

**PENNINGTON BOROUGH
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
May 8, 2024, 7:30 PM**

Mr. Reilly called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and announced compliance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. He stated that the meeting was being held via a Zoom webinar and access to the meeting had been noticed.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Mark Blackwell, Gian Paolo Caminiti, Jim Davy, Andrew Jackson, Amy Kassler-Taub, Kate O'Neill, James Reilly, Nadine Stern, Jen Tracy, Nazli Rex

BOARD PROFESSIONALS PRESENT: Jim Kyle, Planner, KMA Associates, Ed Schmierer, Attorney, Mason, Griffin & Pierson, Kaitlyn Macellaro, Board Secretary

OPEN TIME FOR PUBLIC ADDRESS

Mr. Reilly asked if there was any member of the public who had joined the meeting and had comments on items not on the agenda. There being no member of the public wanting to comment, the open period for public comment period was closed.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Caminiti discussed that the County reached out to the Borough regarding the respective plans of the State and wanted to make sure what we are pursuing and developing with our Master Plan is not in conflict with anything they are working on. Mr. Caminiti reported that the Borough is looking for volunteers or representatives to participate. He suggested that Mr. Jackson should join with his depth of knowledge and engagement. Mr. Reilly confirmed that Mr. Caminiti, Mr. Jackson and himself are going to participate and to reach out to Ms. Macellaro if anyone else is interested. Mr. Caminiti announced that there weren't any specifics yet, but he will let everyone know as soon as he is made aware. Mr. Kyle stated that it is a formal process called cross acceptance and it consists of reviewing and mapping the planning area.

Ms. Stern spoke about the 2024 NJ Planning and Redevelopment Conference. She suggested that Mr. Kyle give us a brief overview at the next meeting instead of having to pay the registration fee for each member. Mr. Kyle confirmed that he was going to attend the conference virtually on June 5th and 6th and an in person session on Friday, June 7th. Ms. Stern stated that the Conference is \$300 per person. Mr. Caminiti stated that he will send out the information to the Board the next day for anyone that might be interested. Mr. Kyle explained that this is the annual conference for the New Jersey Chapter of the American Planning Association partnered with NJ Future. Mr. Jackson asked if he can get a copy of the program/agenda to see if there is anything relevant to the work of the Master Plan Committee.

Mr. Reilly mentioned that the Board received a letter from Mr. Stylianou requesting rezoning for 144 and 148 West Franklin. Mr. Stylianou included a diagram of a development he is hoping to construct. Mr. Reilly suggested that we refer both documents to the Master Plan Committee for consideration for the land use element.

Mr. Jackson stated that he has been in contact with Mr. Stylianou and pointed out there are some opportunities for affordable housing for these. Mr. Jackson explained that the diagram Mr. Stylianou submitted with his letter is an example of separate affordable development that he is intending to put in elsewhere. It is not a formal plan for the properties on West Franklin Ave. Mr. Kyle confirmed that he talked about this with Mr. Jackson for a potential site for round three of the Affordable Housing Plan and will look at it again for the fourth round. Mr. Reilly questioned if the drainage and repair issues are solvable and Mr. Stylianou didn't mention any restrictions when they spoke at Local Government Day. Mr. Jackson stated that the sewage capacity can be incorporated into the Utilities Plan for the Master Plan.

RESOLUTIONS OF MEMORIALIZATION

- Toll Gate Grammar School-Additions and Improvements

Motion to adopt the resolution was made by Mr. Caminiti and seconded by Ms. O'Neill.

ROLL CALL:

Blackwell-Yes	Caminiti-Yes	Davy-Yes
Jackson-Yes	Kassler-Taub-Yes	O'Neill-Yes
Reilly-Yes	Stern-Yes	Tracy-Yes
Rex-Alt. #1-Yes	Vacant-Alt. #2	

Motion approved with 10 votes in favor.

MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Reilly announced that the Master Plan Committee is seeking a preliminary approval by the Board, but we will not be permanently adopting any of the elements. Mr. Reilly stated that the plan will be adopted as a whole when all the preliminary approvals have been completed.

Mr. Jackson read a brief summary of the intent of the Master Plan, what the Committee plans it to be and the processes it will go through. He explained how the GBESE element consists of six core areas: climate change and greenhouse gas emissions, renewable energy and energy conservation, green building and design, land use as it relates to conservation, mobility, water and waste management. He stated that an initial draft of the GBESE element was prepared by Ms. Zein with subsequent additions by Mr. Fuger, Ms. Kassler-Taub and Mr. Jackson. The next draft was sent to the CAC for review. The Environmental Commission thoroughly reviewed the revised draft, making several suggestions; the draft was subsequently approved by the Environmental Commission at their April 15, 2024 meeting. Mr. Jackson stated that the GBESE element has been posted on the website since April 10, 2024, and asked if anyone from the Board or the public had any questions or comments.

