

Springfield Township Planning Board Meeting
AUGUST 18, 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.
- e. Posting of Electronic Notice with Instructions to public on how to participate both on Township Website and on the front of the entrance of the municipal building.

Roll Call:

Jo Jacques, Chairperson	Present
Denis McDaniel	Present
John Hlubik	Present
Bernard Dunn	Present
Theresa Nicholson	Present
Stephen Makuka	Present
Richard Toone	Present
Allie Johnson, Alternate	Absent

Chair Jacques mentioned that William Bauma has resigned from the Board and thanked him for his service over the years.

Minutes:

July 21, 2020

Chair Jacques called for a motion to accept said minutes. Mr. McDaniel motioned to accept the minutes and was seconded by Ms. Nicholson. Mr. Dunn and Mr. Hlubik abstained. Motion carried as follows:

Aye: Ms. Jacques, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Nicholson, Mr. Makuka

Abstain: Mr. Dunn, Mr. Hlubik Absent: Ms. Johnson

Resolution:

2020-1 – Columbus Farmers Market, LLC, Block 801, Lots 2.01, 2.02, 2.03, 2.04, 4, & 4.02. Granting Amended Site Plan Approval.

A motion to memorialize the above resolution was offered by Mr. McDaniel and seconded by Ms. Nicholson. Motion carried on a roll call vote recorded as follows:

Aye: Ms. Jacques, Mr. McDaniel, Ms. Nicholson, Mr. Makuka

Abstain: Mr. Dunn, Mr. Hlubik Absent: Ms. Johnson

Mr. Toone joined the meeting at 7:38 pm.

Correspondence:

Chair Jacques referenced the letter from the Affordable Housing Board. The Affordable Housing Board sent a memo to the Town Council and the Planning Board. The memo notes the Townships longstanding rural traditions and expresses concern that inclusionary development would have significant detrimental impact on the municipality, its rural nature, its ability to provide services and the general character of the Township. The Board believes the Township needs to think outside of the box and not look at the traditional methods that are available. She mentioned the Townships collaborations with Habitat for Humanity and SERV. The Board was concerned that the number of market rate homes needed to provide for the affordable homes was going to be an issue.

Mr. McDaniel stated in looking at the number of units that has been brought up, the Planning Board has been contemplating during the Master Plan Re-examination on how to achieve this number. Using the ratio of 4 market rate units to 1 affordable unit, this would be a significant number of units to achieve the number of affordable units required. If you compare the number of market rate units created in Springfield Township to the number of affordable units created over the same number of years it seems the ratio of affordable units is high already. This is the reason the Board is recommending to the Township Council that a study is completed to determine same.

Chair Jacques stated that basically the Affordable Housing Board and to some degree the Township Council has some concerns regarding the current discussions on how to provide affordable housing. She suggested it may be best to separate what is going on with affordable housing from the mandatory Master Plan Re-examination. This would allow for more time to figure out how to satisfy the affordable housing requirements because the standard approach will not work in Springfield Township.

Chair Jacques questioned the Board members if they would agree to separate the Affordable Housing portion from the rest of the Master Plan to allow for however long it takes to diligently review Affordable Housing.

Mr. McDaniel explained that the Planning Board does need to make the decision. The ten year Master Plan review must be completed. Affordable Housing still needs a lot of work and discussion however; the Master Plan Re-examination must be completed this year.

A motion to separate the Affordable Housing portion from the Re-Examination of the Master Plan was offered by Mr. Toone and seconded by Mr. Makuka. All ayes. Motion carried.

Chair Jacques will contact Planner McManus regarding the above.

Informal:

Mr. Brian Gordaychik, Block 301, Lot 4.01

Mr. Gordaychik stated that he had put together a letter and some exhibits based on the June 29th meeting. He is not asking for sewer or water services. He referenced Exhibit A, which shows the Lot located on Old York Road. There are four Lots shown on the front. The two Lots on the left are roughly a little over an acre and the two Lots on the right side are roughly half an acre. The two smaller lots would be used for affordable housing. The remaining 10 Lots would be market rate homes. The Lots in the rear would be serviced by a small road that would begin at Old York Road and then turn parallel, running with Old York Road. Currently there is a 25 foot right of way serving Lot 6.01 as well as, a 10 foot right of way on the right hand side serving Lot 7. The average size of all of the market rate Lots is 1.4 acres, which is the average Lot size of the homes on Heritage Drive. The affordable Lots in his opinion are larger than what is currently being constructed in the Township and allows for the possibility of a garage or a shed.

Mr. Gordaychik referenced Exhibit B which is a listing of all the homes that Ritz-Craft provides, which was supplied to him by Habitat for Humanity. He has been in contact with them to take the two small lots on which they would construct one of the Ritz-Craft homes. The Harwood model has a carport on the side and is similar to other Habitat for Humanity homes in the area.

Mr. Gordaychik mentioned Exhibit C and D which show wetlands and category one waterways. There are a lot of category one waterways and wetlands in Springfield Township. In showing these two maps he is trying to demonstrate that there are substantial issues with isolating affordable units to central areas of the town. He stated that there are some sewer service areas that are provided in the town and along Burlington Township. He has spoken with Burlington Township and they have the capacity to service thereby, if a developer were to come in, Burlington Township would have the ability to service a development in that area. He however, is not looking to bring in sewer to the 12 lots he is proposing.

