

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Comm. Babb, Comm. LiaBraaten, Comm. Tobin, Vice Mayor Roehrich, Mayor Short

OTHERS PRESENT: Administrator Coppola, Office Manager Lyons, Attorney Jansen, Planner David Banisch

Adequate notice of this meeting was sent to the Observer Tribune and the Daily Record on January 9, 2014 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.

SWEARING IN NEW WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP PATROL OFFICER. Officer Ryan Olah was sworn in by Attorney Jansen.

PUBLIC PORTION. Mayor Short opened the meeting to the public.

Thomas McBride, Melissa Trail, asked about the number of apartments that will be built on King's Highway. Comm. Tobin stated that there is a subcommittee currently meeting with the developer to discuss the rezoning request and number of units that may be appropriate. The subcommittee will meet again in August.

There being no further questions or comments, **Mayor Short** closed the meeting to the public.

PRESENTATION. Softball Field Fencing. John DeSimone of the Long Valley Softball Association stated that they would like to replace/ improve the fencing and the backstops on the softball fields at Rock Spring Park. The Recreation Committee and the DPW have approved this project. There is no cost to Washington Township. Attorney Jansen recommended that Washington Township be named as a 3rd party beneficiary of the contract and a named insured on the certificate of insurance.

PRESENTATION. Long Valley Village Center Concept Plan. Developer Ray Rice discussed a plan to develop a new firehouse, single family homes, townhouses, a community center, retail space and affordable housing in the center of Long Valley.

Mr. Richard Pelizzoni, an engineer with Whitman Company, 7 Pleasant Hill Road, Cranbury, New Jersey, presented additional details about the proposed project and the proposed partial bypass road.

Mayor Short stated that the community center would be a turnkey operation. The Township would not operate or maintain the facility; they would lease it to an organization like a YMCA. Funds received from the lease would be used to offset membership fees for residents.

Township Planner Banisch stated that the conceptual plan addresses long standing issues within the Township's Master Plan, including: affordable housing, a bypass road, and a community center. Mr. Banisch indicated that he, Mayor Short, Administrator Coppola, Comm. Babb, and Mr. Rice met with the Highlands Council and their reaction to the proposed plan was favorable.

Comm. Roehrich expressed concern about the impact on agriculture and stated that surrounding preserved farmland must be considered. Mr. Banisch reassured him that the Highlands Master Plan mandates such a review.

Comm. Tobin questioned if water and sewer is available. Mr. Rice said it is.

Comm. Tobin asked what would happen if the County did not finish the other portion of the bypass road, as this would add congestion to the downtown area. He also expressed concern that the COAH units are off by themselves, and not incorporated into other housing.

Comm. Tobin would like to see bike lanes and access trails other than from the Ballantine parcel.

Mr. Rice stated for the record that he will provide a financial guarantee, in the amount of 3 million dollars, to assure construction of the community center.

PUBLIC PORTION. Mayor Short opened the meeting to the public.

Chris Olsen, 59 North Four Bridges Road, stated that the proposed homes behind the middle school appear to be cookie cutter parcels. She suggested varied sized lots for more diversity. She also suggested the stone building next to the bridge should be repaired.

Mayor Short responded that there is a party interested in purchasing the stone building and this structure would likely be incorporated into the proposed Village Center.

Tom McBride, 1 Melissa Trail, commented that if the bypass were completed by the County it would not be advantageous to the proposed development.

Mr. Rice stated that the future length of the bypass was considered in the plan and natural buffers would be incorporated into the design.

Harry Maroni, 59 Old Farmers Road, expressed several concerns: the location of the community center opposite the middle school would encourage students to cross the bypass; new homes would bring more students and this would impact the schools and busses; does the MUA have sewer capacity for this development; will the municipality complete an Environmental Impact Statement; and the presence of fire hydrant and gas lines on the Ballantine property.

Flora Akin, 98 East Mill Road, wanted to know if the land behind the middle school would be sold to the developer, and if so what would the price be. The new homes would bring additional costs of services to the Municipality.