Susan Bristol, the Municipal Policy Specialist/Licensed Planner and Architect of The Watershed Institute, stated that multiple municipalities had asked her to review the various elements of their master plans. For our GBESE, she suggested that under the Vision section we add "the restoration of previously damaged resources, sites, waterways." She advised that in the following sentence, still under the Vision section, we recognize that human health and safety depends on improvements to and the health of the environment. Referring to the water section, she encouraged us to set

reparative/restorative standards for redevelopment and to include design that would improve the resilience of a previously developed site and repair past damage to that site. On page six, under goal 3, she recommended identifying the streams/banks/corridors/riparian buffers that can be planted and restored, reinforced by tree and native plantings to make them more resilient, reduce erosion, hold the soil, absorb storm water and filter water before entering the streams. She added that we should identify locations for 'pocket parks' and the reforestation of small parcels. She recommended that under green buildings and design goals to mention the collection and reuse of storm water and encourage use of grey water systems. She pointed out that it is very important to mention that, in general, Historic Preservation is green. She recommended that the Borough's, the green building and design strategies include a green building checklist with every building permit. She mentioned that a dark sky lighting ordinance would help to achieve the goal of reducing light pollution. She also suggested that transportation options refer to the Princeton Dinky, the public transit in Downtown Princeton. She suggested that we add low impact development and reduced footprint foundations/footings to the land use and mobility strategy for compact building design. She suggested we refer to green streets and pervious paving when referring to improving and adding more sidewalks and pedestrian infrastructure. She stated that the water section should refer to natural systems of waterways and the water cycle and we should reference any new legislation or regulatory context of the MS4 permit. She also suggested adding another goal to the water section targeting reduction of impervious coverage on old developments or where unnecessary. She mentioned that Goal 2 on page 12, which refers to redevelopment and the importance of including redevelopment properties that we anticipate receiving new investments or economic growth. She stated that the proposed regulations that are expected from DEP would treat redevelopment sites as green fields rather than allowing redevelopment without improving existing storm water conditions. She suggested that we identify and map underground streams or ditches that may be 'daylighted' on Goal 3 under water management strategies. She stated that daylighting streams improves aesthetics, increases the green space and gives human access to water and its health benefits. Ms. Bristol thanked everyone for their patience and stated that she was going to send her notes to Ms. Macellaro for review and consideration. Mr. Reilly and Mr. Jackson thanked her for her time and suggestions. Ms. Bristol stated that she is available to help with other elements that are relevant to The Watershed.

Dan Pace, 9 Railroad Place, thanked Mr. Jackson for all the work he and the various Borough Committees have done. He recommended that the Borough pursue an ordinance to eliminate the use of gas powered lawn maintenance equipment. Mayor Davy responded that, last year, Council had decided to not eliminate gas powered equipment, following legal advice that we can't distinguish between residents and landscapers using the equipment. Mr. Pace said that he is making a recommendation to the Master Plan and it doesn't have to occur immediately. Mr. Jackson added that one of the next elements up is the Conservation element and noise is mentioned there.

Mr. Schmierer proposed that the Master Plan Committee discuss and debate the two commenters' suggestions and come back at a later date to incorporate the changes they feel are needed. Mr. Jackson confirmed that he would work with the Environmental Commission and have it back in front of the Planning Board at a future meeting.

Mr. Reilly asked Ms. Bristol if she was suggesting that buildings be elevated so that the ground under them could be made permeable. Ms. Bristol explained that the architectural world has learned that you can support buildings on piers that have small footprints rather than heavy slabs and large amount of soil removal.

Dan Pace, 9 Railroad Place, pointed out that the topic he brought up before about the gas-powered lawn equipment wasn't just for noise, but for air pollution as well. He stated that most lawn maintenance equipment has two cycle engines that run on a mixture of gas and oil and are extremely polluting. He explained that Princeton has an ordinance to limit the use of lawn maintenance equipment.

Mr. Reilly stated that the Master Plan Committee will continue to study the subject in light of the suggestions and recommendations in tonight's testimony tonight. Mr. Jackson pointed out that we had this element on the website since April 10th and had requested that if anyone had any comments to send them to Ms. Macellaro. Ms. O'Neill asked that if Ms. Bristol had submitted her suggestions earlier whether they would have been incorporated into a new draft before the meeting. Mr. Jackson said that he would have taken Ms. Bristol's comments back to the Environmental Commission and incorporated whatever they felt necessary into the element. He announced that the next public hearings for the Master Plan will be the Conservation Plan and the Environmental Resources Inventory along with the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Ms. Stern suggested that the Master Plan Committee get together to create a plan on how to make the residents and non-residents more aware about the public hearings for each element. Ms. Stern asked Ms. Macellaro if she received any other comments and Ms. Macellaro stated that she had not. Ms. O'Neill said that it may be a good idea to send an article about tonight's meeting to MercerMe.

MINUTES

The April 10, 2024 minutes were approved via a motion by Mr. Caminiti and a second by Mr. Blackwell. All were in favor.

Ms. O'Neil made a motion, seconded by Mr. Caminiti to adjourn the meeting. All voted in favor to adjourn via voice vote at 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kaitlyn Macellaro
Planning Board Secretary