

**RIVERTON BOROUGH PLANNING BOARD  
MINUTES  
October 21, 2008**

The Public Session of the Planning Board was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Joseph Katella. 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 January 18, 2008.
2. Required Service of notice and publication in the Burlington County Times on January 25, 2008.

**PRESENT:** Joseph Katella, Joseph Creighton, Mayor Robert Martin, Councilwoman Suzanne Wells, Mary Lodato, Jeff Myers, and Armand Bianchini.

**Also Present:** Solicitor Tom Coleman and Secretary Ken Palmer.

**ABSENT:** Keith Wenig and Muriel Alls-Moffat.

**MINUTES:**

A motion was made by Mayor Martin and seconded by Councilwoman Wells to adopt the minutes of the September 16, 2008 regular meeting as distributed. The voice vote was unanimous.

**CORRESPONDENCE/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1. October 2008, Workshop announcement from ANJEC for Elements of Sustainability Workshop, 10/30/08, 7-9:30 PM, Highland Park, NJ
2. 10/21/08, letter dated 10/15/08 from Joe Rainer concerning escrow charges and check for \$500.00 towards escrow shortage.
3. 3 vouchers/invoices as presented under New Business.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Council Matters of Importance to the Board** – Councilwoman Wells reported that the task force report would be presented to Council in November. Suzanne reported that the contract for performing the study of downtown revitalization utilizing a grant from the DVRPC had been awarded to the Waetzman Group, Inc. Mark Remsa from the county was very helpful in preparing the scope of the proposal and guiding the Borough through the process. The study will help develop a plan on how to make the town more attractive and to attract economic and business development, and how best to market the town. Tom Coleman spoke briefly on the plans of the DVRPC regarding these types of grants. The mayor spoke about Council discussions to more stringently enforce codes regarding property upkeep especially as it applies to several properties in the town. There was some discussion between the mayor and Tom Coleman regarding professionals charging for their time while traveling to and from hearings and meetings. The conclusion was it depends on the contract.

**COAH Activity** – Councilwoman Wells reviewed Tamara's e-mail regarding the deadline for submitting COAH 3<sup>rd</sup> round submissions. She urged the board to review the memo since it explained the process and the deadlines. Suzanne reviewed the current plans of the Borough for new housing plans and the revised needs as defined by COAH. She also reviewed that there are ongoing discussions with several parties interested in providing possible COAH units. There is a time crunch to meet the 12/31/08 deadline to submit to COAH if the deadline is not stayed by the courts. The Borough meets the deadline as long as it files by the deadline that the amendment to the Master plan is pending approval. The actual hearing can take place in January 2009.

**Proposed Changes to Zoning Code for Historic Preservation** – The chair reported that the matter was tabled until the task force report and recommendations are received.

**Revision to Sign Ordinance to Allow Sidewalk Signs** – Mary Lodato reported that the matter was tabled until the task force report and recommendations are received.

**Environmental Commission** – There was no report presented from the last commission meeting. The mayor stated that there may be a volunteer to assume the board member position on the commission.

**Unpaid escrow accounts** – The secretary reported that aside from the previously reviewed payment from Mr. Rainer, there was no change to the problem accounts and he will be sending follow-up letters. Notices of shortage for other accounts will be sent ASAP. There is no update on possible avenues to pursue collection from either the Borough's or board's attorneys.

**2008 Budget** – Suzanne reported that budgets continue to be reviewed and the board is about at limit. She also explained that charges for COAH work are being paid from the Housing Fund.

**Minor Site Plan Applications** – Mary Lodato reviewed that one application had been submitted and approved by her and the chair for a music teacher to operate a home occupation to provide music lessons in her home at 515 Howard Street. The applicant was present and briefed the board on her plans and qualifications.

**Mandatory Education** – The secretary reviewed that the final course offerings by NJPO for this year are in Atlantic City during the League of Municipalities convention and that he is following up with planning and zoning members that need to attend a session.

**Side yard Setbacks for Accessory Buildings in the Rear Yard** – The secretary reviewed that one of the zoning board's recommendations for possible residential district zoning code changes was for a separate side yard setback requirement for accessory buildings in the rear yard of a property. The current code does not distinguish from the requirement for the primary structure. At least two recent inquiries by homeowners concerning sheds in the rear yard brought up this condition as presenting a severe hardship if they had to comply and the homeowner's concern that this didn't seem fair given that the majority of existing similar structures were not in compliance. The zoning board still feels this is a matter that should be included in any revisions to the current code.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Invoices and vouchers:**

1. 10/8/08, Raymond and Coleman, \$370.00, for general business advice, services, and September meeting attendance.
2. 10/8/08, Raymond and Coleman, \$294.00, for work during September on the Brandenburger/Beneficial Bank application. PAY FROM ESCROW
3. 10/8/08, Alaimo Associates, \$764.25, for work during September on the Brandenburger/Beneficial Bank application. PAY FROM ESCROW

A motion was made by Suzanne Wells, seconded by Mayor Martin, and unanimously approved to pay the vouchers as presented. The secretary will have them signed and submitted for payment.

**Application Fees and Escrow Requirements** – The board agrees that both fees and escrow requirements need to be reviewed and possibly increased. A structure for establishing escrow amounts especially for site plans needs to be considered to help alleviate account shortage conditions. Various amounts were discussed. Tom Coleman recommended that other neighboring town's structures be reviewed. The secretary commented that he feels the two sections of the code dealing with site plans and subdivisions respectively need to contain language regarding fees and escrow requirements. Tom Coleman stated he would approach Bruce Gunn on the subject. The chair feels that a range of low to high amounts as well as structures in place in other towns should be researched and discussed by the board and possible recommendations provided for Council's consideration. He asked Tom Coleman for assistance in acquiring the information. The secretary feels that any procedures need to help determine when and which professionals need to be involved depending on the content of the application.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – The chair noted for the record that there were no members of the public present at the meeting. The meeting was not opened for public comment.

**Meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM. (motion by Joe Creighton, second by mayor)**

**Next meeting is on 11/18/2008 at 7:00 pm in the Borough Hall.**

**Tape is on file.**

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