

BOROUGH OF RARITAN
Planning Board Reorganization & Meeting
MINUTES
January 24, 2024

CALL TO ORDER & FLAG SALUTE

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Borough of Raritan Municipal Building. Mr. Gara read the Open Public Meetings statement into the record.

REORGANIZATION MEETING

OATHS OF OFFICE

The Board Attorney swore in all members who were reappointed.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

• **CHAIRPERSON**

Motion by Ms. Carra, **seconded** by Mr. Colvin and unanimously carried to nominate **Chuck McMullin** as Chairman. Seeing no further nominations, Mr. McMullin was designated Chairperson.

ROLL CALL:

AYE: Mr. McMullin, Mayor Carra, Councilman Tozzi, Mr. Cunningham, Ms. Carra, Mr. Colvin, Mr. Decicco, Mr. Lopresti, Ms. Windrem, Mr. Murphy, Ms. Debellis

NAY:

ABSTAIN:

• **VICE CHAIRPERSON**

Motion by Councilman Tozzi, **seconded** by Mr. Cunningham to nominate **Tony Lopresti** as Vice Chairman. Seeing no further nominations, Mr. Lopresti was designated Vice Chairperson.

ROLL CALL:

AYE: Mr. McMullin, Mayor Carra, Councilman Tozzi, Mr. Cunningham, Ms. Carra, Mr. Colvin, Mr. Decicco, Mr. Lopresti, Ms. Windrem, Mr. Murphy, Ms. Debellis

NAY:

ABSTAIN:

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

There was a brief discussion about Ad Hoc Committee appointments.

- The **Technical Review Committee (TRC)** was reconstituted with only 3 members (Mr. Colvin, Mr. Lopresti, Mr. Tozzi) in the interest of avoiding a quorum.
- The **Pedestrian Bike & Safety Committee** was placed on hold.
- A **Bylaws Committee** with 3 members was formed (Mr. Lopresti, Ms. Carra, Ms. Windrem)

RESOLUTIONS

• **PB-2024-01 (MEETING DATES)**

Motion by Mayor Carra, **seconded** by Councilman Tozzi and unanimously carried to adopt the resolution memorializing meeting dates.

ROLL CALL:

AYE: Mr. McMullin, Mayor Carra, Councilman Tozzi, Mr. Cunningham, Ms. Carra, Mr. Colvin, Mr. Decicco, Mr. Lopresti, Ms. Windrem, Mr. Murphy, Ms. Debellis

NAY:

ABSTAIN:

- **PB-2024-02 (OFFICIAL NEWSPAPERS)**

Motion by Mayor Carra, **seconded** by Mr. Cunningham and unanimously carried to designate the Courier News of Bridgewater and the Star Ledger as the official newspapers of the Planning Board for 2024 and adopt the resolution, as presented.

ROLL CALL:

AYE: Mr. McMullin, Mayor Carra, Councilman Tozzi, Mr. Cunningham, Ms. Carra, Mr. Colvin, Mr. Decicco, Mr. Lopresti, Ms. Windrem, Mr. Murphy, Ms. Debellis

NAY:

ABSTAIN:

- **PB-2024-03 (PROFESSIONAL SERVICE CONTRACTS)**

Motion by Ms. Carra, **seconded** by Mr. Decicco and unanimously carried to adopt a resolution appointing Joe Brosnan of Van Cleef Engineering as Board Engineer and Matt Flynn of Savo Schalk Corsini Warner Gillespie O'Grodnick & Fisher as Board Attorney. The Board also appointed Mark Peck of Florio Perucci Steinhardt as Conflict Attorney.

ROLL CALL:

AYE: Mr. McMullin, Mayor Carra, Councilman Tozzi, Mr. Cunningham, Ms. Carra, Mr. Colvin, Mr. Decicco, Mr. Lopresti, Ms. Windrem, Mr. Murphy, Ms. Debellis

NAY:

ABSTAIN:

- **PB-2024-04 (BOARD SECRETARY)**

Motion by Mr. Cunningham, **seconded** by Councilman Tozzi and unanimously carried to adopt a resolution appointing Lou Gara as Board Administrator/Secretary .

ROLL CALL:

AYE: Mr. McMullin, Mayor Carra, Councilman Tozzi, Mr. Cunningham, Ms. Carra, Mr. Colvin, Mr. Decicco, Mr. Lopresti, Ms. Windrem, Mr. Murphy, Ms. Debellis

NAY:

ABSTAIN:

PUBLIC COMMENT & ADJOURNMENT TO REGULAR MEETING

Seeing as there was no public comment, Mayor Cara made a **Motion** which was **seconded** by Councilman Tozzi and unanimously carried to adjourn the Reorganization Meeting.

