

**Town of Westfield
Planning Board
MINUTES
January 6, 2020**

The Westfield Planning Board met on January 6, 2020, at 7:00 pm in the Council Chambers in the Westfield Municipal Building, 425 East Broad Street, Westfield, NJ.

In compliance with Chapter 231 P.C. OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT in the State of New Jersey, adequate notice of this meeting was provided to all members of the Planning Board and the newspapers that have been designated to receive notice, the Star Ledger and the Westfield Leader.

RE-ORGANIZATION MEETING

Robert Newell called the Re-organization meeting to order, and opened the meeting by calling all present to join in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Robert Newell, Darielle Walsh, Mayor Shelley Brindle, Michael La Place, Anastasia Harrison, Ross Goldstein
ABSENT: Michael Ash, Kris McAloon, Linda Habgood, Matthew Ceberio, Ann Freedman
ALSO PRESENT: Alan Trembulak, Planning Board Attorney, Donald Sammet, Town Planner and Linda Jacus, Administrative Secretary

Robert Newell was recommended as Board Chairman and Michael La Place was recommended as Vice Chairman. Anastasia Harrison motion to approve the recommendations; Darielle Walsh seconded.

Chairman Newell called for a motion to appoint Kris McAloon as Board Secretary. Darielle Walsh made a motion; Anastasia Harrison seconded to approve the nomination.

Mr. Newell called for a motion to appoint Alan Trembulak as Planning Board Attorney for the year 2020 for ordinary and extraordinary duties. Anastasia Harrison motion to approve the recommendations; Darielle Walsh seconded.

Mr. Newell announced the 2020 Site Plan Review Committee: Robert Newell, Michael La Place, Linda Habgood, and Anastasia Harrison. The Planning Board meeting dates for 2020 and January and February 2021 were announced.

Mr. Trembulak swore in Donald Sammet to allow his testimony as Town Planner for the year 2020.

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The Re-organization meeting adjourned at 7:16 pm.

REGULAR MEETING:

Chairman Newell called the meeting to order and opened the meeting by calling all present to join in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Robert Newell, Darielle Walsh, Mayor Shelley Brindle, Michael La Place, Anastasia Harrison, Michael Ash, Ross Goldstein

ABSENT: Kris McAloon, Linda Habgood, Matthew Ceberio, Ann Freedman

ALSO PRESENT: Alan Trembulak, Planning Board Attorney, Donald Sammet, Town Planner and Linda Jacus, Administrative Secretary

ADOPTIONS OF MINUTES:

Chairman Newell called for a motion to adopt the minutes of the December 19, 2019 meeting. Darielle Walsh made a motion to adopt; Michael Ash seconded.

ALL IN FAVOR: Robert Newell, Darielle Walsh, Mayor Shelley Brindle, Michael La Place, Anastasia Harrison, Michael Ash, Ross Goldstein

OPPOSED: None

ABSTAINED: None

ABSENT: Kris McAloon, Linda Habgood, Matthew Ceberio, Ann Freedman

Motion carried.

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS:

Chairman Newell called for a motion to adopt the following resolutions for the applications acted upon at the December 19, 2019, meeting.

Resolution adopting the Master Plan Reexamination Report.

Michael La Place made a motion to adopt the resolution; Darielle Walsh seconded.

ALL IN FAVOR: Robert Newell, Darielle Walsh, Mayor Shelley Brindle, Michael La Place, Anastasia Harrison, Michael Ash, Ross Goldstein

OPPOSED: None

ABSTAINED: None

ABSENT: Kris McAloon, Linda Habgood, Matthew Ceberio, Ann Freedman

Motion carried.

Chairman Newell announced the following applications have been carried to the February 3, 2020 meeting:

PB 19-10 923 Central Avenue, LLC., 923 Central Avenue
PB 19-09 440 North Avenue East, LLC., 440 North Avenue East
PB 19-12 Winfield 226 North Holdings, LLC., 226 North Avenue

OTHER BUSINESS:

Preliminary Investigation Report

The Mayor and Council directed the Planning Board by Resolution Number 220-2019 to investigate if five separate parcels, Block 3301, Lot 1: 421-429 South Avenue East; Block 3307, Lot 2: 445-449 South Avenue East; Block 4004, Lot 17: 418 South Avenue East; Block 4005, Lot 3: 338 Windsor Avenue; Block 4005, Lot 4: 448 South Avenue East; meet the criteria to be declared a non-condemnation area in need of redevelopment. The Planning Board subsequently directed their planner to prepare the preliminary investigation report.

