

Shamong Township
July 21, 2015

A meeting of the Shamong Township Land Use Board was held on the above date at the Municipal Building. The meeting was called to order by Gary Vinciguerra, Chairman, at approximately 7:13 P.M.

The Secretary stated that in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Law, notice of this meeting had been published in The Burlington County Times, and posted accordingly.

Members present from re-organization meeting were:

Noni Bookbinder-Bell	P	Susan Onorato	P
Charles Burgin	A	Bonnie Schneider-Alt	P (7:23)
Doug Dimmig, Alt	A	James Sweet	A
Joseph Gigantiello	A	Gary Vinciguerra	P
Kenneth Long	P	Kathleen Wigley	A
Martin Mozitis	P	Kevin Wise	P

Also present were Peter Lange, Esq., Solicitor, and Dante Guzzi, Engineer.

Flag Salute

Application:

- Block 33 lot 8, 866 Route 206 for a C Variance to replace an existing sign with an illuminated sign. This application was postponed to the August 18, 2015 meeting due to improper advertisement of the public hearing. Mr. Lange stated the law states the advertisement has to be exactly correct, if it is not then the Board would not have jurisdiction to hear the application. There was a discussion on the process going forward. Mrs. Schnieder stated she would be willing to republish the meeting for the August 18th meeting. Mr. Lange confirmed proper notice was provided to all party owners within 200' of the property in question. As such, no additional notice is required and the record reflects no public is present at this time.

Mr. Long recused himself from further discussions.

Mrs. Schnieder joined the meeting at this time (7:23)

On motion of Mr. Wise seconded by Ms. Bookbinder-Bell, it was moved that the minutes of the June 16, 2015 meeting be approved as submitted with members' present voting yes with exception to Mrs. Schnieder who abstained.

Resolution:

None

Review of Shamong Township resolutions 2015R-50; 2015R-51 & 2015R-53. The secretary stated these resolutions were distributed to the members of the Joint Land Use Board and the

professionals prior to the meeting. Resolution 2015R-52 was tabled to the August 4, 2015 Shamong Township Committee meeting.

Mayor Long addressed the Shamong Township Joint Land Use Board regarding the resolutions under review tonight. He stated his desire is to provide a method to generate revenue for the Township and the resolutions presented tonight are a tool to provide revenue to the Township. Mr. Long also stated the Township is in the process of creating revenue with the potential construction of a cell tower on Township land in addition to a proposed cemetery. Although these are means to create revenue to cover Township cost such as replacement of equipment, road repairs, etc. - redevelopment zones could provide additional funds to the Township and eliminate the need to raise taxes. All the areas proposed for redevelopment zones are already zoned commercial/industrial. Mayor Long also informed the Board members that he has been contacted by the owner of Opici Wine Distributors which is considering moving their operations out of Shamong. Mayor Long would like to keep our existing commercial/industrial business in Town and provide a benefit to those business owners if they would like to improve or expand upon their current facilities. This could also make our vacant commercial/industrial properties more marketable. At this time Mayor Long introduced Scott Taylor, Vice President of Taylor Design Group.

Mr. Taylor distributed a six page summary of the Redevelopment Area Process and introduced himself to the Board along with a verbal summary of his firm's credentials. Mr. Taylor stated his firm will verify if the four (4) identified areas will qualify as a redevelopment zone and provide a study for the Board's review. Mr. Taylor stated a redevelopment plan provides tax benefits to the property owners as well as the Township. The redevelopment plan proposed is a NON-Condensation redevelopment plan and if established can create a strong tool to make redevelopment areas more desirable to attract new businesses while retaining existing businesses. Under current law there exist an opportunity for tax abatements up to 30 years in length. Also the statute permits identifying an area in need of rehabilitation, which is a lower hurdle for an establishment to qualify for tax abatement. If a property or area qualifies for this, the tax abatement period is limited to five (5) years. As an example, Medford Township used this tool to attract the Pop-Shop. In this case the base tax will remain the same, however the increased taxes realized on the improvements would come to the Township over the abatement period. Mr. Taylor stated Collingswood also used this as a successful tool over the past 15-17 years. Mr. Taylor stated his firm will be completing the study over the summer and dependent upon the Boards agenda requirements could present a report at the September Joint Land Use Board meeting. The Board will then have the opportunity to make recommendations for types of development in a particular area and even on a specific lot within the zoning requirements based upon specifics of the lot. This will be an ongoing process of review and recommendations to be made by the Board.

Mr. Vinciguerra inquired on how each of the areas was chosen. Mayor Long stated they looked into areas that are currently zoned commercial or industrial, not all industrial/commercial zoned lots were included. Mr. Vinciguerra questioned the cause of the decline in the Collingswood area recently. Mr. Taylor stated when the economy crashed those

communities which had recently experienced significant increases in the market often saw the largest declines. Areas that saw moderate improvements did not have as far to fall.

