

CAPE MAY COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Will Morey
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Leslie L. Gimeno, PP, AICP

Planning Director

Established 1953

Cape May County Planning Board Minutes of the Meeting of January 19th, 2023 5:00 P.M., Commissioners Meeting Room

The meeting was called to order at 5:01 pm by Chairman Simone; he subsequently read the public meeting notice.

Following the flag salute, roll call was taken with the following members being present:

Member	Present	Absent
Mr. Ashman	x	
Commissioner Bulakowski	x	
Mr. Church	x	
Ms. Hendricks	x	
Commissioner Morey	x	
Mr. Simone	x	

Others in Attendance:

Leslie Gimeno, PP, AICP, County Planning Director
Lauren Purdom, PP, AICP, Senior Planner

Public in Attendance:

None

Introduction of New Board Member – Patricia Gray Hendricks: Ms. Gimeno asked the Board to join her in welcoming Patricia Gray Hendricks of Cape May to the Board. Ms. Gimeno said that Ms. Hendricks has a wealth of experience as a community leader and as a former elected official where she was engaged in the City Planning Board, Neighborhood Preservation Program, Open Space, and Environmental Commission. Ms. Gimeno said that Ms. Hendricks had also been an active stakeholder in the development of the County's Creative Placemaking Plan, plans for the Franklin Street School, and hazard mitigation planning.

Ms. Hendricks said that she was happy to be a part of the Board and looks forward to serving with her fellow members. Both Commissioner Bulakowski and Commissioner Morey complimented Ms. Hendricks on her community service and thanked her for bringing her experience and expertise to the County Planning Board.

Adoption of Minutes: Ms. Gimeno said that the last meeting of the Board was held on September 15th, 2022, where the main actions were the adoption of the Farmland

Preservation Plan as an element of the County Comprehensive Plan and Ms. Purdom's overview of the new County Data Book, which she developed. Commissioner Bulakowski made a motion to adopt the minutes of September 15th, 2022 as written. Mr. Ashman seconded the motion. All in favor, with the exception of Ms. Hendricks, who abstained.

Adoption of 2023 Meeting Schedule: Ms. Gimeno gave a quick overview of the proposed 2023 Meeting Schedule, where the Planning Board is scheduled to meet on the third Thursdays of odd-numbered months at 5 pm in the Commissioners Meeting Room. She indicated that the Development Review Committee Meetings are scheduled for twice per month, but typically only 1 per month are held. Commissioner Bulakowski made a motion to adopt the proposed 2023 Meeting Schedule; Mr. Ashman seconded the motion. All Board members were in favor.

Selection of Officers for 2023: Mr. Bulakowski made a motion to return the same slate of officers to their respective positions for 2023, with Mr. Simone as Chair, Mr. Ashman as Vice-Chair, and Mr. Church as Secretary. There were no other recommendations from the floor. Ms. Hendricks seconded the motion. All in favor.

Designation of the Development Review Subcommittee: Ms. Gimeno said that per N.J.S.A. 40:27-6.8, the County Planning Board "may by resolution vest its power to review and approve subdivisions... and site plans ... with the County Planning Director and a designated committee of members of said County Planning Board." Commissioner Bulakowski and Mr. Simone volunteered to continue to serve, and Ms. Hendricks volunteered to serve as an alternate. Resolution 1-2023 was presented and approved by motion of Mr. Ashman, seconded by Ms. Hendricks, appointing said members for 2023 until action of the Planning Board is undertaken to replace said members.

