

**Springfield Township Planning Board Meeting Minutes**  
**June 29, 2020**

Chair Jacques called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and led the salute to the Flag.

The Chair read the Open Public Meetings Statement. "Public notice of this meeting, pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, has been given by the Springfield Township Planning Board in the following manner on January 8, 2020;

- a. Posting written notice on the official bulletin board at the Municipal Building, Jobstown, N.J.
- b. Mailing written notice to the Burlington County Times and the Trenton Times.
- c. Filing written notice with the Clerk of Springfield Township.
- d. Mailing written notice to each person who has requested copies of the regular meeting schedule and who has prepaid any charges fixed for such service.

**Roll Call:**

Jo Jacques, Chairperson	Present
Denis McDaniel	Present
John Hlubik	Absent
Bernard Dunn	Present
Theresa Nicholson	Present
William Bauma	Absent
Stephen Makuka	Present
Richard Toone, 1 <sup>st</sup> Alternate	Present
Alexandra Johnson 2 <sup>nd</sup> Alternate	Present

Also present – Planner Elizabeth McManus, PP of Kyle & McManus Associates

**Minutes:**

March 3, 2020

Chair called for motion to accept said minutes. Ms. Nicholson motioned to accept the minutes; seconded by Mr. Dunn. All in favor. Motion passed.

**Discussion:**

- Master Plan re-examination

Ms. McManus reviewed the changes and wanted input from Board about where to go from here.

Mr. Gordaychik, 204 Heritage had an idea regarding affordable housing and he provided a survey of a lot on Old York Rd across the street from the Indian church. He thought it would be an interesting place for affordable housing because it is on the outskirts of the municipality, backs up to Burlington Township and close to water and sewer. He stated it is about 10 acres and you could provide for a number of units. He added he can send a letter of intent. Ms. McManus asked if he owned the property and he responded yes. Ms. McManus asked for additional details. Mr. Gordaychik stated that in Upper Freehold a number of landowners submitted a letter of intent to build affordable housing so 20 percent would be for affordable then the rest could be market rate units and if the affordable units are rentals you get double the credits. He stated in Upper Freehold for a 12 acre lot they could get up to 42 credits. Mr. Gordaychik also mentioned a project in Bordentown as well. Ms. McManus asked about water/sewer and Mr. Gordaychik responded that the developer would do that. Mr. Gordaychik stated that his belief is that the letter of intent is what qualifies the credits and Ms. McManus responded that is not true it is the commitment from the developer that they are going to extend the water/sewer that might generate credits for the town. (Mr. Toone entered the meeting at 7:45 pm). Ms. McManus also added that the Township

has no financial obligation to assist with the extension of water/sewer into the property. Ms. McManus added that the Township's obligation would be to grant approvals and they would not be required to provide a subsidy for the improvements. Mr. Gordaychik stated the tax records show 10 acres but that is not correct per the survey he had prepared. Mr. Gordaychik does not have anything to counter what Ms. McManus is stating. Ms. McManus clarified that she sees a lot of Townships get excited about working with a developer then when the developer wants a big subsidy that is when the plan goes bad. Mr. Gordaychik asked if the Board thought this is a reasonable spot for affordable housing and added the property he is talking about is not a profitable farm property. Mr. Gordaychik is trying to figure out if he wants to build one house or work with a developer if Burlington Township is willing to extend water/sewer into that area. Ms. Jacques stated that Burlington Township did extend water/sewer to a very few properties where wells failed. She added they did look at this area too and there were concerns that it would be more a part of the Burlington Community not part of the Springfield Community. Mr. Gordaychik did agree there would be more of a connection to Burlington Township but they would also have access to transportation. Mr. Gordaychik stated that we get hit hard on school funding this past year because of the number of students. Mr. Gordaychik feels we are running a school that is underfunded and he hears a lot of complaints and this option would allow the school to get those numbers up and build farther out on the edge of town. Ms. Jacques stated that the idea is that you would build a combination of market and affordable homes and those homes would not come close to funding the students that end up at the school even though it may generate more state aid. Ms. Jacques stated that the value of the home would need to be 1.4 million to generate the tax revenue to cover the cost of the additional students. Mr. McDaniel added that they have looked at the benefits of adding sewer and water cost to the Township. Ms. Jacques does not want it to sound like they are just shooting his idea down but she just wants him to consider other things that go into the planning for affordable housing which the Board has been looking at for years. Ms. Jacques added for a property of that size building both affordable and market value homes the Township may not get that many credits. Mr. Gordaychik just doesn't want to see trailer parks like in Mt. Laurel and Ms. McManus stated that you won't have to worry about that here it will be townhomes and apartments. Mr. Toone stated that there are no trailer parks that are affordable housing in Mt. Laurel. Mr. Gordaychik brought up Robbinsville taking over a trailer park and Ms. McManus responded that she heard about this but the Township did not get credits until they purchased the trailer park and she added that the trailers were not built for that purpose. Ms. McManus stated you also need to consider that the market and affordable housing units need to be consistent. Mr. Gordaychik just wants the Board to consider where we are putting the affordable housing. Ms. Jacques stated that will be part of that discussion tonight. Ms. Jacques stated we will consider his ideas and she added the Township needs 150 units to satisfy our obligation for planning purposes. Mr. McDaniel added that they want you to do long term planning but the rules keep changing. Ms. Jacques also stated that on a property of that size the benefits will not necessarily outweigh the disadvantages.