Angel Garcia, 7 Markham Drive, requested information about the Municipal Master Plan and Regional Highlands Master Plan. **Mr. Banisch** provided that information to Mr. Garcia.

Chris Olsen, 50 North Four Bridges, wanted to know why development is a combination of residential and commercial. **Mr. Banisch** answered that this is simply **Mr. Rice's** proposal to have both, but that retail is encouraged in the center of town.

Robert Drake, Washington Township Fire Chief, expressed concerns including that the development will impact water runoff and the center of town currently floods in heavy rains. **Mr. Banisch** stated that storm water management is a criterion for any proposed development plan. Mr. Drake also stated that more homes and retail will impact volunteer fire and ambulance services.

Phillip Berg, 10 Waldron Road, had several comments, including: the proposal would change the character of the community; a community center swimming pool is not a priority compared to other sports programs in the community; why would the town want to put this type of activity in a sparsely populated valley when most of the population is on the mountain; the LV Fire Department on Fairview has 2 points of access and the proposed new location does not. **Mr. Berg** also asked if **Mr. Rice** is seeking approval for the project and then selling it to another entity, as he has done on other projects. **Mr. Berg** asked who will pay for the new traffic lights that would be needed. He believes that posting 3 million dollars for the community center seems low and that since the strip malls in Long Valley are not fully occupied, why does the town believe we need more retail space.

Mr. Rice responded to most of **Mr. Berg's** concerns including that he, as the developer, would pay for the traffic light. **Mayor Short** stated that there is no agreement with the Township. This is simply a conceptual plan.

Walt Cullen, 9 Laurel Drive, believes a community center is a good idea and needed in this community, and that this plan would help the Township meet its COAH obligations.

Jill Muniz, 18 Sycamore Lane, agrees that a community center will be a benefit for all ages and the community.

Comm. Tobin asked if the middle school would be serviced by natural gas. **Mr. Rice** answered yes.

Phillip Berg, 10 Walden Lane, questioned the cost of the community center and if the costs were higher would Mr. Rice still commit to building the building. **Mr. Rice** said yes.

There being no further questions or comments, **Mayor Short** closed the meeting to the public.

ORDINANCE DISCUSSION

Exemption Ordinances

Mr. Banish reported that this ordinance will permit residents and property owners to apply for and receive an exemption from the Township instead of having to apply to NJDEP for a Highlands Exemption. The applicable exemptions are described in **Mr. Banisch's** July 14, 2014 memorandum.

Comm. Tobin expressed concerns pertaining to exemption # 4, reconstruction a building or structure for any reason within 125% of the footprint of the lawfully existing impervious surfaces on the site, so long as the project doesn't increase the existing impervious surface by one-quarter acre or more. After some discussion it was agreed that **Mr. Banish** will amend the ordinance to provide that two signatures will be required for the approval of this exemption. This ordinance will be considered for introduction at the Township Committee Regular Meeting on July 21, 2014.

Checklist Ordinance

Mr. Banish reported that this new Checklist also provides more flexibility for the Applicant. This ordinance will be considered for introduction at the Township Committee Regular Meeting on July 21, 2014.

DISCUSSIONS

Resolution to promote the preservation, growth and development of NJ military facilities. This County endorsed resolution will be considered at next week's Regular Meeting.

Set up interview for Recreation Committee candidate. Interview was set up for July 21, 2014, before the Regular Meeting.

Mayor Short reported that the township was successful last week's Gov Deal Auction of a used bucket truck. The Township secured this truck for \$6,000. It has been examined and perhaps \$3,000 will be invested to make it road ready. A comparable new vehicle costs \$150,000.

Mr. Coppola provided road work updates. Prep work will commence on July 21 on Schooley's Mountain Road. Paving will begin July 2. Bartley Road will not be paved until after the start of the school year. Milling of Naughtright Road is now complete and paving will start soon.

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

AYES: Comm. Babb, LiaBraaten, Roehrich, Tobin, Mayor Short
NAYES: NONE

ABSENT: NONE

ABSTAIN: NONE

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 PM.

Nina DiGregorio, Municipal Clerk