

**BOROUGH OF BERGENFIELD
PLANNING BOARD TELECONFERENCE
MEETING VIA ZOOM
MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 19, 2021**

Chairman Rivas called the meeting to order at 8:02 PM.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING STATEMENT

In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, the notice requirements have been satisfied. Meeting dates are confirmed at the Annual Meeting. Notice of this meeting was provided to the Record, Star Ledger, and Cablevision, posted on two municipal public notice bulletin boards and posted on the borough website. Notice of this meeting via the April 12, 2021 Sunshine notice has been sent to the Record, Star Ledger, and Cablevision, posted on two municipal bulletin boards and the borough website.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Led by Board member Cabrera.

ROLL CALL

Present: Mayor Amatorio (joined at 8:17pm), Councilman Lodato, Mr. Rivas, Mr. Knowles, Mr. Berger, Mr. Cabrera, Mr. Acosta, Mr. Vasquez, and Mr. Bergman

Absent: Mr. Byrnes, Jr. and Mr. Romeo

Also Present: Gloria Oh, Planning Board Attorney, Carlos Fuentes, Planning Board Engineer, and Hilda Tavitian, Planning Board Clerk

MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR FORMER BOARD MEMBER JOHN STELLABOTTE

He was a Planning Board member for several terms. He passed away in February at Holy Name Hospital.

APPROVE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – March 15, 2021

Motion by: Mr. Knowles

Second by: Mr. Acosta

All ayes. None Opposed.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS

Any resident may comment or question any subject not on the agenda.

No one came forward.

Motion to Close Verbal Communications

Motion By: Mr. Berger

Second By: Mr. Cabrera

All members present voting in favor. None opposed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Site Plan – Chairman Rivas stated he attended a meeting that had to do with an application on Hickory Avenue proposing to built apartment houses. Since it is not an approved use, the formal application will go to the zoning board.
2. Parking Legal - Nothing
3. Capital Improvements – Councilman Lodato stated the plans for the construction of a new borough hall are still tabled. A new bid will be put out within the next month or so.
4. Master Plan - Nothing
5. Liaison to Board of Adjustment – Mr. Knowles stated they had 3 new applications for new business last month, 193 Woods Ave, 65 Maiden Lane, and 83 Hickory Ave. The first two applications were dismissed to be carried to the next meeting because the affidavit from the tax office was not signed. It says right on the affidavit that if that is not signed, the application should not be heard. Ms. Oh could probably clue you in more about that than me. She was at that hearing. They still have Mr. Mondello from time to time because of the 145 W. Main Street application. The application for 83 Hickory Ave, for 6 townhouses, had the same issue but was heard. The attorney claimed he had the written request from January for the affidavit to be signed. The hearing for 83 Hickory Ave was long. They want them to come back with the fire chief because they are concerned about the fire apparatus backing out from the flagpole lot and was carried over to the next meeting. Mr. Knowles stated 145 W. Main Street has a special meeting on April 27th to see if they can wrap that up.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Review of bond ordinance 21-2579

Chairman Rivas read the bond ordinance title into the record. He stated the board was asked to make comments and suggestions regarding the ordinance.

Councilman Lodato stated he doesn't recall an ordinance of this type coming before the planning board for review. It's usually land use ordinances and wondered if it was an error in sending it to the board.

Mr. Knowles agreed with Councilman Lodato. He didn't remember in the dozen years on the board, this kind of bond coming before them for comment.

Mr. Rivas stated they can simply say they have no adverse comments or negative observations and send it back to the governing body.

Mr. Acosta stated it was sent to the board for any suggestions.

Board engineer Fuentes suggested the board look at the traffic and signal improvements to make sure it doesn't impact the previously reviewed applications by the board. The board can provide some comment regarding that. The acquisition of equipment doesn't pertain to the planning board. Mr. Fuentes stated another item that should be looked at would be the storm and sanitary sewer improvements. Mr. Fuentes stated he doesn't know if there have been any applications that would be impacted because his involvement with the planning board is recent. He can reach out to the previous engineer and get some more information.

Mr. Knowles inquired that it's their firm that's going to review the streets that needed repair.

Mr. Fuentes stated he believes the previous board engineer is also the borough engineer and they stayed on as the borough engineer. They will ultimately review the ordinance. Mr. Fuentes stated his firm is just with the planning board and board of adjustment.

Mr. Rivas suggested if the governing board wanted the board to delve into this and make comments, the board should have gotten this way ahead of time so they could research which street lights are pending to be changed. The governing body is going to vote on this tomorrow and it doesn't give the board any time to do research. Mr. Rivas stated, for now, they will respond back to the governing body and state they don't have any negative comments or influences.

Board attorney Oh stated the borough clerk had asked the planning board to review and make any recommendations, if any. The governing body is meeting tomorrow and there is a public hearing on the ordinance.

Mayor Amatorio stated it is a matter of procedure. The bond ordinance has been discussed with the governing body. They didn't want to put the planning board on the spot. If there is something substantial the planning board would like to send to the Mayor and council, then they will consider it. They are not putting the weight of the study on the planning board. Mayor Amatorio stated he had a conversation with the borough clerk and Hilda as to why the bond ordinance has to go to the planning board and was informed it was for purposes of any recommendations there might be from the planning board. He believes it is a matter of procedure and whether there is anything they can recommend to the governing body.

Mr. Rivas stated the planning board doesn't have any right to tell the governing body to buy a truck or a stump grinder, or to fix one curb or another. The engineer has a good point, but what he is suggesting requires prior knowledge of what sections are going to be addressed in terms of lighting and traffic lights. They would have to do some research and the speed they need to do it in is not optimum. He requested the board be given some time and specific items they should be looking at in the future.

Mr. Berger suggested their response should be expanded to neither positive or negative comments.

Mr. Acosta inquired if they could use a document shredder for the town.

Mayor Amatorio stated the borough regularly has shredding services at least once or twice every year. There's a big truck stationed at the back of borough hall and you can bring all your important documents you want shredded. Mayor Amatorio explained they will shred it while you are still there. He will find out the date and maybe they can increase the frequency from having it once a year to twice a year. It's a drive through process and it only takes a minute or two.

Mr. Rivas stated the second page of the DPW recycling calendar has the Bergenfield shred day event sponsored by BCAU on Saturday, August 14, 2021 from 9:00am-1:00pm.

Response Regarding Bond Ordinance from Planning Board is They Neither Have Positive or Negative Comments

Motion By: Mr. Berger

Second By: Mr. Knowles

All present voting in favor. None opposed.

Mayor Amatorio inquired if that would satisfy the requirements of the borough to the council.

Mr. Rivas stated they are sending it back with a commentary that the board has no positive or negative comments. They leave it as it is and the governing body can proceed. The planning board has reviewed it and have found nothing wrong with it.

MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING

Motion by: Mr. Berger

Second by: Mr. Cabrera

All ayes. None opposed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:32 PM.

NOTE: No applications will be heard by the Board that were not on the agenda at the time of publications release to the newspaper or applications that do not comply with Article VIII title "Hearings contained in the By-Laws of the Bergenfield Board".

Respectfully Submitted,



Hilda Tavitian

Planning Board Clerk