

APPROVED: October 29, 2007

SPECIAL SESSION OF WEST WINDSOR TOWNSHIP COUNCIL

IN ATTENDANCE AT WEST WINDSOR PLANNING BOARD MEETING

September 19, 2007

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Gardner, Planning Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

This is to advise that the notice requirement provided for in the "Open Public Meetings Act" has been satisfied. Notice of this meeting was properly given and transmitted to The Times and Princeton Packet; filed with the Clerk of the Municipality; and posted in the West Windsor Township Municipal Building at North Post and Clarksville Roads on September 6, 2007.

ATTENDEES: Planning Board Chair: Gardner; Planning Board Members: Chang, Decter, Rosen, Rubinstein, Ciccone, Lemeshow; Planning Board Attorney: Muller; Planning Consultant: Madden Council President: Anklowitz; Vice President: Borek; Council: Geevers, Kleinman, Morgan; Township Attorney: Herbert; Mayor Hsueh; Township Clerk: Young

Council President Anklowitz had requested Mr. Gardner to Chair this meeting prior to the date of this meeting.

Mr. Gardner opened the meeting and asked for approval of the Planning Board minutes.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. David Siegel, 17 Berrien Avenue, asked to reserve his input until the discussions about redevelopment begin.

DISCUSSION BETWEEN TOWNSHIP COUNCIL AND THE PLANNING BOARD REGARDING THE REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Mr. Gardner outlined the reasons for holding this meeting and explained that discussion would also involve Planning Board's role in the redevelopment process.

Council President Anklowitz reviewed Council's discussion from the September 17th Business Session and explained that Council had suggested that the redevelopment plan be given to the Planning Board for the continuation of determining a final plan. He inquired if Planning Board had an interest in accepting the responsibility.

Ms. Kleinman had reviewed the redevelopment process to date and explained that a determination must be made whether to continue with the educational sessions because of the costs that could be incurred. She noted that the redevelopment plan was always going to be given to Planning Board for review and then Council endorsement.

Ms. Geevers noted that Council Members were considering having the Planning Board take over the process and have their professionals review the plan. She explained that a budget and timeline must be determined.

Mr. Morgan noted that there was confusion over the scope and scale of the plan, and that it was Council's responsibility to provide that information to the Planning Board to provide clarity on what work should be done. He distributed a document that outlined the four points of focus and then proceeded to discuss each of the following: Current Zoning, Parking, Main Street along Route 571, and a Financial Analysis.

Mr. Borek noted the importance of coming to terms with the Planning Board to move the process forward.

Mr. Morgan noted that the current zoning in the redevelopment plan must be evaluated and also begin work on Route 571. He explained that Council should partner with the Planning Board and Administration to review the financials.

Mr. Gardner asked Mr. Morgan if the plan should be discussed in the context of a 350-acre redevelopment plan.

Mr. Morgan agreed that it was the ultimate goal.

Mayor Hsueh discussed his vision of moving the plan forward and he noted that traffic circulation and infrastructure were key points. He invited the Council Members to attend all the Planning Board meetings for better communication and effectiveness. Mayor Hsueh commented that the plan will be phased to avoid a large impact at one time. He noted that the first phase could take up to ten years for completion. Mayor Hsueh explained that a goal of the redevelopment plan was to minimize the impact on the school system. He also spoke about State funding for the project.

Mr. Decter suggested developing several scenarios and discussed the impact of each. He noted that additional funding will be necessary for the cost of the professionals.

Mr. Rosen suggested starting with the four scenarios that Hillier had created.

Ms. Kleinman noted that parking was a major concern and the Council and the Planning Board needed a better understanding and more information on all the issues. She suggested that the focus should be on some of the larger issues in the redevelopment process such as understanding the existing zoning and infrastructure.

Mr. Muller agreed with the phased approach and suggested that data start being collected and then have a joint meeting for dissemination of all the information.

Ms. Kleinman agreed with Mr. Muller and noted that the seven guiding principles need to be incorporated into the discussions. She also asked that Council Members participate in the prioritizing of the goals.

Ms. Geever noted that traffic circulation is important in the beginning discussions.

Mr. Rubinstein suggested that the four existing Hillier plans be the foundation. He explained that the plans should be reviewed and narrowed down the plan options based on the guiding principles.

Mr. Morgan noted that the plan layout should include financial costs to continue the plan evaluation. Then the cost should be brought back to Council for additional funds to be incorporated into the budget.

Mr. Gardner asked President Anklowitz if he was now prepared to move forward with a 350-acre redevelopment plan.

