

The Work Session of the Township Committee of the Township of Washington was called to order by Mayor Short at 7:30 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Comm. Kennedy, LiaBraaten, Roehrich, Tobin, Mayor Short

OTHERS PRESENT: Attorney Jansen, Administrator Coppola, Municipal Clerk DiGregorio, Office Manager Lyons

ABSENT: None

Adequate notice of this meeting was sent to the Observer Tribune and the Daily Record on January 10, 2013 and was posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building on the same date. This meeting is being held at the Washington Township Municipal Building, 43 Schooley's Mountain Road, Long Valley, New Jersey. Notices of this meeting were sent as there were requests.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

PUBLIC PORTION

Mayor Short opened the meeting to the public. There being no questions or comments Mayor Short closed the meeting to the public.

The Committee explained that it would be going into Executive Session for a brief period of time and then would come out of Executive Session and proceed with other business in Open Session

RESOLUTION #R-155 -13 – EXECUTIVE SESSION: Contract Negotiations: Chester Health Department

Motion was made by **Comm. Roehrich**, seconded by **Comm. Kennedy** that the foregoing resolution be adopted. Motion was carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Comm. Kennedy, LiaBraaten, Roehrich, Tobin, Mayor Short

NAYS: None

ABSENT:None

ABSTENTIONS: None

The Township Committee went into Executive Session at 7:31PM.

The Township Committee came out of Executive Session at 7:38 PM.

RESOLUTION

Local Government Energy Audit - There will be a resolution on the agenda at the Regular Meeting on December 16, 2014.

Federal Highway Funds – There will be a resolution on the agenda at the Regular Meeting on December 16, 2014.

DISCUSSIONS

The Committee agreed to move forward with the purchase of a generator for the Senior Center.

Mayor Short and **Comm. Roehrich** recused themselves from the meeting at 7:40 PM. **Comm. Tobin** stepped in to run the meeting.

Kings Highway Rezoning/Redevelopment.

A copy of the online petition opposing the Kings Highway Investment Co., LLC project was provided to **Municipal Clerk DiGregorio**

Greg Zeer a traffic consultant for Kings Highway Investment Co., LLC, stated that the traffic generated by an apartment complex would not be significantly greater than what currently exists on Kings Highway.

Township Planner Banisch questioned what the demographics would be of the people renting units at the proposed apartment complex.

Peter Mattone is the author of the Market Study distributed at the November Township Committee Meeting. He stated rental rates for the proposed apartment complex would be about 20% higher than at Peachtree Village. He projects that renters would have to make \$85,000 to \$100,000 per year in order to afford the rents.

Mr. Mattone projected real estate taxes would be over \$600,000 of which Washington Township would receive approximately \$111,000. Currently the Township receives approximately \$39,000 and, if the buildings were knocked down and the property was vacant, the Township would receive approximately \$14,000.

Comm. Tobin stated that the Highland Council is interested in what happens with this project.

PUBLIC PORTION

Comm. Tobin opened the meeting to the public.

Craig Newton, 47 Kings Highway, is a property manager for apartment complexes. He stated that he believes the traffic projections are too low, and that the income projections for the proposed renters are too high. He also believes that renters are not invested in their community.

Allan Mallams, 147 Kings Highway, believes there will be a greater traffic impact than stated by Kings Highway Investment Co., LLC. He does not think this apartment complex is in the best interest of the community.

Michael Dacey, 153 Kings Highway, believes there will be more traffic than stated. He would like to know how the site will be cleaned up when USR Optonix leaves, and he believes additional children will burden the school system.

Richard Blanchard, from Kings Highway Co., LLC, responded to the question about site clean up. Remediation is the responsibility of USR Optonix and they have completed the clean up. All records go to the DEP for monitoring. No further action needs to be taken at this time. Water and sewer are in place at the site.

Denise Newton, 47 Kings Highway, would like to know what contaminants are in the environment because of the activities at USR Optonix.

Frank Baggio, 190 Kings Highway, believes traffic will be a problem and the expense of additional students within the district will be a burden.

Fred McQuaide, 185 Kings Highway, does not believe Kings Highway can handle the additional traffic. It is a dangerous road to begin with and adding more cars will make it more dangerous. The new apartments on 57 towards Hackettstown are still not full yet. When they are, traffic will further increase. There will be an increased need for police support.

Jacqui Crowe, Kings Highway, is concerned about traffic. The Kings Highway Investment Co., LLC plan indicates that there will not be any government subsidized residents. That would be discriminatory and seems to be a false statement. She is concerned about flooding at the site and the environmental impact.

Patrice Schaffer, 182 Kings Highway, wants to know what positive benefits there are to current residents.

Greg Isbrecht, 183 Kings Highway, agrees with all the points brought up about traffic problems, flooding, remediation, and quality of life. He wants to know if there are any underground storage sites, ground penetration studies, ground water contamination, wildlife on the property, or endangered species on the property. He asked how disposal of refuse from the current site will be handled, and how will storm water runoff be handled. **Comm. Tobin** explained that many of these points would be more appropriately discussed during the planning process if and only if this rezoning/redevelopment request is approved. **Comm. LiaBraaten** stated that clean up and proper testing will be done whether or not this project moves forward.

Fred Smith, 167 Kings Highway, is concerned about his children waiting for the school bus on Kings Highway now; increased traffic is even more concerning. He is concerned about the environmental impact.

Shane Fitzpatrick, 1826 Route 57, is a historian and professor at Centenary College, and owns 3 historical properties on Route 57. The impact on the historic district of Beattystown must be considered. He described restoration and other work he has done to preserve the area. Runoff from the apartment complex would impact the historic area.

Anthony Zarillo, 18 Cobblestone Lane, stated that his road will be impacted by the increased traffic as well. He does not feel the project is right for the community.

Vince Panella, 130 Kings Highway, would like to see the zoning remain as it is. A development would negatively impact the community.

Stephen Fenske, 1 Cobblestone Lane, questioned the traffic study numbers from the gravity model presented. If this property is rezoned it is forever and the impact will be far reaching.

Amy Drahouse, 118 Kings Highway, is concerned about chemical contamination at the property.

Lindsey Mason, 164 Kings Highway, wanted to know how this development will impact the value of homes on Kings Highway.

Brent Marelo, 92 Kings Highway, questioned the rental rates projected by the developer; he believes they are too high. He suggested updating the commercial buildings and looking for a commercial tenant.

There being no further questions or comments, Comm. Tobin closed the meeting to the public.

RECESS

Comm. Tobin suspended the meeting to allow for a brief recess at 9:53 PM

The meeting resumed at 9:58 PM. Comm. Roehrich returned to the dais.

DISCUSSION

Comm. Kennedy began a discussion about a fire chief's vehicle. The general reaction was negative.

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Motion to adjourn made by **Comm. Roehrich**, seconded by **Comm. Kennedy**. Motion was carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Comm. Kennedy, LiaBraaten, Roehrich, Tobin

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Mayor Short

ABSTENTIONS: None

The meeting adjourned at 10:14 P.M.

Nina DiGregorio, Municipal Clerk