

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
BOROUGH OF MOUNTAIN LAKES  
May 1, 2017**

**ATTENDEES:**

Members Present: David Shepherd (Chair), Chris Richter (Vice Chair), Martin Kane, Cynthia Korman, Mark Laurenzi, Andrew Schinder, Austin Ashley, Rich Sheola

Members Not Present: Janet Horst, Khizar Sheikh

Guest: Paul Phillips

Attending from the Public: Steve Arnold

**REVIEW OF MINUTES:** The committee reviewed the April 3, 2017 minutes and agreed that they reflected the substance of the discussions.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

1. The meeting began at 6:00PM
2. Introduction of New Members – David Shepherd stated that the Town Council had approved the appointment of 3 new members to the EDAC: Austin Ashley, Mark Laurenzi, and Andrew Schinder. All were introduced to the Committee.
3. Overview of Re-Development/Affordable Housing Issues
  - a. Paul Phillips, the Borough’s Planner, provided an overview of the relevant history of affordable housing issues under the “Mount Laurel” cases and subsequent legislation and rules.
  - b. He explained that the Borough’s obligations under Mt. Laurel/COAH regulations had been satisfied through 1999 (known as the “prior round”). At that time, the plan was 62 units ‘short’ of the obligation identified by COAH, but this was remedied by adding an “overlay zone” (e.g., any future residential development, anywhere in the borough, consisting of five or more dwelling units shall include a 20% setaside of affordable housing). This was a common approach for towns that only had limited vacant land for potential development.
  - c. A Revised Plan was prepared by the Borough in 2008, but was never officially filed with COAH. As a result, the Borough is not protected against the use of a “builders’ remedy” and will remain unprotected until a new plan is in place and approved by the State.
4. Selection of Secretary – David Shepherd asked one of the new community members to take on the role of secretary to prepare minutes to the Committee’s meetings. Mark Laurenzi agreed to take on this task.
5. Affordable Housing Committee – Cynthia Korman report that the Committee will meet in May and she will report out at the next EDAC meeting.

6. NJ Transit Service Issues – Martin Kane reported that he is still in the process of contacting other nearby towns about poor service on our NJ Transit train line. An alliance of a few towns had been formed to communicate with NJT. He said that there are at least 6 towns, east and west of the Mountain Lakes station, that are not happy. For the benefit of the new members, the issues being discussed are:

- Takes too long to get to New York City, so most commuters use other means
- Too few trains run
- No weekend service

Martin hopes to have more to report at the next meeting, to see if it makes sense for the Borough to join this effort.

7. Updated Aerial Map/Parcel Maps & Review of Market Area and Rt. 46 Properties –
- a. Chris Richter provided aerial and parcel maps of the areas that could potentially be used for commercial re-development and/or multi-family units.
  - b. Chris explained that many towns are now re-vitalizing their centers with multi-use re-development (e.g., 4 stories over parking or retail space, 15 to 20 units per acre density, architectural controls for aesthetic appeal, etc...). He stated that this is a way to provide better amenities to residents, generate tax revenue, and address affordable housing needs, while minimizing the additional burden on municipal services. For example, he explained that 1BR and 2 BR rentals are typically associated with .25 additional students per unit – since the families renting these types of units are either young families or empty nesters.
  - c. Chris led the committee through the parcel maps to highlight some of the pros and cons and known history about each of them:
    - Route 46 Eastbound parcels
    - Morris Avenue near Fanny Road
    - Route 46 Westbound parcel at the Denville boundary line
    - The Market/Mountain Lakes Garage Area
  - d. Some highlights from the discussion:
    - In general, the fact that Route 46 Eastbound area and the Market/Mountain Lakes Garage area are made up of many parcels owned by different owners would make re-development planning difficult
    - There was a question about the historic status of the structure currently occupied by the Mountain Lakes Garage–David Shepherd said that he would look into that.
    - Cynthia Korman stressed that any efforts to expand development should be consistent with the “Residential Park” characteristic of the town, and she expressed caution that lots of residential units in the Market/Mountain Lakes Garage area would have too much additional traffic on Midvale Road
    - Chris Richter highlighted the fact that more vibrant town center has been desired for many years, in that many residents–new and old–would benefit from having more to do in the center of town.
    - Steve Arnold agreed that even as a 40-year resident he would be in favor of something new in the town center but if it were too tall he would not like it

- Mark Laurenzi agreed that residents would likely experience indirect benefits (either by having a more enjoyable town center/community or through increased property values) if these areas were to be developed or renewed, but he also suggested that the EDAC should identify certain parameters to target in making recommendations (e.g., increasing ratables from X to Y).
8. Social Event to Engage Commercial Business Owners – David Shepherd stated that this is a possibility.
  9. The meeting adjourned at 7:55PM

**Next Meeting:** June 5, 2017 at 6:00pm in the Borough Hall