Council President Anklowitz addressed the key issues again, such as parking and traffic circulation, and the need for these issues to be evaluated for all of the 350 acres. He noted that Council and Planning Board need to agree on the priorities then move forward with such issues as the compost facility and brownfields. Mr. Anklowitz also spoke about State funding and developer contributions and noted that he has not seen anything put into writing for a financial commitment.

Mr. Gardner noted the importance of phasing the project because no one can predict what the economy and the market will be like ten years in the future. He reviewed key elements to the plan but noted that the whole plan must be looked at and not just particular elements. Mr. Gardner explained that process, procedures and collaboration need to be addressed further and a timeline should be created for the project. He noted that Planning Board needs to understand the financials and their impact.

Mr. Madden explained that the plan must be broken down to allow guidance to be given to Hillier. He outlined five key components: project goals and trade-offs, basic street and block form to the plan, design parameters, understanding the financials, and housing. Mr. Madden suggested that the Planning Board educate themselves with the plan and suggested that a joint discussion with Hillier to outline what the Township would like to see and can afford.

Ms. Geevers asked Mr. Madden his opinion on what a fail timeline might be.

Mr. Madden responded that several meetings need to be set up with Hillier and all involved need to educate themselves. He explained that after these meetings the Planning Board and the Township Council can sit down and begin informed discussions to move the plan forward.

Mr. Chang asked questions pertaining to the education sessions and the proposed booklet that was being developed. He also promoted a 350-acre comprehensive redevelopment plan.

Ms. Kleinman answered Mr. Chang's questions and addressed his concerns.

Mr. Chang was in favor of Council being involved in the process. He noted that the financials should be thoroughly analyzed and recommended that the power station not be relocated because of the cost that would be incurred.

Ms. Lemeshow also noted her favoritism in reviewing the entire 350-acres as the redevelopment plan.

President Anklowitz explained that the sentiment of the majority of Council and the public consensus was to work on what points have been outlined.

Mr. Gardner inquired about the effect on funding received from the State and County if the plan is changed.

Mr. Morgan suggested that the entire 350 acres should be reviewed for potential zoning and parking issues. He noted that this project is a quality of life issue for the Township versus what type of funding the State will supply.

Mayor Hsueh reviewed a flow chart that he had created and noted that the plan should not be limited. He outlined items which need to be evaluated and made part of the redevelopment plan.

Mr. Borek suggested starting with the basics and working our way up to larger plans to see what the community will embrace.

Mr. Rubinstein noted that the market will develop the plan and the plan will be built in phases.

Ms. Kleinman suggested that the Council discuss the budget needs for the redevelopment project. She also spoke about Orth-Rodgers & Associates developing a traffic plan and the costs associated with developing this plan and also the cost to have the financials re-evaluated. Ms. Kleinman commented that Council would need to support these costs with a budget amendment to allow the Planning Board to proceed.

ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. David Siegel, 17 Berrien Avenue, urged Council not to turn over the redevelopment plan to the Planning Board unless Council makes the key decisions.

Ms. Alison Miller, 41 Windsor Drive, suggested that two plans be developed, one that the Township can afford and the other plan based on what the Township would like to develop.

Mr. Richard Eland, 4 Courtney Drive, noted that the West Windsor Neighborhood Alliance supported the current redevelopment plan.

Ms. Virginia Manzari, 28 Berkshire Drive, asked why the Township was continuing to use the services of Hillier and proceeded to list reasons why the firm should not be used.

Mr. Michael Donnelly, 1 Benford Drive, spoke about moving the plan forward.

Mr. Paul Cerna, 955 Alexander Road, noted his approval that Council and the Planning Board would be working together to develop the plan. He advised that the two groups need to agree on a concept.

Mr. Inge Srinivasan, 40 Windsor Drive, explained that one piece of information is missing and that is the project must be tax neutral.

Mr. Al Lerner, 67 Rainflower Lane, noted that he is in favor of having the Planning Board take the process over and advised that Vaughn Drive is a key component to the project.

Ms. Janet Lerner, 67 Rainflower Lane, voiced support for the full 350-acre redevelopment project.

Ms. Julia Rhodes, 31 Scott Avenue, spoke about the size and scale of the project and inquired if the Township's tax payers could afford the cost of the project.

Mr. Bob Akens, 32 Windsor Drive, spoke about the need to educate the public especially when dealing with the financials.

Mr. Gardner noted that the Planning Board will discuss the information presented tonight at another meeting, and advised that the Township Council will be actively involved in the process.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn: Decter
Second: Rubinstein
VV: All approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:07 p.m.

Sharon L. Young
Township Clerk
West Windsor Township