Don Sammet stated the governing body directed the Planning Board to conduct a preliminary investigation to see if the five properties studied meet the statutory criteria to be declared an area in need of redevelopment. At least one of the eight conditions described in the statutory criteria must be present for the property to qualify as an area in need of redevelopment. The criteria describe a number of conditions that show evidence of abandonment, disinvestment, decline or stagnation of the property.

The property at 421-429 South Avenue East consists of exterior storage of vehicles, dumpsters, refuse containers, and piles of debris located throughout the site. There were not any pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks or marked pedestrian travel ways, or landscaped areas. The property satisfies "d" of the statutory criteria. The site contains non-conforming uses and other violations of the Land Use Ordinance, and the poor condition of the pavement creates pollution concerns with the storage of damaged vehicles. The combination of these conditions is detrimental to the health, safety, and general welfare of the public.

The property at 445-449 South Avenue East contains four separate buildings once utilized for light industrial and manufacturing purposes. One of the buildings is used for storage for a local small motor equipment sales facility, and the other three buildings are vacant. All four buildings on site meet redevelopment criteria "a" and "b". The four buildings exhibit signs of dilapidation, water damage, and all but one had missing or broken windows. The buildings are deteriorated and unsafe. The property satisfies "d" of the statutory criteria. There are undefined parking and circulation aisles, improper storage of materials, a lack of sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities, environmental concerns, and land uses that have an adverse impact on the surrounding area.

The property at 418 South Avenue East is a single-story structure that was once occupied by an auto repair facility, and has been vacant since 2015. The structure exhibits signs of deterioration and the pavement is in poor conditions with cracks, potholes, and surface degradation. The property satisfies "a" and "b" of the statutory criteria. The building has water damage, spalling of the concrete block walls and flooring, the windows are deteriorating, and vegetation was growing into the building from the exterior. The property satisfies "d" of the statutory criteria. There are undefined parking and circulation aisles, lack of defined ingress and egress, a lack of sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities, environmental concerns, and land uses that have an adverse impact on the surrounding area.

The property at 338 Windsor Avenue is a single-story structure once occupied by an auto body shop. The structure shows signs of deterioration and has been vacant since 2015. The property satisfies "a" and "b" of the statutory criteria. There are visible signs of water damage, infiltration and mold in the building. Ceiling tiles are damaged or missing, and there are broken windows with vegetation growing through them to the interior of the building. The property satisfies "d" of the statutory criteria. There are undefined parking and circulation aisles, a lack of sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities, unsafe and improper storage of materials, environmental concerns, and land uses that have an adverse impact on the surrounding area.

The property at 448 South Avenue East is a single-story structure once occupied by an auto body repair shop, and was once a gasoline station. The structure shows signs of deterioration and has been vacant since 2015. The property satisfies "a" and "b" of the statutory criteria. There are visible signs of water damage, infiltration and mold in the building. The floor is marked with chemical spills and is spalling in certain areas. The property satisfies "d" of the statutory criteria. There are undefined parking and circulation aisles, a lack of sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities, unsafe and improper storage of materials, environmental concerns, and land uses that have an adverse impact on the surrounding area.

All 5 properties meet development criteria "h", which addresses smart growth consistency. Municipalities can designate an area in need of development if the designation is consistent with smart growth planning principles.

This analysis concludes all five properties in the study area meet the statutory criteria necessary to be declared an area in need of redevelopment. The Board should recommend to the Mayor and Council that all 5 properties meet the statutory criteria and should be declared an area of redevelopment.

Open to public comments and questions.

Bill West (663 Summit Avenue) stated the report was well done and these properties should be designated as properties in need of redevelopment.

Closed to public comments and questions.

The Board agreed the report was well done and very detailed. All the parcels are within the SW-AHO Affordable Housing Overlay Zone District, but designation of these properties as a redevelopment area will allow the town to have control over the outcome of what will be developed.

Chairman Newell called for a motion. Darielle Walsh made a motion that the five properties meet the statutory criteria and should be recommended to the Town Council as an area of redevelopment; Michael La Place seconded.

ALL IN FAVOR: Robert Newell, Darielle Walsh, Mayor Shelley Brindle, Michael La Place, Anastasia Harrison, Michael Ash, Ross Goldstein

OPPOSED: None

ABSTAINED: None

ABSENT: Kris McAloon, Linda Habgood, Matthew Ceberio, Ann Freedman

Motion carried.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made, seconded and carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Linda Jacus
Administrative Secretary