Director's Report:

Ms. Gimeno offered the following updates:

Municipal Redevelopment Initiative

- Background – 2019 County Established Initiative – idea is to help facilitate redevelopment activities in areas that need catalyst
- Wildwood selected as PILOT due to a number of factors including their Municipal Revitalization Index as one of most distressed munic. in the State
- Redevelopment Collaborative Agreement – City, County, AICA with County committing \$240k & City at \$60k for declaring area in need of redevelopment, redevelopment plan, and redevelopment study
 - City – adopt plan / provide tax incentives
 - County – bond in place for acquisition/demolition with commissioners approval; tech support via planning
 - ACIA – Redevelopment Entity; professional support; acquisitions; contracting; marketing

- Redevelopment Plan created overlay of zoning ordinance – key factors:
 - Shrink footprint of commercial district for new development
 - Create additional opportunities for residential at higher density (hopefully resulting in variety in available housing stock)
 - Implement design standards to elevate investment and aesthetics
 - Enhance walkability
- Highlights
 - Private sector activity – new construction
 - 5 of the top priority blighted buildings = gone; being redeveloped
 - Properties on PAC AVE in demand (spreading island wide – currently only 89 active real estate listings; normally 200+)

Ms. Gimeno said that the initiative was the recipient of one of 6 statewide Smart Growth Awards from NJ Future. She played the video clip from the virtual award ceremony. Commissioner Morey commented that the density incentives provided in the plan are key, as are the standards for elevated aesthetics and walkability. He indicated that floodplain regulations are accommodated in the building height requirements.

Mr. Ashman asked if the County had participated in any land acquisition in support of the redevelopment efforts. Ms. Gimeno indicated that although appraisals were done and offers made, no acquisitions had been made to date, and that the private sector was driving development in the corridor. Discussion was held on the BG Capital project and how the original intent had been to support J-1 Visa summer workers but that CAFRA and other issues had caused the developer to pivot to a hotel project. Commissioner Bulakowski commented on the beneficial impacts of façade improvement programs as part of redevelopment efforts. Commissioner Morey suggested that upscale apartments with modern amenities in the downtown area would be very beneficial to enhance the area.

Cape May County Chamber of Commerce Housing Task Force:

- Chamber to lead group of stakeholders in initiative to identify challenges and opportunities with regard to housing
- lack of “housing that is affordable” in the County
 - 59% seasonal housing (vacant otherwise)
- Associated problems
 - Lack of year-round rental housing
 - Finding/retaining year-round employees
 - Residents “Cost Burdened” rental and owners
- Planning Dept Support – data collection
 - 2022 Data Book
 - GIS Analysis – review Map

Ms. Hendricks said that she is a realtor in the Cape May area and characterized the shortage of housing options as being a “crisis situation.” She shared the recent example of having 87 applicants apply for renting a 2 BR 1 Bath townhome, which is an unprecedented number. Commissioner Morey said that there are many challenges with respect to sustainable housing and suggested that upscale rental housing with amenities

could be a part of the solution. Ms. Hendricks indicated that housing shortages are turning people away from the County, particularly young families. Ms. Purdom said that per Census data, the age cohort of 18-34 is declining.

DRC Committee:

Ms. Purdom gave an overview of the subdivisions and site plans reviewed since the September Planning Board meeting and provided handouts with project details.

- Subdivisions: no new lots, but many lot line adjustments; 32 applications impacting 82 acres
- Site Plans: 20 applications; 321 acres impacted; 11 projects on County Roads

Transportation Comments:

UT / DT Regional Bike Path Feasibility Study

- Funded via South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization
- Pennoni Associates hired by SJTPO through the RFP Process
- Evaluating potential routes for off-road path to connect the trail terminus in South Seaville (Dennis Township) with Beesley's Point Park (Upper Township_
- Utility rights of way are a primary focus
- Site evaluations have been conducted
- Seeking public input on the project and more information is available on SJTPO website
- Ultimate goal is to connect into the Circuit which serves the greater Philadelphia area

Mile Marking System –

- 17 miles paved off-road path from Ferry Road in Lower Township to South Seaville in Dennis Township
- Mileage Marker system developed by Creative Placemaking team
- Thermoplastic markers 1/10 mile; stop bars and road names placed at road crossings to help path users with orientation and location
- Going out to bid this month
- Target to have this phase complete before Memorial Day
- Phase 2 will be vertical wayfinding signage system; this is under development

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

Adjournment:

At 6:04, Mr. Ashman made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Bulakowski seconded the motion. All members were in favor.