

**RIVERTON BOROUGH PLANNING BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING WITH BOROUGH COUNCIL
MINUTES
June 8, 2005**

The special joint meeting of the Planning Board and Borough Council was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman Frank Siefert.

The secretary for the board and the mayor for Borough Council read the following:

Public Notice of this meeting pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act has been given in the following manner:

1. Posting notice on the official bulletin board in the Borough Office on June 2, 2005.
2. Required Service of notice and publication in the Burlington County Times on June 5, 2005.

PRESENT for the Planning Board: Frank Siefert, Birnist O'Reilly, Christopher Halt, Mayor Martin, Councilwoman Alls-Moffat, Robert Smyth, and Joseph Katella.

Also Present: Secretary Ken Palmer

Absent: Donna Tyson and Tony Dydek.

PRESENT for Borough Council: Mr. Cesaretti, Mrs. Alls-Moffat.

Absent: Dr. Daniel, Mrs. Villari, Mr. Smyth, and Mr. Gilmore.

Borough Clerk, Mrs. Longbottom, announced that Council did not have a quorum present and it was therefore a planning board meeting only

MOTION TO SUPEND REGULAR BUSINESS: The chair entertained and a motion was made by Joe Katella and seconded by Mayor Martin to suspend all regular business and proceed directly to the advertised topic. The vote was unanimous.

FACT GATHERING FOR REEXAMINATION OF THE MASTER PLAN

The chair reviewed that tonight's meeting is basically a listening session for the board in order to hear Council's concerns about the current master plan and to solicit ideas or direction the board might consider in it's reexamination. The floor was opened to the mayor and members of Council. The mayor stated he feels the plan at most may require some tweaking. He wants Council members present to please offer their opinions. He also feels the board should solicit comments from the zoning board. Councilwoman Alls-Moffat stated that she, as a Council representative, and the board members of the subcommittee formed by the board to head up the process had started their work. They have been reviewing things in the plan that they don't feel are appropriate any longer. They also have begun putting together a list of things in town that could be improved such as the NuWay property, National Casein, the Collins building, etc. They have begun a review of the goals and objectives of the plan and possible revisions of them. Muriel feels that revisions are needed. She would like to review her ideas with other Council members. She agrees that tweaking the plan is the way to go. Joe Katella, a member of the subcommittee, seconded much of Muriel's comments and added that the subcommittee feels it is important that everyone stay on the same page concerning the master plan and the pending redevelopment plan.

Birnie O'Reilly, a subcommittee member, raised the issue that she had not been included in the meeting and wanted to know why. Following a protracted discussion, it was concluded that the other members thought Birnie could not make it, were unaware that she did not receive notice, and that all the members would endeavor harder to make sure that all the members know of future meetings and are properly contacted. The mayor motioned and Muriel seconded that the board please move on given the limited time for this meeting and the issue regarding membership of the subcommittee be considered at the board's next regular meeting. It was reviewed that Bob Smyth, Birnie O'Reilly, and Joseph Katella for the board and Muriel Alls-Moffat for Council appeared to be the current members of the subcommittee.

Bob Smyth, a subcommittee member, reviewed that the board had begun reviewing the goals and objectives and determining what has been accomplished and what issues still need work or new issues that need work. The members had also discussed the efforts needed to obtain the statistical data needed to update the numerous tables in the plan related to traffic, land use, and housing. This data is required to be updated. The mayor feels a major issue is the redevelopment of the NuWay site. He feels that apartments over businesses are a good thing if they help the Borough meet its COAH obligations but otherwise should be reconsidered. He feels the Borough may wish to look into the methods or advisability of entering RCA's (Regional Contribution Agreements) with other towns when considering methods to satisfy COAH obligations. Chris Halt asked if the Council members had discussed their concerns over the plan. The answer was there is no formal consensus yet, but informal conversations have occurred. The mayor stated he knew Laurie Villari had concerns, especially regarding the NuWay site. The mayor asked other Council members present to please jump in with their opinions. Chris Halt asked the mayor if general concepts had been discussed. The mayor replied he believed the general consensus of Council is the current plan could use tweaking but overall it was a good plan. Asked what was meant by tweaking, the mayor thought the examples mentioned were a good start. On a more general level regarding say the goals and objectives, they haven't really been discussed and no consensus reached. Bob Smyth reviewed that there are four goals and about twenty objectives that the subcommittee has begun to review. He feels the board is asking for direction and input from Council as to whether they feel the goals and objectives are still valid and or if there should be additions or other revisions. This input will help the board in their deliberation as to what they feel is the direction the town should head from a planning perspective. Chris Halt asked if Council had set any goals. The answer was no. Councilman Cesaretti stated that apartments were an issue of concern and he was confused over the objective in the current plan and in Tamara's letter to Council and the board concerning issues for the joint meeting. He wondered how this objective meshes with the fact that conversions of single family homes to apartments is not permitted and if a dwelling with apartments was converted back to a single family home it could never go back to being apartments. It was explained that the objective in question is limited to the Neighborhood Business zone only and arose as one method for possibly helping meet COAH's rehabilitation needs. It was also proposed to help business owners in the zone; many of whom have second stories that are not used for the business. Councilwoman Alls-Moffat mentioned this is also a concern with redevelopment. Chris Halt asked when direction or decisions on this and similar fundamental issues might occur. Muriel feels there is little changed in the concerns raised in the current plan and today. She has reviewed the "Constituent Outreach" section of the plan and feels that many of the opinions, concerns, etc. raised during the last review of the plan are still valid among Council and the town as a whole today. The chair commented that he thought that Tamara's letter to Council and the board provided a good reference for initiating and reaching some form of consensus. He feels the general planning issues are still pertinent.

