers.
- i. DeLacy Davis Proposal – Councilwoman Foster-Dublin noted that the proposal will be reviewed by the Borough Attorney and the matter will be placed on the next agenda for execution.

- j. Ambulance Services – Borough Administrator Jover and Borough Attorney Schmierer are working on procedure for what would and should be done. Hillsborough has the best model. Law requires that the Borough issue an RFP for competitive contracting. Do not need to pick the lowest proposal, but need to find out the costs for the residents. Borough Administrator Jover to contact the representatives from RWJBH.
 - k. Middlesex Water Company Utility Engineering Services – Borough Administrator Jover noted that the Borough will need to execute a contract with Middlesex Water for utility engineering services and a professional service contract with the Borough Engineer. Need to make sure the numbers line up for the project and both matters to be placed on the September 4th agenda for action.
 - l. Stormwater Training for Mayor and Council – Councilman George noted that the Governing Body is required to take this training as part of the new DEP regulations. Everyone should watch the video and send an email to the Borough Administrator and/or Borough Clerk to notify them that they complied.
14. On motion made by Councilman Fine, seconded by Councilman George, and carried by affirmative voice vote of all Councilpersons present, Council went into Executive Session at 9:55 PM to discuss two matters involving litigation. On motion made by Councilman George, seconded by Councilman Fine, and carried by affirmative voice vote of all Councilpersons present, the Council returned to open session at 10:07 PM.

There being no further business, on motion made by Councilman George, seconded by Councilman Hale, and carried by affirmative voice vote of all Councilpersons present, the meeting adjourned at 10:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Hullings
Borough Clerk