OLDMANS TOWNSHIP

PLANNING BOARD

February 17, 2015

The regular monthly meeting of the Oldmans Township Planning Board was held on February 17, 2015. Meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Steve Smith at 7:00 PM. This meeting was held in compliance with the Sunshine Law.

**ROLL CALL**: George Bradford, Sandy Collom, Sue Miller, Anthony Musumeci, Tina Nipe, Jay Perry, Earl Ransome, Steve Smith and Cordy Taylor.

**SWEARING IN:** Jay Perry was sworn in as a member of the Planning Board.

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**: Motion was made by Steve Smith, seconded by Cordy Taylor and approved by all those who attended the January 20, 2015 meeting.

**CORRESPONDENCE**:

New Jersey Land Conservation Conference – March 6th in Trenton. Lou Joyce will be attending and giving a presentation about the project with Rowan University in which Oldmans Township is a participant.

Logan Township Planning Board – Amendment to Master Plan. Logan Twp. held a public meeting to consider the reclassification of a portion of the Township’s Recreational Waterfront Development Zone to Light Industrial.

Columbia Pipeline Group Flood Hazard Area Individual Permit Application – Application is for a project expansion along Oldmans Creek; to construct 9.5 miles of natural gas pipeline paralleling Oldmans Creek Road in Woolwich and Logan Townships.

Salem County Engineers Office – The Freeholders have accepted Gateway Boulevard as a County Road and will be responsible for snow removal and if any potholes arise.

Right to Farm Act and Resolving Agriculture-Related Disputes in New Jersey Webinar – Melinda Taylor has signed up to participate in a one hour webinar and invited any members of the Planning Board to attend. The webinar will entail recent changes to the Right to Farm Act and possible solutions to resolving conflicts.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**:

Environment - No report at this time.

Economic Development – Cordy Taylor met with New Jersey American Water to discuss the feasibility of providing water to Camp Pedricktown without using the water tower. NJ American Water will report back to the Township of their findings. Currently the water line stops at the water tower. The Army Corp of Engineers is interested in having water at their site and will help facilitate if possible.

NFI construction of Five Below is on track with an anticipated completion by June.

Master Plan Subcommittee – Two elements to be discussed at tonight’s meeting.

Planning Board Engineer – Not present.

**OLD BUSINESS**:

Conflict Engineer - Jay Perry questioned why a conflict engineer was not appointed at the January meeting. Cordy Taylor thought the appointment should wait until Chairman Bill Miller was able to attend the next meeting. George Bradford has spoken with John Bickel who has indicated that he is still interested.

Economic Development Element of Master Plan – Presentation by Lou Joyce. Mr. Joyce handed out two questionnaires that he recommends be sent to Oldmans businesses, municipal officials (planning board, Township committee) and other organizations such as the school board. It might be a good idea to combine the two questionnaires into one to get as much feedback as possible. Some of the comments he has seen in the past include frustration with planning boards over cost of approval and timeliness, as well as problems with building inspectors once the project has been approved and now being built. Mr. Joyce doesn’t believe those type of problems occur in Oldmans. The questionnaire can ben responded to anonymously. Mr. Joyce and Melinda Taylor will work on selecting the businesses that will receive the questionnaire. If a Planning Board member has suggestions for recipients, those will be accepted. Might be able to send the questionnaire with the tax bills to save postage costs.

**NEW BUSINESS**:

Farmland Preservation Element of Master Plan – The Township already has a Right to Farm Ordinance which will become part of the Master Plan element. This element will need State approval. Jay Perry used to be a member of the County Agriculture Board. At that time Oldmans was excluded from the ADA due to development. Mr. Joyce said the ADA was at one time concerned about soil type but is now more interested in expanding farmland preservation. Some open space funds are available at the State level. Cordy Taylor stated that currently the Township pays $15,000 quarterly to the County for open space. He would like to have some of that money be used in Oldmans Township. May need voter approval through a referendum to allow Township funding of open space. Anthony Musumeci has contacted the County and State inquiring about farmland preservation and was told that Oldmans is not on the preserve list. Cordy Taylor believes once the Township has a Farmland Preservation Element to the Master Plan and Township funds to preserve land that work can begin with the State and County to include Oldmans in the preservation plan. Until the Township has those items in place, it will be hard for landowners to preserve their farms. Mr. Joyce will begin working on the element and would like to meet with the subcommittee next month. Ultimately the Township will need to have an Agriculture Board or Advisory Committee for farmland preservation.

7:45 Planning Board Solicitor Bill Ziegler arrived. He will contact Niki Trunk about setting up a Township Agriculture Board.

In Need of Redevelopment Zone – The Township Committee passed a resolution authorizing the Planning Board to begin a feasibility study for the airport and truck stop areas, as well as a few surrounding lots. The resolution may need to be modified to include eminent domain language. Cordy Taylor stated that the County and Township are in the process of hiring a firm to complete a feasibility study for the airport. This area could be the next possible development along the Route 295 corridor. The truck stop has been abandoned for numerous years now. By declaring the area in need of redevelopment, future developers would be in a better position for funding as well as possible tax breaks. Mr. Joyce stated that it is optional whether eminent domain is used – should be included in the resolution as well as the actual Redevelopment Plan. All landowners would have an opportunity to speak at a public hearing. The process of redevelopment would include:

a. appraisal done on each lot to determine fair market value

b. offer fair market value to landowner

c. landowner either accepts or rejects offer

d. if offer rejected, goes to court – 3 commissioners determine fair market value.

e. eminent domain used as a last resort

The Redevelopment Area for Gateway Business Park was funded by the Salem County Improvement Authority. The Township would have to fund the study for this area. The DCA doesn’t recognized vacant land (unless a brownfield) as an area in need of redevelopment like they used to; laws changed. Even though the area that the Township is considering has vacant land, Cordy Taylor believes it might be allowed to be included because 1. it is already located in a district zoned commercial, 2. Lots are part of the flight path; airport safety zone extension and 3. Along the Route 295 growth corridor. Next step to take is for the governing body to correct the resolution to include eminent domain and to find out the cost of doing a study.

Anthony Musumeci inquired about subdividing lot 31 (currently 94.7 acres) so that the whole lot is not included in the redevelopment zone. Mr. Ziegler stated that as long as the new lot is bigger than six acres, the lot might be able to be subdivided using an agricultural subdivision. Using this method of subdivision means that only a property survey would be required, no public notice or wetlands survey would be required.

Mr. Joyce believes that the plan could get approved by the DCA within thirty days of their receipt, as long as the area has been designated a Planning Area I or II. Mr. Joyce and Melinda Taylor will follow up on the designation for that area.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**: No comment.

**NEXT MEETINGS**: Monday, March 16, 2015 beginning at 7:00 PM

There being no further business, on motion by Cordy Taylor, seconded by Earl Ransome, all agreed to adjourn the meeting at 8:20.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melinda Taylor

Planning Board Secretary