Board Comments:

Chair Jacques stated that the Board has looked at developing on the outskirts of the town before and it was determined that it would be more preferable to have development that enhances the hamlets. The Master Plan is trying to enhance Jacksonville, Jobstown and Juliustown by directing development towards those areas to provide more of a sense of community. It would need to be shown as to why this development should be allowed to deviate from the intention of the Master Plan as well as, the zoning.

Mr. Gordaychik agrees that the Old York area is very agricultural driven however, there are many similar sized lots in the area.

Mr. McDaniel questioned if any soil tests have been done in the area to see the feasibility of septic systems.

Mr. Gordaychik stated he has done three perk tests and all have come back feasible for septic systems.

Mr. McDaniel mentioned that he assumed the area by the creek is in a flood plain.

Mr. Gordaychik confirmed same.

Mr. Toone brought up Rutgers studies that were done in the 1970's that confirmed additionally housing is never a plus for a municipality. At best, it provides about 60% of the tax base required to operate the school and the municipality. In regards to the affordable housing point, the Township is currently addressing it and making progress.

Chair Jacques stated that is a fair point. A development like what is being proposed would be a net loss for the community in terms of services required overall versus revenue.

Mr. Gordaychik mentioned some communication he had with the Springfield Elementary School Superintendent, Mr. Vaughn, wherein he questioned if the school would benefit from more students. He stated that Mr. Vaughn had replied that they would benefit from more students, which would lead to an increase in state funding, create easier decision making when figuring out how many sections per grade, with the assumption of maxing out at 20 students per class in grades pre-k to one and 25 students per class in grades two through six.

Mr. Toone stated that would be correct when looking at it only from the schools point of view. However, only about 20% of the residents have children in the school, with the remainder being working and retired people.

Mr. Gordaychik reiterated that the Township needs affordable housing and added this development is only twelve houses; it is not a major development.

Mr. McDaniel stated that even though twelve houses are currently being discussed, this would set a precedent for someone else with a similar lot. This is similar in a way to the non contiguous density transfer, currently being discussed, but there is no land being preserved, thereby this plan would actually be going in the wrong direction from what has been discussed by the Board.

Chair Jacques agrees that in a sense this would set a precedent, if the Board allows land owners to arbitrarily develop contrary to what the Master Plan lays out. The Master Plan discusses enhancing the hamlets and not just allowing development all over town.

Mr. Gordaychik mentioned that the non contiguous density transfer was done in Chesterfield Township, in which, he had participated in with a lot similar to this lot. It came along with the TDR program, which allowed him to build five homes on his 18 acre lot. He does not believe lots are actually preserved and that the Township and Planning Board have the ability to un-preserve them.

Chair Jacques stated the Planning Board has no authority to un-preserve the land, which is deed restricted.

Mr. Gordaychik stated that he is ready to do this right now and he is not willing to wait years for a decision; he does not feel that is fair.

Chair Jacques stated when Mr. Gordaychik bought the property it was zoned 10 acres as it still is today. There was no realistic expectation for it to be anything other than that at the time of purchase. The

Board may decide to allow something different, or it may not. This is a complicated process and a slippery slope and the Board wants to make sure everything is done properly.

Mr. Gordaychik stated it's about the opportunities for other people to be able to come and live in the township in affordable housing.

Chair Jacques stated that is understood and it's the reason why the Board is taking its time in looking at Affordable Housing. This is an informal application and nothing is binding; a formal application may be submitted if Mr. Gordaychik chooses to do so. What has been submitted thus far, is very contrary to the Master Plan

Mr. Gordaychik would like the Board to think about it, because he believes it is a good deal for the township. He would like to get something moving as soon as possible.

Chair Jacques explained that she understands, but the Township is under no obligation to help develop his property, if it's contrary to what the Township is trying to do with the overall Master Plan.

Discussion ensued regarding the number of students in the school and the number of homes, as well as, the affect that it has on the tax payers. Chair Jacques reiterated that the number of students in the school does not have anything to do with the number of homes.

Mr. Gordaychik mentioned he believes there are many homes in Jobstown that are vacant.

Mr. Dunn confirmed there are only 3.

Mr. Gordaychik questioned what his next step should be.

Chair Jacques stated that at this point with the Master Plan that is in place she does not see the Board being favorably inclined to a development such as this. In moving forward with the Master Plan and Affordable Housing discussions, the Board will certainly take these comments into consideration.

Mr. Toone believes there has been a very thorough discussion and the Board is guided by the Master Plan, which is something that was developed over many years. You cannot do for one person without opening the flood gates to everyone else.

Chair Jacques mentioned that this also seems like spot zoning which is illegal.

Chair Jacques stated that the Board appreciates the ideas presented however it does not coincide with what the Board is trying to do.

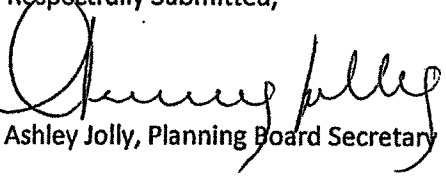
Public Comments:

Chair Jacques called for any public comments. Seeing none, a motion to close public comment portion of the meeting was offered by Mr. Dunn and seconded by Mr. Toone. All ayes. Motion carried.

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn was offered by Mr. Toone and seconded by Ms. Nicholson. All ayes. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



Ashley Jolly, Planning Board Secretary