Ms. McManus stated that she knows the Board hasn't had a lot of time to go over the changes but she wanted to go over them anyway. Mr. McManus added that she did have some comments from the Mayor and she thinks they should be discussed off line and with the Township Solicitor. Ms. McManus went over the changes on page 7 added definition for "resources and referral center for farmers and landowners and she added a recommendation to update the right to farm portion of the Township's Ordinances. She added some language regarding greenhouse agricultural and recognizing it as part of agricultural but it doesn't properly reflect the Township's character. She added it is more of an industrial use used to grow agriculture. Mr. Dunn agrees and our Ordinance is kind of grey on that area and we are getting more and more requests every day. Mr. Dunn added the hoop houses are not even inspected by the construction official. Mr. Dunn treats them as a regular farm building for zoning purposes and one of our engineers considers them impervious and the other does not. Ms. McManus asked if there is an issue with how the Ordinance is being applied and Mr. Dunn responded that yes and we need to do something about it. Ms. McManus asked the Board if they want to see location requirements applied to greenhouses and hoop houses. The Board discussed guidelines and Mr. Dunn responded there really aren't regulations for them and this may be an issue because they are increasing throughout the Township. Ms. McManus stated that the Zoning Officer telling her that two professionals are interpreting the Ordinance differently is a problem. Ms. McManus was thinking about greenhouses because of the recent application that was not well received. Mr. Dunn added he does not get many complaints it is more when they come in for this type of building there is not much guidance.

Ms. McManus stated that the next item is circulation planning and it has to do with electric vehicle charging stations because she is legally required to address it in the Master Plan and she is just recommending it be permitted. Mr. McDaniel asked if this is to single family homes and Ms. McManus responded it does not pertain to single family homes it is more for example if Wawa wanted to put a charging station there. Mr. Makuka added maybe the Market would want to add these charging stations as well and he asked would there any issues with these being put in. Ms. McManus responded that signage would be an issue, for example the charging is free but there is an electronic sign with advertising and she sees that as the main issue. The other issue may be the number of parking spaces but she does not see that as a big issue in Springfield Township. Ms. McManus added she would just require a variance for signage over a certain size. The Board did not express any concerns about electric charging stations.

Ms. McManus stated the next set of changes there was a note to allow for restaurant uses to revitalize Jacksonville and Jobstown which came out of previous discussions that the zoo would like to redevelop that property.

Ms. McManus stated that she had a note to look at the sign Ordinance and Mr. Dunn stated they are allow in Community Commercial and Light Industrial zones but not Neighborhood Commercial. Ms. McManus stated that it currently allows for 25 feet which is kind of large except for maybe on Route 206. Ms. McManus recommends to allow signs in the different zones but to structure it to each zone and individual characteristic of the area. Ms. McManus stated that another issue is sign lighting and she would like to see some standards for exterior sign lighting. Mr. Dunn brought up that the Township has an Ordinance prohibiting a flashing sign and now everyone wants these electronic signs because they can be changed from inside and now they need to go to the Zoning Board. Mr. Dunn added that people requesting these electronic signs how do you determine if it is flashing. Ms. McManus stated the DOT requires that it can't change the sign for 8 seconds because of the distraction to drivers. Ms. McManus stated that another item is sight lighting, she wants to make sure neighborhoods and businesses are lighted but not too much to take away from the character of Springfield. She wants to be able to provide safe lighting while maintaining dark skies.

