

WEST WINDSOR PLANNING BOARD REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 17, 2018

The regular meeting of the Planning Board was called to order at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, October 17, 2018 by Chair O'Brien in Meeting Room A of the Municipal Building.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, a notice of this meeting's date, time, location and agenda was mailed to the news media, posted on the Township bulletin board and filed with the municipal clerk on October 10, 2018 as required by law.

ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

Present: Sue Appelget
Linda Geevers
Michael Huey
Andrea Mandel
Hemant Marathe
Michael Karp
Gene O'Brien
Allen Schectel- Alt I
Anis Baig-Alt II

There were no comments from the public on non-agenda items.

LIAISON REPORTS:

a) Environmental Commission report by Ms. Mandel

There is a 40% increase expected in the cost for recycling. The commission met with the MCIA Compliance Team on September 28, 2018.

Mercer County Sustainability NJ Ratings Requalification is due in June 2019.

There was discussion about the deer management program. October to February is the county hunt at Mercer County Park. There are three certified deer hunters in the police department.

Mr. Dobromilsky said the planning board has the ability to impose deer removal controls on developers. Counsel Muller said that this could be a condition of approval. David Harris from the Environmental Commission said that there are different options for deer management, but the township has to apply to the Fish and Game Commission.

b) Affordable Housing Committee report by Councilwoman Geevers

They had the groundbreaking today for Project Freedom.

The committee met on October 4, 2018. Councilwoman Geevers asked Mr. Surtees if township codes for dispersing affordable housing units in a development means throughout or just in one building.

The township is planning a requalification program for affordable housing as it pertains to residents in affordable housing. Mr. Piazza will talk to Counsel Muller about how it will work.

MINUTES OF JUNE 13, 2018:

Page 1 under Liaison Reports, Councilwoman Geevers said that the last line in the second paragraph, "recertify rental units", should be changed to "re-qualify rental tenants".

Review of Condition on page six, Item 10 "impervious services" should be changed to "pervious surface".

Ms. Mandel requested that under Condition of Approval, "pervious surface on driveway and parking areas" be added as a condition.

Motion by Mr. Huey to approve the June 13, 2018 minutes with modifications and seconded by Mr. Schectel. Voice vote, unanimously approved.

MASTER PLAN DRAFT:

Mr. Novak from Burgis and Associates discussed Mr. Burgis' October 12, 2018 memo about preparing a new Master Plan. There are eleven plan elements. Mr. Burgis recommends the review process begin with the Land Use and Circulation elements.

On May 23, 2018 the township adopted the Re-examination Report. It was a recommendation of the Re-examination Report to adopt a new Master Plan as opposed to modifying the previously adopted Master Plan.

Burgis and Associates will do the Land Use Element. Arora Associates will do the Circulation Element.

Chair O'Brien said that the Economic Development Element should also be in front with Land Use. As soon as the Land Use Element is adopted any changes proposed from what the last plan has shown will necessitate the governing body to consider changes in the zoning ordinance. This is tied directly to economic development.

Mr. Surtees agreed that they should be done at the same time. He said that Land Use is key because with the Housing Element Fair Share Plan, there is going to be three properties re-zoned and a fourth property will have a change in definitional requirements for that zone. There will be four ordinances that have to be adopted affecting land use patterns in the township. Also, SRI is coming in for redevelopment on their property as is Princeton University, which means change in the Circulation and Land Use Elements. There is a 653-acre site (Howard Hughes) that was addressed in the 2018 Master Plan Re-examination Report that will be the subject of a Master Plan Review in 2019.

There are projects that will require use changes that will have to be reflected in the Land Use Element. Princeton University will present their concept plan for the Lake Campus on December 19, 2018. SRI will present their concept plan in the beginning of 2019 so there will be opportunity to see these plans in conjunction with the Land Use Element.

The Mayor, Counsel Muller and Mr. Surtees met with several property owners over the last nine months who have uses that are currently not permitted in the township. Mr. Surtees has a list of these properties. He will take a look at these in conjunction with the Master Plan so that the uses are put where they are best suited.

The board decided that the first phase of Master Plan updates should include the Land Use Element, an Economic Development Element and a Circulation Element.

The next phase of Master Plan updates will address the Storm Water Management Element as round two and Community Facilities Element and the Public Utilities Element as round three. The rationale behind Storm Water Management being separate is with the expected increased development in the next seven to eight years, it is important to ensure that the current storm water management utilities are capable of handling this development.

Afterwards, the board will address the Conservation Element, Sustainability Element, Community Forestry and Street Tree Element and Farmland Preservation Element.

Cost estimates will be added when the order of elements is agreed upon.

Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP):

Mr. Surtees explained that every ten years the township has to update the OSRP Element in order to be eligible for funding so that is why this element is being reviewed now. Mr. Novak added this is an optional element but required by DEP in order to participate in the Green Acres Plan Incentive Program, which provides matching funds for municipalities to acquire open space.

DEP requires that the Planning Board adopt the OSRP, but there also needs to be a public hearing by the Environmental Commission or the Township Council. Mr. Surtees said that the date for the Planning Board to adopt this is November 28, 2018.

Mr. Huey asked about the benefits of adopting the OSRP Element. Mr. Surtees explained that part of the OSRP is the open space plan on what properties are targeted for preservation; and two additional properties may be added to the current list. Once the properties are in the plan and it is accepted by the state, it cuts down on the paperwork staff has to do to apply for grants. One of the benefits to property owners when dealing with the town is there is no roll back tax on the property. Also, for property owners, we can close within 120 days, because we are pre-approved for all the properties targeted through the open space plan. So money can come in from the county and state relatively quickly.