Mr. Mozitis stated Shamong is a small rural town with little need for commercial development. The residents continue to support farmland preservation instead of development. Mr. Mozitis also stated over recent property owners have invested a great deal of money already without any incentives. He believes that although this could provide economic benefits to the Township at some point it will steel funds from the County and School taxes which will increase regardless and therefore the taxes will go up for these purposes no matter what. Mayor Long and Mr. Mozitis had a brief discussion on how the funding will be allocated. Mr. Taylor stated the Governing Body has options on how to allocate taxes of new development/improvements within a redevelopment zone. Mr. Mozitis stated the argument is the additional revenue does not go into the larger distribution of tax dollars collected and therefore is not distributed to the school and county taxes. Mr. Taylor stated that there is no change in the amount of funding the schools will receive from the property. Mr. Mozitis would rather see the increased tax revenue allocated and if the Township needs additional funding they should just “fess up” and inform the residents their taxes are being increased to repair the roads, buy equipment, etc. Mr. Mozitis is all for other methods of increasing revenue for the Township, but not redevelopment. Mr. Taylor stated that this program will help Shamong retain existing businesses and attract new businesses. Mr. Mozitis feels this will stimulate unwanted growth and increased cost, the contract for Taylor Design Group is \$12.8K. Mr. Mozitis stated there will be additional cost for the Township Engineer and Solicitor which he estimates the total cost of this project to be paid by the Township is \$50K. Mr. Long stated that 1 redevelopment project could generate enough taxes to pay for most if not all of this in 1 year. Mr. Long feels it is important for the Committee to find ways to generate revenue for the Town as we have been losing funding from the state for several years. We have an aging infrastructure that we have to make provisions for and provide current business owners a means to improve their current buildings.

Mr. Vinciguerra requested Mr. Taylor to expand on the options to modify the types of development that can occur within the proposed redevelopment zones. Mr. Taylor stated the Board can incorporate some specific design standards, leave the existing zoning guidelines as is or perhaps permit a brewery which may not be included in an existing area. Mr. Vinciguerra asked if we can have control by single parcel. Mr. Taylor stated the redevelopment law does provide targeting specific parcels as well. The Board can develop as broad or specific of a plan as they desire. Mr. Taylor confirmed for Mr. Lange the Committee could develop the specifics of the plan if they desire. The ultimate plan would then come to the Board for review and approval if it is consistent with the approved master plan. Mr. Taylor then confirmed for Mr. Long that the Board could have the power to state a specific building or business type in an area or specific parcel if they choose.

Mr. Long disclosed Mr. DiCroce had purchased the old bank building across from the Wawa. The Committee did not have knowledge Mr. DiCroce was pursuing the purchase of this building when Mr. Long proposed creating redevelopment areas within Shamong. Mrs. Schnieder asked if we can do anything with the industrial park for instance to create a more

attractive buffer of the area as she lives across the street from the industrial park. Mr. Taylor stated we could incorporate landscaping design standards within the redevelopment zone to provide an enhanced buffer to these properties. Mr. Wise stated he feels we are providing current and potential businesses with a tool or incentive to come into or stay in our Town, which is important as we still have not filled all the lots in the industrial park. He also feels the Pineland Commission restrictions are pulling businesses away from our Town. Mr. Vinciguerra stated it would be nice to see the current businesses within the Industrial park to clean up and give these buildings a face lift. Mr. Taylor stated the blessing and curse of Shamong is that we are not close anything which does not make Shamong attractable to large distribution businesses. He believes the redevelopment plan would make Shamong more attractable to current and new local businesses. Mrs. Onorato agreed this incentive could benefit the town. Mr. Wise would like to see some type of marketing plan in place once the plan is completed. Mr. Long does not want to bring in new businesses for the purpose of bringing in new businesses. Mr. Wise explained he would like to see the marketing targeted to the current business owners. Mr. Taylor stated we might benefit of our local papers that might cover this topic. Mrs. Onorato stated we could also send out correspondence to our business owners in town as well.

Mr. Lange stated at this time the Committee has commissioned a report by Mr. Taylor's firm which, the Board will review and comment. Mr. Taylor verified the report will be ready for the September 15th meeting. Mr. Vinciguerra questioned if a new business comes into Shamong, how we can determine if we do not want a used car lot on 206 as an example. Mr. Taylor stated if the underlining zoning does not provide for a used car lot then you do not need to do anything. If current zoning does provide for a used car lot in an area, the redevelopment zone would exclude this use in the redevelopment plan. There was a discussion between Mr. Long and Ms. Bookbinder-Bell on why the redevelopment zone was split into four (4) zones. Mr. Mozitis is still concerned with the cost of creating a redevelopment zone and would rather raise taxes if necessary. Mr. Long verified for Mr. Vinciguerra that if OPICI completed the proposed improvements there will be an increased property value of \$3M+/- . The additional taxes on this project will more than pay for the cost of creating a redevelopment plan over 1 to 2 years. The tax abatement plan will cover a period of 20 years. Mr. Long would rather generate revenue instead of simply increasing taxes 2% per year as the schools do and thanked the Board for their time. He also informed the Board members to call him at any time if they had any questions.

Mrs. Onorato confirmed circulation of the NJ Planner was distributed at the last meeting. She stated all other correspondence had been distributed via e-mail to the Board members.

Mr. Vinciguerra opened the meeting to the public at which time there were no comments, and the public portion of the meeting was closed.

There being no further business, on motion by Mrs. Schnieder, seconded by Mrs. Onorato the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:30 pm with all members voting yes.

Susan D. Onorato

Secretary