Birnie feels the purpose of the meeting has been sidetracked. She felt the board would be hearing the conclusions of Council and then the board could move on. She feels this has not occurred. The mayor feels the subcommittee is off to a good start and if Council members have comments, they should get back to the subcommittee. Birnie feels the board should hear it from one source that represents the consensus of Council. The chair feels this is what has been started and that an ongoing discussion will be helpful. Concerning the location in town of COAH obligated needs, Muriel stated in her opinion she would prefer to see COAH mandated housing be spread throughout the town and not concentrated in one place. Muriel feels this may also be the consensus of Council as a whole. Birnie objected to Muriel's personal opinions and Ron Cesaretti stated that Muriel should be allowed to speak her opinions. Further, since Muriel is on the subcommittee Ron is willing to let Muriel lead and that her opinions probably also represent some consensus among Council. Ron feels that if there are only a few units such as three or four units involved they might be localized but not if it involves 18 or 20 units. The mayor feels it will be situational based on development and redevelopment as it occurs. Chris Halt feels the board should seek guidance from Tamara. Ron Cesaretti wonders if additional units can be added to the overlay zone.

Joe Katella feels Council's opinions on the pedestrian vs. traffic vs. parking issues are important. He feels the impact of the River Road development in Cinnaminson will have a major impact on the town and needs to be addressed. The mayor agrees the issues need addressing. Pedestrian is nice but people, even in Riverton, like to drive and he wonders if it is possible to satisfy both. Joe thinks that this is one of the items that the board must stress and try to address in the plan. Chris Halt feels the Borough is more of a village and will never be a Haddonfield or Collingswood and thus the town has unique problems regarding traffic flow through the town that need to be addressed. Joe Katella concurred especially as regards the Cinnaminson development that is projected

to be about the same size as Riverton. Chris Halt feels Tamara's suggestion that the town could possibly seek to have its traffic patterns and flows rated and desirable levels determined and locked in should be followed up on. As he understands, this process give the town a firm footing in mandating that major development even if in a surrounding town must not prove a detriment to that rating and the town. Joe Katella concurred that this issue needs to be discussed further and he thinks all the changed issues need to be looked at. Bob Smyth thinks many of the objectives need to be addressed more clearly. Joe asked if this kind of session was going to occur again. Bob Smyth thinks the goals and objectives are not that large and he feels every Council member should review them, attempt to develop a consensus, and get back to the board. Birnie feels Tamara should review and help decipher the input from Council. The mayor stated he felt it a good idea to have the review of the goals and objectives of the master plan on Council's next agenda and to make sure all Council members had a copy of them for review and development of opinions prior to the meeting. Bob Smyth feels that the subcommittee and the board are seeking broad direction in their efforts. In the interim, the subcommittee can continue tasking the gathering of the numerous statistical related things necessary to update the plan. Chris Halt suggested the board can utilize the Borough's website. Birnie stated that perhaps questionnaires should be used. The chair stated that he feels that specific milestones should be developed and this should be discussed at the board's next meeting; however, time is up and the board needs to adjourn. Muriel motioned and the mayor seconded that the meeting be adjourned

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM.

Tape is on file.

**Kenny C. Palmer, Jr., Secretary
RIVERTON PLANNING BOARD**