

GROWTH & REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
June 14, 2016

The following are the minutes of the Growth & Redevelopment Committee Meeting, which was held on Tuesday, June 14, 2016, at 6:42 p.m., in the Lawrence Township Municipal Building, Lower Level Conference Room.

Statement of Proper Notice

Adequate notice of the regular meeting of the Lawrence Township Growth & Redevelopment Committee has been provided by filing an annual meeting schedule with the Municipal Clerk, and by filing the agenda with the Municipal Clerk, posting prominently in the Municipal Building, and mailing to the Trenton Times and the Trentonian.

The roll was called as follows at 6:42 p.m.:

Present: Lovette Love-Stevens; John Conroy; John Schloesser; Joan Brame; Maria Connelly; Teresita Bastides-Heron; John Odalen; Jeffrey Lang

Excused Absence: Ryan Kennedy; Tushar Patel; Charles Lavine; J. Andrew Link; Councilman Christopher Bobbitt

Absent: Danielle Delprato; Boynton R. Weekes; Andrew Bedryk

Also Present: Pam Mount; Susan Snook, Recording Secretary

Approval of Minutes:

The May 10, 2016 minutes were unanimously approved per change on Page 2.

Public Comment:

None

Awards Program:

Chairperson Conroy asked about if Mr. Link was sending out the press release to the newspapers about the nominations.

Chairperson Conroy asked the Board members about the venue and that Greenacres Country Club was a backup. The members suggested Costco, Wawa, Sherwin Williams, Auto Lenders, Collaboration Core, Mrs. G's, ETS the Chauncey Center. The members thought Collaboration Core is a hard location to find and some of the locations were too small because about 100 people attend.

Ms. Brame inquired about money and was informed that the space gets volunteered, the Chamber solicits sponsors to pay for the meal and tickets are sold. Chairperson Conroy will contact the Chamber. The Board thought ETS and Collaboration Core were the best. It was also mentioned about Leonardo's on Route 1 and the re-development could be discussed. The Board discussed the Route 1 round-about at Route 1 and Whitehead Road.

Chairperson Conroy then asked about speakers for the venue and Ms. Love-Stevens mentioned to get someone in to speak on multi-media to help small businesses. Ms. Connelly will speak to Jeff Mueller to ask him if he knows someone that could speak at the Awards Ceremony or he could be a possible speaker or someone from Sanofi which is a pharmaceutical company. Chairperson Conroy told the Board members to come up with names to discuss at the next meeting. Ms. Brame suggested Lorraine Allen and she would be a good resource. Ms. Mount suggested Michelle Siekerka and can speak about Sustainable Jersey.

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Chairperson Conroy asked to send out the description of awards to the committee members. The Board members suggested the following papers to put the nomination forms: Gazette; Lawrenceville Patch, Main Street, our TV Channel. Ms. Connelly asked if this committee could have a Facebook Page.

Sign Ordinance:

Chairperson Conroy stated that Ms. Connelly drafted a memorandum, dated June 14, 2016, addressed to James Parvesse, copy attached. Ms. Connelly stated that these are still pending changes and wants to write a memorandum to Council with the Board's suggested changes. She spoke with the Mayor and Councilman Kownacki and they would want some of the Board members to attend the Council meeting to present it. However, to let the staff know so it could be put on the agenda.

The major changes to the ordinance:

1. The lawn signs need to be clarified in the ordinance which might solve a lot of the problems that the Township is seeing with all the violations, and not to be allowed because they litter the Town. The ordinance needs to be clarified.
2. A brochure for temporary signs and political signs to be handed out and have it also stated that "this brochure should also reference the more in-depth sign ordinance so businesses know where to go for additional information, if needed". The brochure could be kept on the counter at the Zoning Office, or download it.
3. To allow A-frame signs in shopping centers in the Highway Commercial zone for the Lawrence Shopping Center and Mercer Mall. It is already allowed on Main Street and in the GEPNA area. This is only in the Highway Commercial zone in shopping centers. The ordinance specifies what shopping centers are.
4. Allowing some type of temporary banner after a grand opening period to allow businesses to promote sales or other types of events. This would allow some type of temporary banner to be set out for a certain set periods throughout the year or would like to allow some type of temporary banner and hire Clarke Caton Hintz to figure something out.

Ms. Mount stated her impression was supposed to be enabling more stuff to help businesses advertise. Ms. Connelly stated that banners are not permitted at all after a grand opening so this is allowing a banner after a grand opening. Ms. Connelly stated we will talk about it at the next meeting and then to Council in August or September. Chairperson Conroy stated the Committee will shoot for the September Council meeting.

Redevelopment of Lawrence Shopping Center:

Ms. Brame reported that she received a response from the management company and read the response. The property management forwarded the e-mail to the owner and his reply was "the property is on the market and most likely the new owner will be looking to make changes and just don't know what those changes will be".

Ms. Brame asked if the Committee members have any questions or strategies for the owners, she will forward them to him. It was suggested to speak to James Parvesse to see if anyone spoke to him about the Lawrence Shopping Center.

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Ms. Mount went to a conference in Trenton and it was about redevelopment. The suggestions for towns were vacant buildings and main suggestions that Towns could designate a stranded out area as an "area in need of redevelopment". It can be accomplished without spending tax payers' dollars on it and would come from developer money and a special fund. Ms. Connelly stated there are five different criteria that you have to meet (examples are: industrial areas, contaminated site, old industrial areas).

Ms. Brame stated there is not one new business. Chairperson Conroy wants to see if we could find out who has leases and how long they are for. Ms. Brame stated the leasing director has disappeared too. Colliers International is the owner and they have numerous shopping centers and probably do not see this as a profitable venture and shift them around. Ask the management company who has leases, the price, who the realtor is, who is behind on the lease and some stores stopped paying the rent because of the deficient items.

Mr. Lavine stated he contacted the rental agent on June 13, 2016 and spoke with Tim Stevens. Mr. Stevens stated he cannot do anything about that and is in charge of the rentals. He will pursue and will check with the owner and will get back to him.

Ms. Brame is going to find out who is the listing agent, who has current leases, and is it for sale.

There will be no new special award this year because it is too late, maybe next year.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Digital audio file of this meeting is available upon request.



Susan Snook, Secretary
Growth & Redevelopment Committee