

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
MORRIS COUNTY PLANNING BOARD**

30 Schuyler Place
October 21, 2021

Morristown
New Jersey

Meeting Held Via WebEx

Chairman Rattner called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS LAW

Public notice of this meeting was provided on February 3, 2021, in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

ROLL CALL

Steve Rattner, Chairman	Joseph Barilla, Director of Planning and Preservation
Isobel Olcott, Vice Chair	Anthony Soriano, Supervising Planner
Ted Eppel, Secretary	Greg Perry, Supervising Planner
Everton Scott (@ 7:05)	Virginia Michelin, Principal Environmental Planner
Nita Galate	Staci L. Santucci, Esq., County Counsel
Everton Scott (@ 7:05)	Mary Romance, Recording Secretary
Dennis Bull, Alternate #1	
Chris Vitz, County Engineer	

STATEMENT REGARDING COMPLIANCE WITH OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS LAW

Ms. Romance read the Statement Regarding Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Law.

FLAG SALUTE

Mr. Rattner invited members to join in for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

Ms. Olcott moved the Planning Board Meeting Minutes of September 23, 2021. Ms. Galate seconded the motion. Mr. Rattner called for questions or comments and there being none, the motion was approved by roll call vote.

Stormwater Ordinance and Plan Review – Mr. Barilla reported that reviews of all 39 municipalities has been completed.

Land Subdivision and Zoning

Developments Reviewed – Ms. Olcott reported on the following items:

East Hanover, KRE Acquisition-East Hanover, 2021-10-7-SP-0, 2021-10-7-P-0 & 2021-10-7-M-0 (River Road Municipal) - This application is for a major subdivision, minor subdivision, and site plan for the redevelopment of a 74.3-acre property on River Road and Deforest Avenue. The applicant proposes 548 units including apartments and townhomes/condominiums constructed in several phases. There will be five apartment buildings containing 44-54 units each, of which six to seven units in each will be set aside for affordable housing. There will be 309 townhomes/condominiums, including 62 affordable housing units. There will be 1,692 parking spaces between surface, driveway, and garage parking. Ingress and egress to the property will be provided by two full-access driveways to River Road and Deforest Avenue. Stormwater management will be provided by a large, surface detention basin near the southeast corner of the property. The system will connect into an existing point near the corner of River Road and Deforest Avenue. Site amenities include a clubhouse, pool, playground and outdoor/social gathering spaces near the apartments, a clubhouse and pool near the townhomes, a community garden, and a dog park. County Engineering has reviewed for drainage.

Mr. Perry noted that the North portion of this property is existing office space being retained by Mondelez; the larger of the two buildings has recently been torn down. He reported that County Engineering has found the stormwater management plan acceptable, and the traffic study adequate. Mr. Perry noted that one or two minor issues still need to be resolved with regard to the digital submission.

Montville, Sterling Montville, 2021-21-6-SP-0 (County Route 202) - This is a redevelopment plan for a multi-lot/multi-use site for a 178 unit (36 low/moderate) multifamily residential development on 11.39 acres. There are six residential buildings proposed with 23 to 32 units each, in addition to a separate clubhouse structure. Amenities include a dog park, bocce court, playground, a cornhole area and several concrete patio areas. The site is impacted by some moderate slope areas, a tributary of the Crooked Brook and the Morris Canal. There are two proposed full access driveway connections to County Route 202. Stormwater entails the use of porous pavement for the parking stalls with an internal collection system which will outfall towards the tributary of Crooked Brook. There are three, five-space electric vehicle charging stations within the parking areas. County Engineering is reviewing the proposed driveways and stormwater management. Mr. Vitz notes County Engineering had made recommendations regarding access to Route 202 when the preapplication had been submitted. Mr. Vitz expects that the applicant will be able to meet the requirements.

