

**WEST AMWELL TOWNSHIP
PLANNING BOARD MEETING
December 16, 2014**

The West Amwell Township Planning Board meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Chairman Tomenchok followed by the salute to the flag.

The following statement of compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act as listed on the meeting agenda was read into the record by Chairman Tomenchok: This meeting was called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice has been posted on the bulletin board at Town Hall on December 11, 2014 and has remained continuously posted as to required notices under the Statute. A copy of this notice is available to the public and is on file in the Office of the Planning Board and Township Clerk.

The following general policy statement of the Board was read into the record by Chairman Tomenchok: The Board's general policy is to end the presentation of testimony on applications by 10:30 PM and to conclude all Board business by 11:00 PM. When necessary, the Chair may permit a reasonable extension of those time limits.

The meeting was recorded via digital recording system and a copy of the CD is on file in the Office of the Planning Board.

Attendance – Roll Call

Present: Nella Hamtil
John Haug
Art Neufeld
Zach Rich
Hal Shute
Rob Tomenchok – *Chairman*
Chester Urbanski
Bob Balaam – *Alt. #1*
Jim Cally – *Alt. #2*
Planner McManus
Engineer Burr
Attorney Shurts

Excused: Steve Bergenfeld
George Fisher

Approval of Bill List

A motion by Mr. Haug, seconded by Mr. Cally to approve the vouchers for payment as listed on the 12/16/14 bill list was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Resolutions

It was noted for the record that there were no resolutions of approval listed on the agenda.

Applications

It was noted for the record that there were no applications listed on the agenda.

Unfinished Business

Discussion – Permitted Uses – Status Update

Planner McManus explained that she had reviewed that large table of permitted uses compiled by the subcommittee and whittled it down to broad categories of permitted uses. She commented that the next step is to determine whether or not the Board is comfortable with what is listed and if so, to then create definitions for each use.

There was a brief discussion on wind energy being permitted in the light industrial zone rather than being designated as a conditional use. Planner McManus explained that she structured the language that way because the State Statute allows wind energy in light industrial zones.

Mr. Shute questioned why the Township even has a light industrial zone and suggested that perhaps it could be merged into another zone. Mr. Rich commented on the existing vacant commercial space available and remarked that if the Township wants to grow, perhaps we should be looking at ways to help landlords find tenants. Chairman Tomenchok suggested that the merging of the Light Industrial Zone and the growth potential of the Highway Commercial Zone should be reviewed by the Board in 2015.

Mr. Shute asked if the Board wished to allow recycling centers in the light industrial zone. Planner McManus commented that recycling varies greatly and noted that there is a big difference between collection, collation, separation and repurposing. She stated the Board would need to give specific direction on this and establish a clear definition before moving forward.

Mr. Neufeld asked for clarification on home occupation. Planner McManus explained that typically a homeowner has specific office space dedicated within their home and there are regulations governing such things as who can work there, lighting and signage.

Mr. Haug asked why there are no details provided for heavy manufacturing. Planner McManus explained that she will provide definitions for both heavy and light manufacturing to clarify any potential questionable uses.

Mr. Haug asked if a seasonal event is really a use and commented that he would have an issue with inviting “Woodstock” to the Township because it’s an event, not a use, and should require a permit. Planner McManus indicated she will list seasonal events as conditional uses in all zones and stated that this will not impact large family parties.

It was noted that the Board would like to see car washes be listed under motor fuel sales and be conditional uses in all zones with vehicle sales being a conditional use in the highway commercial and limited highway commercial zones.

It was noted that Planner McManus will provide a revised table of permitted uses for review at next month’s meeting based on this evenings comments along with a clean version of the residential districts so the Board can then move forward with definitions. Mr. Urbanski stated that he would like to see a clean copy of the whole ordinance, not just the permitted use table.

Proposal for 2015 Planning Services for Ordinance Revisions from Planner McManus

Planner McManus explained that she provided the proposal at the request of Chairman Tomenchok so the Board had an idea of the scope of services needed for 2015 and could budget accordingly.

The following two details were noted during the discussion on next year's continued work on the permitted uses:

1. Planner McManus will create appropriate conditions for any newly established use. Any existing conditional uses are not part of her 2015 proposal.
2. With regard to updating the Township's zoning and design and improvement standards as necessary to address the relocation of regulations in the footnotes of the subcommittee's permitted use table, all of the notes and annotations will be moved into the ordinance with detailed regulations provided that are specific to the uses.

Mr. Urbanski asked about the status of the checklist review by Engineer Burr and Mr. Cally. Mr. Cally asked if it was prudent to be working on the review now. Chairman Tomenchok said yes and remarked that the objective is to simplify the existing checklist. Engineer Burr indicated he will work with Mr. Cally and submit a budget request to Chairman Tomenchok that he can forward to the Township Committee.

It was noted that the Board had no issue with Planner McManus's 2015 proposal and indicated that Chairman Tomenchok should forward all of the Board's professional's proposals to the Township Committee upon receipt.

New Business

Recommendation to the TC: Adoption of Ordinance 22, 2014 – An Ordinance Amending Chapter 109 of the Code of the Township of West Amwell (R-1A Zone)

A motion by Mr. Urbanski, seconded by Ms. Hamtil finding Ordinance 22, 2014 consistent with the Master Plan and zoning regulations was made and the Board unanimously, by roll call vote, recommended adoption by the Township Committee.

Copy of Planning Board Letter to Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)

Chairman Tomenchok noted that the Township Committee had asked him to put together a letter on behalf of the Planning Board opposing the proposed PennEast Pipeline. It was noted that the letter will be forwarded to FERC by Clerk Olsen.

Open to the Public

Chairman Tomenchok opened the floor to public comment. Seeing no members of the public come forward, a motion by Mr. Urbanski, seconded by Mr. Rich to close the floor to public comment was made and unanimously approved by voice vote.

It was noted for the record that Planner McManus and Engineer Burr were excused from the meeting at this time, 8:41 PM.

West Amwell Township Planning Board Minutes – 12/16/14

Approval of Minutes

A motion by Mr. Urbanski, seconded by Ms. Hamtil to approve the Board's 11/18/14 open session minutes with no revisions noted was approved by voice vote with Mr. Balaam abstaining.

A motion by Mr. Haug, seconded by Mr. Urbanski to approve the Board's 11/18/14 executive session minutes with no revisions noted was approved by voice vote with Mr. Balaam abstaining.

Mr. Shute commented that he would like to discuss the right-of-way easement on the Holcombe property at next month's Planning Board meeting and stated that he will be asking Mr. Cronic to provide some input for the Board to consider.

Mr. Urbanski thanked Chairman Tomenchok and Secretary Andrews for their service to the Board during 2014.

Adjournment

A motion by Ms. Hamtil, seconded by Mr. Urbanski to adjourn the meeting was unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM.

Maria Andrews, Planning Board Secretary