

**PENNINGTON BOROUGH  
JOINT PLANNING & ZONING BOARD MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
December 13, 2023**

Mr. Reilly, Board Chair, 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 that access to the meeting had been noticed.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mark Blackwell, Deborah Gnatt, Andrew Jackson, Amy Kassler-Taub, Cara Laitusis, Katherine O’Neill, James Reilly

**BOARD PROFESSIONALS PRESENT:** Jim Kyle, Planner, KMA Associates, Ed Schmierer, Attorney, Mason, Griffin & Pierson

**I. APPOINTING KAITLYN MACELLARO AS PLANNING BOARD SECRETARY**

Mr. Blackwell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Jackson to appoint Kaitlyn Macellaro as the Planning Board Secretary.

**II. 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 was closed.

**III. PUBLIC HEARING**

Referral from Borough Council on the Preliminary Investigation Report Concerning the Designation of the Former Landfill (Block 206, Lots 4, 5 and 12) Borough of Pennington Tax Map as a Non-Condemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment.

Mr. Kyle shared his report titled “Preliminary Investigation Block 206, Lots 4, 5 and 12.” Mr. Jackson asked if the ongoing environmental study expenses will stop until a decision is made on what to do with the landfill. He noted that the cost to cap the landfill could be about \$1.5 million, which we would not want to spend if the final use doesn’t require capping. Mr. Kyle responded and said that other expenses won’t stop and he hopes to send a grant request to the State.

Dan Pace, 9 Railroad Place, stated that it was a good report from Jim Kyle and he supports this proposal. He asked if the shopping center is losing land. Mr. Kyle noted that it won’t lose land and there are not actual lot lines.

Mr. Jackson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blackwell to recommend to the Borough Council that block 206, lots 4, 5 and 12 be declared an area in need of redevelopment.

Blackwell- Yes	Burke- Absent	Gnatt-Yes
Jackson-Yes	Laitusis- Yes	O’Neill-Yes
Reilly-Yes	Kassler-Taub- Yes	

45 With all in favor, the motion passed.

46 **IV. CORRESPONDENCE**

47 ○ Request for Rezoning

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49 Guy Lanciano, 17 Honeybrook Drive, stated that he is the owner of 2 Rt. 31 North (the former  
50 Wells Fargo Building). He explained how he continues to struggle to find a tenant for his  
51 building given the zoning constraints. He announced that he has recently been approached by  
52 Chipotle to locate a store at 2 Rt. 31 N. He said that the building would remain intact and the  
53 plan would be for Chipotle to occupy approximately ½ of the first floor with a second tenant  
54 utilizing the other ½. He noted that he would remain on the second floor. He asked for the  
55 Board’s support on this project. He disclosed that this project cannot happen without the property  
56 being rezoned as Highway commercial with limited food use.

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58 Mr. Kyle recommended to refer to the Board and embark on planning process. He stated that  
59 rezoning Route 31 corridor will be considered in 2024.

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61 Mr.Lanciano stated that the building has been vacant for two years and can’t wait two more  
62 years. He explained how he has taken a financial hardship and asked the Board to re-think the  
63 process.

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65 Mr. Kyle assured Mr. Lanciano that it is not going to be two years, maybe one year at most. Mr.  
66 Reilly suggested that he can file for a variance.

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68 **V. MASTER PLAN UPDATE**

69 Mr. Jackson gave his report on the Master Plan. He noted that the Citizens Advisory Committee  
70 was up and running and had been tasked with developing a vision for Pennington in 2035. He  
71 announced that they had discussed this with friends and neighbors and had proposed a range of  
72 goals for the plan along with visionary ideas. He stated that the Master Plan Committee is  
73 working to synthesize these ideas into a draft of Plan Element 1.

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76 **VI. ZONING OFFICER’S REPORT**

77 There was nothing to report.

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80 **VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

81 ○ September 13, 2023

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83 The minutes were postponed until the next meeting due to the changes not being distributed to  
84 the Board.

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86 Ms. O’Neill made a motion, seconded by Mr. Blackwell to adjourn the meeting. All voted in  
87 favor to adjourn via voice vote at 9:04 p.m.

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89

90 Respectfully submitted,

91 *Kaitlyn Macellaro*

92 Board Secretary