

MEC Meeting Minutes - 05/28/2020

Chair: Claire Whitcomb

Meeting started 07:33pm.

Present: Ann Huber, Joan Maccari, Brian Monaghan, Stephan Stocker, Trina Mallik, Ellen Kranefuss, Bridget Daley, Claire Whitcomb, Maureen Byrne

Absent: Nicole Wood

Guests: Steve Shannon, Janet Foster, Brett, Mehek, Kathleen Caccavale, Marilyn, Lisa Jordan

Continuing Business

Master plan discussion. Claire noted that the town form allowed specific comments but didn't present a way to address the larger issues of climate change. These should be part of the MP vision.

Trina noted that the MP should align with NJ's goals for reduced vehicular travel and waste reduction. We will need to comply with solar (lifting the 10K cap), LED for streetlighting, etc.

Ann explained that the MP is supplementing a 1992 version. Council decided to fund only three elements - redoing the land use, historic preservation and the mobility/circulation elements. There is room for these large visions in the MP, but a sustainability element won't make it to this draft. Those ideas can be incorporated in the existing elements.

Claire and Ann discussed adding in a note that a stormwater utility is a goal. Claire is meeting with Susan Blicksteen and will ask. She noted that the MP gives future ordinances a stronger footing and makes them harder to challenge. MP should be guided by Environmental Resource Inventory.

Janet Foster, Co-chair of Historic Preservation asked: Do we want to live in a town where we want more commercial development to mix with residential development? She noted the importance of considering new uses for existing development, eg. Drew university. Is that another commercial/residential space waiting to happen? Will car dependence change and diminish the use of open parking spaces? Can empty parking lots turn into commercial/residential/civic development?

* She noted that it is not possible to eliminate demolition, but we can make it more rigorous to go through demolition. This is a conservation and historic preservation issue.

* Other top priorities for her committee: Create an inventory of historic sites on Rosenet and look at where those properties are impacted by development. In terms of variances, we should look at creative incorporation of existing non-conforming things, if that's a stated goal of the community. The town owns properties of historic value. They should collaborate fully with HPC

on that. Lastly, Transfer of Development Rights - gives more flexibility to zoning with the purpose of preservation of open space on private property.

Joan noted the importance of water use. We have our own well and the levels have just been dropping every year, if people are home more, they will use more water. Drip irrigation is an education opportunity.

Brett Cheadle noted that public health may need to be incorporated at the forefront of this MP since everything relates to it.

Continuing business

Brian's vegetable gardening newsletter was well executed with lots of readership.

Joan's polinator giveaway topped out at 165 plants.

Ann - commented during a discussion of stormwater utilities that it might be useful to arrange a presentation for locals and our engineer (NJ Futures).

Meeting adjourned at 9:33pm.