

MINUTES
HOPE TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD MEETING
OCTOBER 5, 2020

The agenda/business meeting of the Hope Township Planning Board was held via Zoom on Monday, October 5, 2020. Chairman Larena called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. He announced that notice of the meeting was given in compliance with the “Open Public Meetings Act – This meeting has been advertised in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975.” He then led the Board in the pledge to the flag.

Roll Call:

Members present: Chris Maier, Steve Larena, Terry Urfer, Matthew Koski, Mayor Timothy McDonough, Betsy Peterson, and Robert May.

Members absent: Tom Toohey, John Koonz, Donna Marie, and Neil Rosenberg

Also Present: Board Attorney Roger Thomas, Board Engineer Ted Rodman, and Board Secretary Alfia Schemm.

Correspondence

8-13-20 Hope Township Committee, **Re: Correspondence**

Chairman Larena noted the correspondence received by the Township.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of January 6, 2020 were distributed prior to the Board meeting.

Mr. May made the motion to adopt the minutes. Motion seconded by Chairman Larena. In a voice vote, all were in favor of adopting the minutes, except for Ms. Peterson, who was not present at the January meeting and abstained.

Other Business:

Farmland Preservation Plan Presentation

Barbara Heskins-Davis of the Land Conservancy of NJ was present to address the Draft Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan of 2020. She shared the screen and she presented the power point presentation, which the Board discussed. Mayor McDonough questioned the funding of the Plan and Ms. Heskins-Davis reviewed the procedure in adopting the Plan.

The meeting was opened to the public

Jodi Keegan stated that she is in support of Farmland Preservation program.

Fred Stine stated the concerns over Solar Farms.

With there being no further public comment, the meeting was closed to the public.

Ms. Heskins-Davis thanked the Board and she left the meeting.

Designation of Official Newspaper

Board Secretary Schemm stated that the Star Gazette is no longer being published and the Township has designated the Express Times-NJ Zone Edition.

Mr. May made the motion to designate the Express Times-NJ Zone Edition to replace the Star Gazette. Motion seconded by Mayor McDonough. In a voice vote, all were in favor.

Stormwater Control Ordinance

Board Engineer Rodman stated that the Township will need to update the Township Ordinance by March of next year. He stated that a copy of the Model Ordinance has been distributed for the Township's consideration. Ms. Peterson suggested that the Environmental Commission review the Ordinance and provide comments. She stated that she did forward a copy to the Environmental Commission. Chairman Matthews stated that the Environmental Commission can provide comments.

Bills: Rodman Associates

Re: General 105.00

Mr. May made the motion to approve the voucher. Motion seconded by Mr. Maier. In a roll call vote, all were in favor

Dolan & Dolan

Re: General 331.77
 Re: General 194.25
 Re: Singh 48.56
 Re: Singh 812.73

Mr. May made the motion to approve the vouchers. Motion seconded by Mr. Koski. In a roll call vote, all were in favor, except for Ms. Peterson, who abstained.

Open to the Public:

Chairman Larena opened the meeting to the public.

Ellen Benoit read the Environmental Commission Memorandum in regard to their recommendation on the removal of the conditional use of Service Stations in the POP Zone. Board Attorney Thomas stated that Attorney Moore is present and he can address the status of the Singh application.

Kevin Moore Esq. was present on behalf the Singh application and he addressed the status of their application before the DEP. He stated that they should be ready to proceed shortly before the Board. He urged the Board to not eliminate service stations as a conditional use.

Ellen Benoit questioned the intent of the overlay zone, which was discussed by Board Attorney Thomas.

Fred Stine stated that there are a number of properties in the POP Zone and whether the Board could reserve the rights of the Singh application and also allow for the removal of service stations, as a conditional use, in the POP Zone. Board Attorney Thomas reviewed the Board's action to dismiss the Singh application without prejudice. He commented on the lack of a budget line item for 2020 and he stated that the Board may wish to consider a budget line item for 2021.

Betsy Peterson questioned the actual budget cost to the Township as it appears that the request to remove service stations is not very involved. Chairman Larena stated that the Board can place this matter on the Board's next meeting agenda for discussion. Board Attorney Thomas stated that it is a bit more complicated than just striking words out of the Ordinance and a Master Plan modification will be needed. Chairman Larena suggested that the Board get a budget proposal from the Board Professionals. Board Attorney

Thomas stated that he will try to compile that information for the Board's consideration. Attorney Moore addressed the required noticing provision and he stated that they would not have any objection to the proposed rezoning, if there was a legal way to exempt their property from the proposed rezoning, as they are not grandfathered at the present time.

Ellen Benoit stated that the Environmental Commissions recommendations pertain to the entire POP Zone and not just one parcel .

Jodi Keegan addressed the proposed modifications to an Ordinance. Board Attorney Thomas stated that he has to make sure that there are no technical defects in terms of any action taken by the Township and the necessary requirements. Ms. Keegan also questioned the Board's budget and the next steps to proceed as they were directed by the Township Committee to come to the Board. Chairman Larena and Board Attorney Thomas reviewed the justification for an ordinance modification and the process at a master plan level. Ms. Keegan commented on the modification to the POP Zone with the addition of the Alternate Treatment Center, the process, and the cost to the Township. Chairman Larena stated that the Board will place the matter on the next agenda and then open it up for discussion to the Board and the Public.

Fred Stine had a clarification question (Zoom froze)

Jodi Keegan read her letter into the record. Attorney Moore addressed some of the items that Ms. Keegan noted in her letter as they would not be servicing and bringing in tractor trailers, there will be tremendous modern safeguards in place and there is not a danger of an underground spill. He stated that providing gas is still a viable business and economic model.

Monica Sobon urged the Board to not become complacent and it is a great opportunity to review the Master Plan.

With there being no further public comment, the meeting was closed to the public.

Other

Chairman Larena asked about the voting procedure, which Mayor McDonough addressed.

Adjournment:

With there being no further business a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Alfia Schemm
Board Secretary
12/04/20