

BOROUGH OF AVALON PLANNING/ZONING BOARD

Minutes of Work Session/Regular Meeting of November 8, 2016

Members Present: William Burns
Sharon Cooper
Michael Coskey
Neil Hensel
David Knoche
Michele Petrucci
Brian Reynolds
Beth Tipping

Members Absent: Sam Beddia
James Fleischmann
Thomas McCullough
Susan Rhoads

Chairman Hensel called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance. After a roll call of members, Chairman Hensel recited the Open Public Meetings Act Statement.

The Board first addressed the proposed minutes of the October 11, 2016. Several amendments to the minutes were requested. A motion was made to approve the minutes as amended by Mr. Burns, seconded by Dr. Reynolds with all eligible members voting in the affirmative.

The Board then considered proposed Resolution PZ #16-07, the application of Richard Hoy, for variance relief for building coverage, side yard setback, total side yard setback and width of drive aisle to relocate an existing house onto a vacant lot located at 409 22nd Street. Several amendments to the Resolution were requested. A motion was made to approve the Resolution as amended by Mr. Burns, seconded by Dr. Reynolds, with all eligible members voting in the affirmative.

The next order of business was a presentation by the Historical Preservation Subcommittee. Chairmen Hensel requested that Nina Ranalli, a member of the Historic Preservation Subcommittee and the Director of Avalon's Historic Center, to address the Board. Ms. Ranalli made several comments regarding the Historic Preservation Element of the Master

Plan which had been submitted to the Board as a draft. She took questions from the Board regarding same.

Mr. Burns commented that there are portions of the Statewide Construction Code which requires that buildings be raised above base flood elevation, or that their fire suppression, electric and plumbing systems be upgraded in the event that the improvements to a structure exceed more than 50% of its value. Oftentimes, the structure has little actual value and most of the value is associated with the land. Mr. Burn's opined that these laws could be a disincentive to property owners to maintain and restore historic buildings. Mr. Burns requested that Solicitor Marcolongo investigate this issue to determine whether there are mechanisms to avoid this difficulty.

Ms. Ranalli directed the Board's attention to Page 9 of the Historic Preservation Element draft and commented on the proposed process for evaluating historic properties and placing them into the Avalon Register of Historic Places. Ms. Ranalli advised that there are more historic homes in Avalon than one may believe. She also discussed the old Avalon School building and noted that the Historic Society has already retained the services of an architect to evaluate the cost to renovate this building. Mr. Burns suggested that the Borough should investigate incentives which may encourage property owners to maintain historic buildings.

Chairmen Hensel then began a discussion regarding the most recent Master Plan Reexamination draft created by Mr. Maffei. Chairmen Hensel stated that he would like to have a final draft created as soon as possible for submission to the Borough Council. Joe Maffei, the Board's Professional Planner, discussed the changes to date noting that many of the charts contained in the reexamination draft are now up to date thanks to Mr. Burn's assistance.

The Board began a spirited discussion regarding incentives to property owners to both raise their buildings above base flood elevation and provide additional parking spaces under the structure. Similar discussions took place regarding the Borough's B-2 Zone. Mr. Maffei was requested to redraft this section of the Master Plan Reexamination to state that given the changes that have occurred in this Zone, it is time to revisit the purposes and intent to this district and potentially revise same.

Reviewing Page 35 of the November 2016 draft Master Plan Reexamination, Mr. Maffei noted that the Borough's water usage and sewage generation has remained fairly constant over the last decade. It was suggested that modern water saving equipment, including sprinkler systems has had a positive effect on this issue.

Mr. Burns stated that he believes the Master Plan should provide more guidance to the Borough on numerous issues that he sees as problematic over the last few years. He believes that more attention should be paid to requiring consistent width of sidewalks within the Borough. He believes that the problem regarding the definition of rear yard setbacks from bulkheads needs to be clarified to avoid the difficulties that had recently occurred on 7th Street. Finally, the Master Plan should state that a more in depth investigation of permitting hotels and motels in the B-1 Zone should be conducted.

The matter was opened to the public, at which time Martha Wright of 7th Street addressed the Board and stated that while she is in favor of extending the shoulder season she remains opposed to motels and hotels in the B-1 Zone. The Borough should promote more events during the shoulder season and should promote crowd sourced ride sharing. She further stated the issue of rear yard setback from bulkheads should be left alone.

Doug McCauley addressed the Board again expressing his objection to hotels and motels in the B-1 Zone. He stated that the Master Plan should state that the Board encourages enforcement of parking regulations to avoid motorist from parking over sidewalks.

Solicitor Marcolongo requested that the Board enter into a very short closed session for purposes of approving the closed session minutes of October 11, 2016. That, in fact, occurred.

A motion was made to close the open session at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/Dean R. Marcolongo

Dean R. Marcolongo, Esquire

DRM:jr