Mr. Eppel asked what impact this redevelopment will have on preserving the Morris Canal, noting that there was a lock in the area. Mr. Perry reported that this redevelopment plan will not be going near the area of the Canal. Mr. Bull asked about the current use of the site and Mr. Perry reported that the site contains several industrial spaces, three houses and one restaurant. Mr. Eppel asked about mapping related to the issue and Ms. Michelin noted that maps were included in the meeting materials. Ms. Olcott stated that the proposed plan is an improvement over the existing site.

Mr. Soriano reported on the September Land Use Ordinance Monthly Report, prepared by Mr. Sitlick. Staff processed 15 ordinances in September, including seven proposed ordinances, and eight adopted ordinances. With regard to proposed ordinances, he highlighted an ordinance in Chatham Township concerning the location of firehouses in residential zones and a Jefferson ordinance that would allow apartments above retail uses their C-1 and C-2 commercial district

Long Range Planning

Building Permit Report – Mr. Soriano gave a PowerPoint presentation concerning the 2020 Building Permit Report. He reported that 1,055 residential building permits were authorized in 2020, an increase of about 34% over 2019; roughly 45% were for one- and two-family homes and 55% were for multifamily homes. Nearly half of all permits were concentrated in Florham Park, Rockaway Township and Morris Township. He reported that the authorization of new office space was up about 39% over the previous year, but that authorized retail space fell significantly. The greatest authorization of new office space was in Morristown and all new retail space authorized was for the redevelopment of the Ledgewood Mall in Roxbury. He reported that over 500,000 square feet of new construction was authorized in the “Other Nonresidential” category, which includes such uses as institutions and warehouses and that this category has substantially outpaced retail and office growth in recent years. He reported that permits authorized for the first six months of 2021 included 1,351 new housing units, roughly 233,000 square feet of office, 16,000 square feet of retail and 442,000 square feet of other nonresidential use.

LIAISON REPORTS

Lake Hopatcong Commission - Mr. Barilla noted that minutes were included in the meeting materials for Board review. He reported that the Commission is now responsible for weed clearing, so it has begun gathering quotes for this work. He noted a resident concern about the fountain restoration project in the state park regarding water draw-down from the lake that might be caused by the fountain. Mr. Barilla noted that the fountain will actually improve water quality by providing more aeration.

Lake Musconetcong Regional Planning Board / Musconetcong River Management Council (MRMC) and Musconetcong Watershed Association - Mr. Rattner reported a major concern of the MRMC is that the Harmful Algae Blooms (HABs) are affecting the entire watershed. He also reported that various municipalities in Warren County are passing ordinances opening public lands to deer hunting to protect forested areas from tree damage due to deer, which is starting to deforest these areas. Mr. Rattner then reported that pieces of the 130-year old Chevron Pipeline that were causing access and flow issues, have been removed from the Musconetcong River, in large measure due to the concerted efforts by U.S. National Park Service (NPS) representatives. No oil contamination was found in the soil and replacement planting plans are in the works. He noted that the NPS has also been instrumental in helping the MRMC to move Segment C of the Musconetcong River to a “Wild and Scenic” designation. Mr. Rattner then reported that the Hydro rake has been sold back to the manufacturer and that the water chestnut has nearly been eradicated from the lake, with an additional three-year treatment program to begin with a focus on the shoreline.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Barilla reported that he was contacted by a consulting planner representing the Musconetcong Water Planning Group and that he will be meeting with this individual and a representative of the Group to discuss different funding options that the County has for land preservation. The meeting will provide an opportunity to brainstorm on pathways to fund and/or implement measures to preserve water quality. Mr. Barilla will keep the Board apprised on this issue.

Mr. Rattner noted that this Group has been receiving various grant application awards and that the most recent will help address erosion along a two-mile stretch of the Musconetcong in Warren County.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Mr. Rattner opened the meeting for public comment. There being none, he closed the public portion of the meeting.

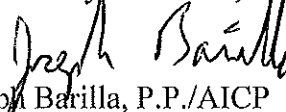
NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for December 2, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:56 pm, Mr. Vitz moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Scott. All approved by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,


Joseph Barilla, P.P./AICP
Planning Director

Original was signed and is on file at the office of the Morris County Planning Board.