

**JOINT SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
MAYOR AND BOROUGH COUNCIL
AND THE
BOROUGH OF CHATHAM PLANNING BOARD**

November 14, 2019 MINUTES

Mayor Bruce A. Harris called the Joint Special Meeting of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Chatham and Borough of Chatham Planning Board to order on Thursday, November 14, 2019 at 7:35 p.m. in the Council Chambers in Borough Hall, 54 Fairmount Avenue, Chatham, New Jersey.

SALUTE TO FLAG

Mayor Harris led the assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mayor Harris asked for a moment of silence for those who have given their lives for our country.

STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE

Tamar Lawful, Borough Clerk, read the following statement of adequate notice:

Pursuant to the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice of this Joint Special Meeting had been provided to the press on November 5, 2019 and a copy was posted on the Municipal Bulletin Board on the main floor of Borough Hall.

The purpose of this Joint Special Meeting is for the presentation by the Borough's Special Planner, Topology and SV Chatham PO JV LLC on the Post Office Plaza redevelopment project. Formal action will not be taken at the Joint Special Meeting by either public body.

ROLL CALL | MAYOR AND BOROUGH COUNCIL

On a call of the roll, the following officials were present:

Mayor Bruce A. Harris
Council President James J. Collander
Council Member Robert A. Weber, Sr.
Council Member Thaddeus J. Kobylarz
Council Member Carolyn Dempsey
Stephen W. Williams, Borough Administrator
Tamar Lawful, Borough Clerk

ABSENT

Council Member Jocelyn Mathiasen
Council Member Victoria Fife
James L. Lott, Jr., Borough Attorney

ROLL CALL | BOROUGH OF CHATHAM PLANNING BOARD

On a call of the roll, the following members were present:

Mayor Bruce A. Harris [Class I Member]
Stephen W. Williams [Class II Member]
Council Member Thaddeus Kobylarz [Class III Member]
Chairman Susan W. Favate [Class IV Member]
H.H. Montague [Class IV Member; Zoning Board of Adjustment Member]

Matthew Wagner [Class IV Member]
William Heap [Class IV Member]
Vincent Loughlin, Board Attorney

ABSENT

Curt Dawson [Class IV Member]
Torrie Van Wie [Class IV Member; Environmental Commission Member]

RECUSALS

Mayor Harris asked if there were any recusals or abstentions to be submitted for the record.

Mayor Harris recused himself from any discussions regarding the presentation the Post Office Plaza Redevelopment Plan.

PRESENTATION

Post Office Plaza Redevelopment Plan:

Mayor Harris turned the meeting over to Annie Hindenlang, Special Redevelopment Planner from Topology. Ms. Hindenlang gave a brief history of the redevelopment process, which started in November of 2016. Images were shown about the existing conditions of the site and its surrounding areas. According to Ms. Hindenlang, the objectives of the project are to revitalize the downtown area, create new rateables, support the downtown businesses, create a transit-oriented development and provide a diverse housing option for residents.

Jeff Briske, Principal Developer of Kushner Real Estate Group (KRE) located in Bridgewater, New Jersey came forward and thanked the governing body for allowing him to be present. Mr. Briske stated that he's been developing since 1979 and discussed KRE's developments through the state of New Jersey. Mr. Briske stated that he owns the Professional Building at One Main Street in the Borough of Chatham.

Dean P. Marchetto, founding Principal Planner of Marchetto Higgins Stieve Architects, located in Hoboken, New Jersey came forward and stated that he's been working on ideas for the Post Office Plaza redevelopment project for over 25 years. Mr. Marchetto, a former resident of the Borough for 24 years, discussed the concept plan which he stated is consistent with the redevelopment plan and will enhance the character and vitality of the downtown area. He explained that the proposed concept is for mixed use consisting of residential and commercial. He demonstrated the design and layout of the project and described the floor plan for the ground level. To mitigate the traffic impact on Main Street, he proposed creating a second exit from the development connected to Hillside Avenue. He added that the development will contain five (5) townhouse units along Bowers Lane.

James Ribaud, Director of Operations and Design for Arterial LLC came forward and spoke briefly about the exterior design of the building and the goal to create a public space that will feel like a plaza. The basic goals are to prioritize a pedestrian-friendly area, provide commercial segment for multi-purpose use, add planting and green infrastructure and to create a quality useable space.

Marc Kushner, Principal Architect of Hollwich Kushner, located in New York, NY discussed the history and aesthetics of the exterior of the building, such as adding a brick wall decorated with roses and other masonry features, a retail commercial pavilion containing glass throughout the building, big garage doors, rooftop dining to be rented for private events and a movie room on the rooftop to be enjoyed by the residents.

Bruce Stieve, Principal Architect of Marchetto Higgins Stieve Architects came forward to discuss the architectural concept of the project. He demonstrated a total of four hand-drawn sketches of the proposed building styles that were considered fitting for the area. The drawings were passed around for attendees to view.

Mr. Dean P. Marchetto came forward and stated that the project is aimed at conforming to the redevelopment plan of Topology. He further stated that he will provide a final plan at the Planning Board level. Ms. Hindenlang stated that the information provided tonight is not final; and the design will be developed according to the redevelopment plan and according to what compliments the area.

Council Member Dempsey inquired whether the open space is available to the public. She was informed that the area will be available for property residents only.

Council Member Kobylarz inquired about the number of parking spaces and rental units. He also inquired about the number of floors anticipated for the building.

Ms. Hindenlang stated that the project will have 230 units, at roughly three-stories; but around the railroad tracks, the building may rise to a fourth or a fifth level.

Council Member Weber questioned if the building will be approximately three to four-stories with the possibility of a fifth level. He further stated that more conversations are likely to occur should the building rise to a fifth level.

