

**Borough of Watchung
Planning Board Meeting
May 20th, 2014**

Minutes

Chairman Schaefer called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Salute to the flag. The Chair called for a roll call. Present at the call of the roll were:

Schaefer (X) Boyd (X) Desnoyers (A) Ellis (A) Haveson (X) Nehls (A) Pennett (X)
Pote (X) Speeney (X) Hartmann(X) Mr. Ellis arrived at 7:38p.m.

Linnus (X) Herits (X)

Chairman Schaefer indicated that there was a quorum to conduct business. Chairman Schaefer stated that this meeting was being held in compliance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 of the Open Public Meetings Law and proper notification of this meeting has been made.

Chairman Schaefer asked for a motion to approve the minutes of April 15, 2014 motioned by Mr. Boyd, seconded by Mayor Pote. Hearing no discussion it was approved on a voice vote.

Chairman Schaefer said that COAH will be coming out with new rules to be published June 2nd 2014, with a 60 day public comment period after that the new rules will possibly be adopted November 17th 2014. There will be a meeting June 9th. The third round is now based on 2014-2024 instead of 2004-2018. There are some discrepancies with prior round calculations. The formula for 1987-1999 prior round shows 213 units however the earlier rules show 206. This will need to be clarified by COAH. The Mayor and Counsel instructed Marcia Shiffman from Maser to review the new rules. The Chair called for a motion to authorize attorney, Frank Linnus to research the new COAH rules, Ms. Shiffman's report and get back to us at the June 17th meeting. The motion was made by Mr. Haveson and seconded by Mayor Pote. Mr. Haveson questioned whether or not it was duplication of efforts by Ms. Shiffman and Mr. Linnus. Chairman Schaefer clarified that Mr. Linnus' review of the reports was from a planning board perspective i.e. how it would affect the master plan and zoning ordinances. Mayor Pote added that it is important to understand COAH changes from a planning board perspective so that we know what the issues and risks are and what to do to fulfill our obligation. Mr. Ellis does not support the motion as it is proposed. He suggested that we use the League of Municipalities organization to see how the changes are going to affect the municipalities in New Jersey in their judgment at no charge. Once we receive their review, if there is something that applies to Watchung that would require further review then we would give it to Mr. Linnus. Mr. Ellis said that this would be his suggestion and does not support the motion as it stands now. Mr. Herits said we should wait until our meeting with Ms. Shiffman, Mr. Cruz and the COAH committee members, to see how the new regulations are going to affect Watchung Borough before we move forward. After hearing Mr. Ellis' input Mayor Pote said they should wait until they have input from our

COAH committee members after their meeting.

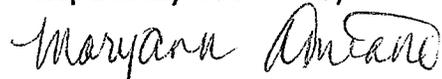
After discussion, Chairman Schaefer asked for a motion to table the original motion (Mr. Linnus' research of the new COAH rules). That motion was made by Chairman Schaefer and seconded by Mr. Speeney. The Chairman called for a voice vote. All were in favor except Mr. Ellis, who voted no. Motion is passed, and the original motion was tabled. Chairman Schaefer said they would wait for the report from the COAH committee.

Berkeley Heights has approved building 174 room Embassy Suites Hotel on the Connell site. Chairman Schaefer met with the Law and Ordinance committee on house size versus lot size. Topic of discussion for several years has been to limit the size of a house. There has been an issue of homes either being demolished and rebuilt or added onto that are oversized and out of character to the neighborhood. At that time our suggestion was to either cap the floor area, do a floor area ratio or do building coverage. Mark Healy's recommendation was to do height versus set back ratio. Most of these houses conform and we are not looking to take away resident's rights. Mayor Pote said Mr. Healy's recommendation doesn't apply to residents who buy three lots and build something like we have on Washington Rock. Deb Joren had requested a list of homes from Carolyn Taylor that were either knocked down and re-built or added onto in the last two years that take up most of the building lot so that the committee can look at them to see if there's anything they want to do. Mayor Pote feels very strongly that there should be a footprint max for Watchung no matter how many lots you have. Even though the impervious surface is low, there still needs to be a footprint max. He would like to see the board work on a max size with respect to the lot and the part of town where it is located. Carolyn said she would get together a small list for Law and Ordinance committee.

Chairman Schaefer thanked Mr. Speeney for his service to the borough and the board over the years.

Hearing no more discussion, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:19 p.m. until the next meeting of June, 17th, 1014.

Respectfully Submitted,



Maryann Amiano
Planning Board Clerk