



BOROUGH OF SOUTH RIVER PLANNING BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

August 20, 2024 – 7:00 PM

Location: ZOOM

The Regular Meeting of the Borough of South River Planning Board was called to order by Chair Zammit at 7:00 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. She read the following announcement in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act: *In compliance with Chapter 231 of Public Laws of 1975, adequate notice of this meeting was given by way of Annual Notice filed with the Borough Clerk, the Home News Tribune, The Sentinel and posted and posted in the window of Borough of South River Municipal Building on January 17, 2024.*

The Planning Board may take formal action at this meeting.

Roll Call

Present: Monica Almeida, Richard Byrne, Councilman Matthew DeSantis, Shirley Dockery, Mayor Peter Guindi, Cynthia Urbanik, Nick Giannakopoulos, Cynthia Wilk, Donna Zammit

Absent: Jesse Hare (Alt 1)

Also Present: Art Londensky, Administrator, Thomas Barlow, Attorney, Bruce Koch, Engineer, Todd Bletcher, Planner

Approval of Minutes: July 16, 2024

The motion to approve the regular meeting minutes dated *July 16, 2024* as presented was first moved by Mayor Guindi, seconded by Mr. Giannakopoulos, all in favor by voice vote.

Abstain: Almeida, DeSantis, Zammit

Resolution – None

Completeness – None

Public Hearing – None

Presentation

Resilient NJ – Resilient Raritan River & Bay Communities Preservation Presentation

Presenters: Vicki Chou (Arcadis), Sera Tolgay (SCAPE), Pippa Brashear (SCAPE), Maria Palomares (SCAPE)

Mr. Bletcher provided a summary of the study and introduced the group. NJDEP made the determination that the communities surrounding the Raritan River Watershed needed a regional plan. NJDEP hired the Arcadis firm to lead this project; Mr. Bletcher has been working with this group for the past 8 months. The study will provide information on what could be proposed for the waterfront zones. Vicki Choi from Arcadis, summarized the federally funded project. The team consists of Arcadis, SCAPE and Community Based Organization (CBO), YMCA. Ms. Choi reported on the areas they visited and what the project will entail. Sera Tolgay from SCAPE went over the framework, overview and future opportunities for the areas. Chair Zammit opened the floor to questions from the Board. The seven coastal towns included in this study is South River, Woodbridge, Carteret, Perth Amboy, South Amboy, Sayreville, Old Bridge. This project will end March 2025.

The motion to open the floor to the public was first moved by Mayor Guindi, seconded by Ms. Wilk, all in favor by voice vote.



Ann Marie Briscese asked about the cleanliness of the water at the location of the proposed fishing pier. Ms. Brashear replied that the waters has not been tested, however fishing currently occurs at this location. Ms. Briscese inquired about the porous pavement; Ms. Chou responded that regular maintenance would be needed. Ms. Brashear explained that they are looking at other materials that would be porous. Ms. Choi stated that NJDEP and OEM are not interested in porous pavement on the Blue Acre sites.

Shair Garretson likes what they presented. She stated she is on the Environmental Commission (EC) and was not aware of this study. She asked about EC's involvement and if there any residents on the Blue Acres' team. The Blue Acres team is within the NJDEP; they are working with Mr. Bletcher and Mr. Londensky from South River and have met with the Mayor and Zoning Board members. Ms. Garretson asked about the industrial area and the Borough losing rateables. Mr. Londensky addressed the uses along the Causeway. This area is part of the waterfront redevelopment plan; the current businesses there are preexisting non-conforming uses, which are not allowed in the Master Plan. He explained what the Borough would like to eventually see in this area.

Ed Trygar likes the plan presented and would like to see the area cleaned up.

Madelina Rivera agreed with Mr. Trygar's comments; opines the proposal would be a good addition to the Borough as long as it can be kept up. She had concerns regarding the porous pavement issues, but will address at another time.

The motion to close the public portion was first moved by Mr. Giannakopoulos, seconded by Mayor Guindi, all in favor by voice vote.

Mr. Bletcher provided a summary of next steps of the project.

Board Discussion

Ordinance 2024-39 – 1st Reading at the August 6, 2024 Council Meeting

Adopting the Amendments to the Sub-Area 150 of the Lower Main Street Redevelopment Plan

Chair Zammit recused herself; Vice Chair Urbanik presided over the meeting. Vice Chair Urbanik addressed the ordinance and asked what was revised. Mr. Bletcher explained that revisions to the redevelopment plan have been made. Each page in the redevelopment plan was its own sub area; this document replaces page 8 for the specific redeveloper. They updated standards and included specificity in the plan. The revised ordinance is an amendment to the old sub area 150 Standards, which was page 8 of the redevelopment plan; all other pages still comply. The ordinance's first page includes the blocks and lots affected by the revision in the resolution. Mr. Londensky provided information of what the next steps will be. The Council is the Redevelopment Agency. The Redeveloper Agreement describes how this site will be developed. They are in compliant with the zoning requirements and will need site plan approval from this Board to move forward with their project. Vice Chair Urbanik opened the floor to the Board for questions. Mr. Londensky provided a brief summary of what this developer is planning for the site. He reported that the developer received approval from the County and DEP for their project. Mr. Bletcher explained the application process as we move forward; the Council introduces the plan and the Planning Board is to review and comment for consistency with the Master Plan. Per Mr. Bletcher, the applicant will adopt the maintenance for the Blue Acre site that they surround. Per Mr. Barlow, the Master Plans calls for redevelopment of this area; this project is consistent with the Master Plan.

The motion to request Mr. Barlow to construct and send a letter in support of *Ordinance 2024-39* as submitted, was first moved by Mr. Bryne, seconded by Mr. Giannakopoulos, all in favor by voice vote.



Chair Zammit resumed her position as Chair of the meeting.

Public Comment

The motion to open to the public was first moved by Mr. Giannakopoulos, seconded by Mayor Guindi, all in favor by voice vote.

Shari Garrettson, Resident

Ms. Garrettson asked what was planned at the PNC Bank building. Mr. Londensky responded that the owner is working on a redeveloper agreement with the Borough and is working on their plans. Chair Zammit stated that the application is not before this Board at this time, additional questions should be addressed to the Council or Redevelopment Committee.

Seeing and hearing none other, the motion to close to the public was first moved by Mayor Guindi, seconded by Mr. Giannakopoulos, all in favor by voice vote.

Adjournment

The motion to adjourn at 8:30 pm was first moved by Mayor Guindi, seconded by Mr. Giannakopoulos, all in favor by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted by:



Julie Moy
Recording Secretary

Adopted: September 17, 2024