Council President Collander asked whether the five townhouses are three-stories high, and whether they will be rental units or properties for purchase. Mr. Dean responded that the townhouses along Bowers Lane will be three-story rental units.

Council Member Weber inquired whether the project will expand beyond what was presented at tonight's meeting. Ms. Hindenlang stated that what was proposed tonight is not the final concept, concerning the building size. She further stated that there is a deed restriction on the gas station which may prohibit further developments in that area.

Council Member Dempsey inquired about the number of retail spaces. Ms. Hindenlang stated that there will be three (3) retail spaces provided.

Mr. Montague, Planning Board Member, stated that more pictures and drawings should be provided, and the developer's intent should be better explained.

Ms. Favate, Chair of the Planning Board, asked who would maintain the landscaping and cleaning of the buildings once the construction is completed. She also requested additional information about the townhouses.

Mr. Heap, Planning Board Member, inquired about the square footage of the apartment units and townhouses. Ms. Hindenlang responded that the information is not yet available.

Planning Board Chair Favate stated that if the parking spaces are not reserved for the residents and accessible to the public to utilize, it can mitigate the parking concerns in the area.

Council President Collander proceeded to open the meeting to the public.

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT TIME LIMIT

Council President Collander read the following:

Hearing of citizens during the Public Comment section of the Agenda is an opportunity for any member of the public to be heard about issues which are/are not topics scheduled for Public Hearing tonight. To help

facilitate an orderly meeting, and to permit all to be heard, speakers are asked to limit their comments to a reasonable length of time.

Jack Drew – 32 Inwood Road:

Mr. Drew voiced his concerns with the number of residential units in the downtown area. He recommended the governing body secure a bond to improve the appeal of the area. He further recommended providing additional public parking.

Michael Dean – 181 N. Passaic Avenue:

Mr. Dean inquired about the owner of the parking lot. He also inquired about the alleyway utilized by pedestrians and what will become of it. Mr. Dean further inquired about the parking lot behind the stores and who owns it. Ms. Hindenlang responded that the parking lot ownership is up for negotiations between the developer and the Borough.

Ron Nicola – 25 Rowan Road:

Mr. Nicola inquired about the future of the Post Office Plaza Distribution Center.

Fran Drew – 32 Inwood Road:

Mrs. Drew voiced her opposition to the project. She stated that the Borough does not need additional housing however, the Borough needs a parking garage. She advocated for more parking in the downtown Main Street area. She suggested putting a parking garage along the railroad tracks.

Bob Blau – 45 S. Passaic Avenue:

Mr. Blau questioned the traffic redirection from Main Street onto Passaic Avenue and other back roads. Ms. Hindenlang stated developers are currently reviewing the different alternatives to redirect traffic away from Main Street.

Ms. Rozella Clyde - 33 Carmine Street:

Ms. Clyde stated that the project's concept sounds pedestrian friendly, but, not car friendly. She voiced opposition towards the wall being proposed by the developer. Additionally, she stated that there should be more open space and vegetation. She also expressed her discontent with the loss of the Post Office Distribution Center. Lastly, she stated that the building design should be more consistent with the area.

Tricia Finley – 35 Woodland Road:

Ms. Finley stated that she likes the openness of Post Office Plaza. She suggested that the Post Office on Main Street and the Post Office Distribution Center should be combined. She further stated that the project is too massive and suggested the developer build colonial homes instead.

Brian Barrett - 24 Fuller Avenue:

Mr. Barrett voiced his opposition to a 5-story building, explaining that the size is too massive and doesn't fit within the openness of the Borough.

Stewart Carr – 3 Crestwood Road, Chatham Township:

Mr. Carr expressed concerns about the size of the project versus the size of the land. He further inquired about the fiscal benefit of the project to the Borough. Ms. Hindenlang responded that the developer and the Borough are a month or two away from that process.

Harry Clayton – 137 Fairmount Avenue:

Mr. Clayton voiced his support for the project, stating that the project is consistent with the redevelopment plan and will help retail stores on Main Street. He inquired how the alleyway would be incorporated into the redevelopment.

Mary English – 380 Main Street:

Ms. English voiced her opposition to the project, stating that it will make the area more congested. She stated that rental units may change the character of the Borough and is in opposition to a 5-story building.

Shell Lee – 30 Edgehill Avenue:

Mr. Lee inquired about a 3-level parking garage. Mr. Hindenlang responded that the parking levels will be based upon the number of units in the building.

Michael Dean – 181 N. Passaic Avenue:

Mr. Dean asked the Council to inform the residents that the Post Office building is not owned by the Post Office.

Tricia Finley – 35 Woodland Rd:

Ms. Finley stated that the Post Office sorting facility is beneficial for the community. She further expressed concerns about indoor parking areas, suggesting that outdoor parking is preferred and safer.

Fran Drew – 32 Inwood Road:

Ms. Drew stated that the Post Office in Chatham should remain the same or be created like the Post Office in the Borough of Madison.

Phil Kron – 127 River Edge Road, Chatham Township:

Mr. Kron voiced his opposition for a 5-story building and further expressed concerns with parking. Ms. Hindenlang informed the public that the information discussed at tonight's meeting will be posted on the Borough's website.

Seeing no one else wishing to comment, Council President Collander closed the public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no further business to conduct at the Special Joint Meeting, Council President Collander entertained a motion to adjourn.

Council Member Mathiasen made a motion to adjourn the Special Joint Meeting at 9:35 p.m., seconded by Council Member Kobylarz. The motion unanimously passed.

Respectfully Submitted:

Tamar Lawful, RMC
Borough Clerk
BOROUGH OF CHATHAM