REGULAR MEETING

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order and the Board Attorney read the Open Public Meetings statement into the record.

ROLL CALL

Present

Mr. McMullin
Mayor Carra
Councilman Tozzi
Mr. Cunningham
Ms. Carra
Mr. DeCicco
Mr. Colvin
Ms. Windrem

Also Present

Matt Flynn, Board Attorney
Joe Bronson, Board Engineer/Planner
Lou Gara, Zoning/Construction Official/Board Secretary

Mr. LoPresti
Mr. Murphy
Ms. Debellis

MINUTES

- The Minutes of November 29, 2024 were tabled.

UPCOMING HEARINGS/PENDING APPLICATIONS (RARITAN CROSSING/AMRUTHA)

Susan Rubright, Esq. appeared on behalf of both applicants for the purposes of requesting a special meeting. She proposed that the matters be heard on February 20, provided the conflict attorney was available. She offered February 5 as an alternative since Mayor Carra indicated that 2/20 was a Council meeting night. Mr. Flynn asked about availability for the next regularly scheduled meeting. Ms. Rubright indicated that their Traffic Engineer would not be available on 2/28.

Mr. Flynn polled the Board for their preference. Mr. McMullin suggested that both matters be carried to 2/28/24. Mr. Flynn confirmed that the Board preferred to carry both Raritan Crossing and Amrutha to 2/28/24 without further Notice. Ms. Rubright consented and agreed to send him the proofs.

Mr. Cunningham asked whether the applicant was contractually obligated to Shop n stop for the parking spaces (because he was Noticed again). Ms. Rubright explained the Notice requirements given that part of the application involves parking spaces on that lot. Mr. Flynn concurred.

RESOLUTIONS

There were no resolutions presented for adoption.

MASTER PLAN CONSISTENCY REVIEW

Mr. Bronson spoke about the renovations to the municipal building. He advised that a courtesy engineering review had been done on the building that the Borough purchased which is not in a zone regulated for government use. Mr. Bronson advised that there would be no inconsistency with the proposed use as it relates to the Master Plan. Referencing page 2 specifically, he spoke about standards in the B1 zone. He explained that uses in the G1 cover municipal functions, which are mostly administrative.

In summary, Mr. Bronson related that after reviewing the Master Plan, the proposal appeared to be compliant with the intent and spirit of the zone.

Motion by Councilman Tozzi, **seconded** by Ms. Windrem and unanimously carried to accept Joe's report dated 1/24/24 regarding the municipal building at 9 West Somerset Street.

CONSTRUCTION/ZONING OFFICIAL REPORT

Mr. Gara provided updates on the following matters:

- Johnson & Johnson – Buildings 920&700 almost done; 1000&1003 still progressing; new parking lot expansion well underway.
- Labcorp - expect completion in about 6 months.
- 40 East Somerset St. (repair garage/convenience store) – close to being done.
- 5 First Ave. – (apartments upstairs next to Delucias) – On temporary CO.

NJPO Membership

Mr. Gara asked the Board whether the Board would like to continue membership in the New Jersey Planning Officials (NJPO). **Motion** by Mayor Carra, **seconded** by Mr. Colvin and unanimously carried **by voice vote** to continue membership.

New Board Member Training

Mr. Gara provided information on upcoming course dates/times and procedures for registering.

ENGINEERING/PLANNING REPORT

Referencing the image in his consistency report, Mr. Bronson suggested that the Planning Board undertake a courtesy review of the site plan of the municipal building. He spoke about several characteristics on the site, including building layout, increased parking, reduction in impervious coverage, new landscaping, pedestrian access, location of main entrance in rear, ADA space location and EV charging stations. Chairman McMullin suggested that it was consistent with his letter.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman McMullin opened the floor to public comment.

Michael Pepe of 810 Old York Road identified himself as a representative of the Board of Education. He advised that the School District was undergoing a strategic planning process which would involve three meetings for which he provided dates. He shared that participation would give stakeholders a chance to provide thoughts /views that are in line with the wishes of the community.

MISCELLANEOUS

Mr. Gara asked Mr. Flynn if he could provide guidance to the Board members with respect to Preliminary v. Final proceedings. Mr. Flynn advised that he would share a colleague's crib sheets with the Board that provide an overview of Board powers.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mayor Carra, **seconded** by Councilman Tozzi and unanimously carried to adjourn at 7:09.

Respectfully submitted,



Lou Gara
Board Administrator/Secretary

Approved: 2/10/24