

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL PLANNING BOARD FROM SEPTEMBER 10, 2020

The ZOOM meeting was called to order at 7:03pm by Chairman Dean Doukakis.

Present: Dean Doukakis, Frank Ferrese, Kate Russo, Jennifer Bonaccorsi, Jaclyn Parisi, Brian Shannon, George Gionis, Mayor Houck, and Christopher Morzinski who entered at 7:16pm.

Excused: Jeff Hanson, Kelly Santosusso

Also Present: Emily Givens, Solicitor, and Suzanne Ritter, Secretary

Business:

Preliminary Need Investigation Determination of Need Report, Block 24 Lots 4 & 5

Candace A. Kanaplue from Bach Associates was sworn into the record. Ms. Kanaplue stepped through her report for the area to need redevelopment based on three points: obsolete layout of parking lot, smart growth consistency, and NJSA 40A:12A-3. Questions from the Planning Board surrounded the parking lot on one of the lots. At this moment in time, the parking lot is not in accordance with today's standards; criteria D. The two lots need each other. Both lots combined equal 1.5 acres. Solicitor Emily Givens talked through a site plan application process for any future needs for these 2 lots. The viability of the lot outside of the church was discussed. The church is situated in the middle of the property taking up most of the parcel. The board heard comments regarding criteria H of the report.

Comments from the Public:

Jim McGrath was sworn into the record; whose business resides at 587 Haddon Ave. Collingswood, NJ; PRD Management. Mr. McGrath talked about the possibility of having Stanfill Towers and Saint Mary's Episcopal church working together to offer senior housing.

Mark Standing of 208 Fourth Avenue was sworn into the record. Mr. Standing stated that in his mind, affordable housing is a need in Haddon Heights. He also stated that the empty lot facing E. Atlantic Avenue should go to the Atlantic Avenue Elementary school due to concern of car traffic.

Carol Larro of 318 Ninth Avenue was sworn into the record. Mrs. Larro stated that there are about 246 apartments already on the White Horse Pike and on the second floor of businesses within the 500 and 600 blocks of Station Avenue. Mrs. Larro also reminded the Planning Board members this area is within the Historic District. Mrs. Larro is also concerned about the empty lot facing E. Atlantic Avenue. Mrs. Larro wondered if it would be better if this empty lot go to Atlantic Avenue School. Mrs. Larro wanted to know where the high-density map is located within Haddon Heights. Mrs. Larro also questioned if all the residents from Haddon Heights are on the waiting list to live in Stanfill Towers.

NOTE: The Master plan report and redevelopment plan report would be reviewed again if the determination of need request is approved.

Genevieve Bishop of 501 Green Street was sworn into the record. Ms. Bishop stated that since 1909 St. Mary's Church has been part of the Haddon Heights' community. Ms. Bishop hopes a portion of the building will be preserved. Ms. Bishop stated that the church is running out of money to maintain its building.

Rose Fitzgerald of 401 E. Atlantic Avenue was sworn into the record. Who will be the redevelopment authority for this project? Will it go out to bid for different architectural bids for what could be done with the site? NOTE: Borough Council will need to determine the answers to these questions.

Kathy Lange of 26 First Avenue was sworn into the record. Has Stanfill Towers purchased the property? The answer was NO. Of the 300 people on the Stanfill Tower waiting list how many are from Haddon Heights? About 20 percent of the waiting list are Haddon Heights' residents. In the 2016 Master Housing Plan Investigation on page 16 it mentions an over lay and the language of not having housing front the White Horse Pike. NOTE: Goals and Objectives will be taken into consideration in the next steps.

Anne McAdams of 401 E. Atlantic was sworn into the record. Mrs. McAdams stated that the Board of Stanfill Towers is looking at St. Mary's site for future needs as a good fit between the two organizations.

Richard Egner of 22 W. Atlantic Avenue was sworn into the record. Asked if a portion of the building would be used for church services? Answer is yes. If this building is going to be two or three stories high how can seniors with walking difficulties access these floors? There will be elevators for seniors to access the second or third floor. The 2 lots being looked at as a whole or not? The sites across the street were looked at from a site plan perspective.

Chris Morgan of 216 Fourth Avenue was sworn into the record. Mr. Morgan is a member of Borough Council and Historic Preservation Commission. He thanked the members for the civil dialogue held tonight.

Motioned by Frank Ferrese to recommend the area of in need of redevelopment based on criteria H; smart growth, Seconded by Kate Russo. All members approved the motion.

Motion to adjourn at 9:09pm was made by Jaclyn Parisi; seconded by Frank Ferrese. All members approved the motion.