Chair O'Brien re-capped the Re-examination Report Guidelines, which say, "The Township should consider conducting an analysis to evaluate the present and future recreational needs of West Windsor. Such an analysis should incorporate standards set forth by the National Recreation and Park Association as well as input from the Division of Recreation and Parks and community organizations. This analysis should examine the changing characteristics of the township's demographics to ensure that its existing and future facilities will be responsive to the needs and wants of the community of West Windsor. The township should also look at feasibility of developing a public indoor recreation facility. Presently the township's recreation programs rely on the local and regional school districts for indoor space for programs during fall and winter months".

Mr. Novak reviewed Draft 1.0 of the OSRP dated October 4, 2018. He said the OSRP is a blueprint that recognizes the benefits of open space. In order to utilize the funds, properties that the township wants to acquire and how they want to use them must be identified in the plan. The document under review combines the updates of the 2002 plan and the 2003 Mayor's Open Space Task Force report, which goes into more detail about specific needs of open space, recreation properties, and future improvement plans.

Ten items are required to be addressed in the OSRP and are summarized on page six of the draft. The Action Plan includes a spreadsheet of certain tasks to be accomplished and identifies properties targeted for acquisition and some for other uses such as greenbelt, open space, farmland preservation, or recreation.

Attached is a memorandum from Mr. Novak, which provides a section-by-section summary of the pertinent changes and edits made to the Open Space and Recreation Plan Draft Version 2.0, dated October 12, 2018.

Other additional comments made concerning the OSRP:

Item 9 on page six, Public Participation, Chair O'Brien added that this Planning Board meeting was announced at the most recent Council meeting on October 15. Also, the Recreation Director, Mr. Jacobs shared the OSRP with members of the Recreation Commission so that they had an opportunity to comment.

Council President Miller questioned the reference to ninety-six acres on page 21.

Mr. Novak said that this is a general guideline of how much more recreation space is needed.

Mr. Dobromilsky explained that SCORP gives a range only for active recreation and the idea is to show need.

Ms. Mandel made reference to map number 8. Chair O'Brien said that the gray areas show parcels that are targeted for acquisition.

Mr. Surtees said that any property vacant and more than five acres made the list of 99 properties. All 99 properties total about 2,500 acres but some of those properties were unable to be preserved. Development applications came in and they were developed. They still stay on the map so that the developed parcels do not conflict with parcels that the township purchased and for which the Township received Green Acre Funding. Mr. Surtees added that a number is required for Green Acres because it is part of our Open Space Plan.

Council President Miller suggested that, when talking about the list of acquisitions, it be noted somewhere that some of these parcels were developed but at least a portion was dedicated for open space.

Chair O'Brien asked in reference to Goal B, Strategy 6, on page eight, how the township updates recreation inventory and needs analysis.

Mr. Dobromilsky said that the professionals working for the township try to assess needs all the time, and the list is re-prioritized to keep up with the constantly changing needs.

Mr. Huey brought up the need for trail maps.

Mr. Dobromilsky said that the Girl Scouts are working on this.

Mr. Church commented that every time you increase open space, you get an increase in deer population. Chair O'Brien replied that the goal is to increase recreation open space.

Mr. Dobromilsky offered to go through the resources on page 13 and make sure that all the amenities are accurately reflected.

Mr. Novak, in reference to Section 4, Needs Analysis, said that according to the general standards of NRPA and SCORP, we are in the range of how much active open recreation space is needed based on population.

Council President Miller suggested that a list of all parks and open space mentioned in the report along with the coordinating parcel numbers and location be included somewhere.

Mr. Dobromilsky said there is a guide for that, and it can be included.

Council President Miller also suggested there be consistency in naming active recreation, passive recreation, farmland preservation, etc.

Page 24, Court and Lawn Games, Chair O'Brien made reference to bullet three in the 2018 Update section. Mr. Dobromilsky said that the ordinance should be updated to address current needs.

Mr. Surtees said that once the Master Plan process is done, next will be a total revamp of the Land Use ordinance.

Concerning the indoor recreation center on page 25, 16.9 acres were purchased 120 days ago across the street from the municipal building.

Mr. Schectel asked what the recreation center can offer that cannot be offered through cooperation with the schools.

Mr. Dobromilsky said that this would have to be studied,

Mr. Novak added that he had a conversation with Mr. Jacobs and there are security concerns in the schools by allowing access to the general public. Also, a community center can be utilized as an emergency shelter.

Mr. Novak said that having this in the plan does not bind you to developing a community center but gives you the option.

Mr. Karp likes the idea of one central place to send children.

There was discussion about Bridegroom Farm and Rue Farm Park.

Councilwoman Miller does not think they should be separated since this is a contiguous parcel.

Rue Farm will be changed to Bridegroom Run Park North.

Chair O'Brien said there are three general categories of use of open space shown in the table on page 38.

Mr. Surtees said that an additional property is being added to the acquisition list as requested by FOWWOS. It is a 25-acre parcel between Howard Hughes property and Windsor Athletic Club on Clarksville Road. It is Block 8, Lot 13, and the address is 81 Clarksville Road. The property is privately owned now. Half is proposed greenbelt preservation and a third could be active recreation.

Chair O'Brien suggested that parcels such as ID #'s 36, 37, 42 and 43, that are reserved for potential schools be identified on the table.

Mr. Surtees said that the bulk of what the state needs to have, because this is our acquisition plan, is on the charts on pages 38-42. These numbers, blocks, lots and location is what the state looks at for funding.

Mr. Surtees pointed out that on Map 2, 50% is state, 35% is township and 15% is county.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Terri Jany
Recording Secretary