Ms. McManus stated that another area is to enhance outdoor recreation opportunities. Ms. McManus stated that in the last meeting it was asked if you are kayaking on a private property would you need an easement and the answer is yes. Mr. McDaniel asked if the property line is the center of the water area which property owner would we need to get an easement from and Ms. McManus responded it would be from both. Mr. Makuka asked about liability for the general property owner and if the Township gets the easement would the Township assume the liability. Ms. McManus responded that it would depend on how the easement is structured and that should be a huge concern but it may not be the Township. Ms. Jacques stated this just recommends looking at the possibility of it and Mr. Toone added the County currently has this with the Rancocas Creek and he wonders how they handle it. Mr. McDaniel stated that he can't imagine the County has an easement with every property owner and Ms. McManus stated that she will look into this. Mr. McDaniel asked about the language on page 12 it affirmatively states the Township should add a rest area at the municipal lands and he would like this softened and Ms. McManus responded she could change it to read "consider". Mr. McDaniel added this could be privately owned and operated as well. Ms. McManus also recommended that the Township partner with someone for maintenance and operation of all these facilities.

Ms. McManus stated that in the NC district it is discussed allowing mixed uses where sufficient parking and wastewater facilities exists. Ms. McManus stated these are all the changes based on the last meeting and she will make additional changes but she recommends the Board to read the language regarding non-contiguous clustering beginning on page 3. Mr. McDaniel would like to take a look at the non-contiguous clustering that was proposed and knocked down by the Court and Ms. McManus responded she has a copy of that document and will forward to the Board.

Ms. McManus asked for any recommendation for future discussion. Mr. McDaniel asked where the 150 units comes from whether from non-profits or Courts and Ms. McManus responded she was not being specific on purpose because we don't know for sure what the obligation will be and it is going to have to be determined by the Court but according to some sources it will be about 150 units. Ms. McManus added that the numbers

calculated by Fair Share Housing is 230 units. Mr. McDaniel asked if any units already done count towards the 150 units and Ms. McManus responded that those units would count and she expects that number to come down to around 100. Ms. Jacques agreed that number would be around 100 with the credits the township has. Ms. McManus based the 150 units on a decision in Mercer County regarding a municipality and Fair Share Housing case and she added that the methodology used by the Judge is much respected. Mr. McDaniel asked about the new leadership at Fair Share Housing and Ms. McManus responded that it is Adam Gordon and she added that she believes Springfield will get the same deal with whoever is in charge.

Ms. McManus stated that we can target the July 27<sup>th</sup> meeting but Ms. Clayton stated there may be an application coming in and we could add it to the agenda and if time we can discuss it.

**Public Comment:**

Chair opened the floor to public comment.

Mr. Gordaychik stated that the Assiscunk Creek in Springfield Township has a lot of logs from trees that have fallen and lay across the creek so Kayakers have to actually have to get out of the kayak and pull it over the log. He stated you don't have this issue in the Rancocas Creek. He stated the Assiscunk is the better creek to Kayak but the County must spend a lot of money to maintain the Rancocas Creek. He would like to see the township to be able to do something with this because the creeks in Springfield are much better than the Rancocas Creek. Mr. Gordaychik referenced a book that actually discusses the Creeks in the Township. He added that the only place to currently put a Kayak in the water is by the Petticoat Bridge. He suggested advertising this on the county site or talking to the County about it because he believes a lot could be done with this. Mr. Gordaychik stated that there is one property owner who built a bridge with some wire that makes it dangerous and Mr. Dunn responded that it is not his jurisdiction but if he has a location Mr. Dunn can look at it but it would most likely be a DEP issue.

Being no further public comment, Mr. Toone motioned to close; seconded by Ms. Nicholson. All in favor.

**Adjournment:**

Chair called for motion to adjourn. Mr. Toone motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Dunn. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Patricia Clayton  
Planning Board Secretary