

A Special Meeting of the North Brunswick Township Council was held on Thursday, February 18, 2010 at 7:30 P.M. at the North Brunswick Township High School, 98 Raider Road, North Brunswick, Middlesex County, New Jersey.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Womack.

Roll call:

Present: Ms. Narra, Messrs. Andrews, Davis and Andrews
Absent: Ms. Nicola, Mr. Socio

Also present: Township Attorney, Ronald Gordon, Business Administrator, Robert Lombard, Assistant Business Administrator, Justine Progebin, Director of Community Development, Michael Hritz, Township Planner, Tom Vigna, Director of Public Works, Glenn Sandor, CME Associates, John Kriskowski, Municipal Clerk, Lisa Russo and Deputy Clerk, Milvi Weiner.

Ms. Russo announced that the notice requirements of the law have been satisfied. Notices were faxed on Thursday, February 11, 2010 to the following:

a) The Home News & Tribune b) Star Ledger c) North Brunswick Sentinel

Notice receipts are on file in the Township Clerk's office. Also, notices were posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Complex and filed in the Clerk's office on February 11, 2010.

Council President Corbin led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Womack began the meeting with the question "Why are we here?"

- Traffic Study – Rte. 1
- Economic Crisis Limits
- Options for Growth
- Residential property taxes must be controlled
- Proposed Transit Village
- Region will continue to grow – additional traffic on Rte. 1
-

The Process: Applications by the developers for the Transit Village (B.J.'s by Regal Cinemas). Traffic study commissioned by the Planning Board, paid for by the developer. Traffic consultant is Maser Consulting. Zoning Board of Adjustment and Developer must work together – objectives may differ. There is so much the developer can or will concede to the Township – at any time the developer can walk away or go to court. No action will be taken tonight. Public hearings will be held before action is taken. Speakers tonight will be Director of Community Development, Michael Hritz, Township Planner, Tom Vigna, Traffic Engineer, Maser Consulting.

Public Comment with Questions and Answers to follow: first time up - 3 minutes per person – 2nd time – 5 minutes per person. Public officials, professionals and developer representatives will be present for informational purposes.

Also in attendance, Lesley Potter – District Director for Congressman Rush Holt.

Director of Community Development, Michael Hritz:

- North Brunswick Transit Village – ordinance introduced to the township council – 60 pages – still being amended.
- Primary Goal – a rail station as the primary component of a mixed-use development transit village – The longest stretch on Route 1 without a station is from Princeton Junction to Jersey Avenue (14 miles).
- Community development – Long-term planning – producing ratable for North Brunswick taxpayers.
- Smart Growth
- NJ Transit – NJDOT – friendly land use
- Meetings actually started five years ago, 'Got Vision?'

How is this achieved? – an ordinance to create "overlay zoning" for the industrial 2 district. The ordinance grants zoning to allow a Phase I and Final Phase development only if certain criteria are met.

Four Requirements to Move Forward with Phase I:

- The site plan must provide a train station and bus depot.
- The developer must show and build all of the traffic improvements cited in the Maser study for Phase I and plan to accommodate the Final Phase.
- The project must generate minimum 10% of all its estimated energy.
- Developer must build 100% of the affordable housing - developers obligation township incurs as a result

"Phase I Features"

Maximum – two free-standing one story large stores such as Costco and Lowe's – totaling 370,000 square feet.

Maximum of two additional stores such as Kohl's and Dick's Sporting Goods – totaling 275,000 square feet only if multi-story or residential above stores.

Maximum of 50,000 square feet – restaurants and kiosks

Maximum of 175 hotel room

Maximum of 300 residential units

Ratable Math

***Estimates:**

Phase I Municipal taxes -	\$930,520
Current Municipal taxes -	<u>\$287,387</u>
Difference 2 ½ tax points	\$643,133

Phase I school taxes -	\$1,926.26
Current school taxes -	<u>594,920</u>
Difference	\$1,331,346

The Final Build Phase is conditioned upon the rail station and bus depot.

Final Phase:

Commercial features:

No additional large retail establishments
No additional restaurants or kiosks
Up to 175,000 square feet of additional retail in the same style as Phase I
Up to 200 additional hotel rooms
Up to 195,000 square feet of office buildings

Residential Unit features:

An additional 570 units are permitted only when construction has commenced on a passenger rail station.
An additional 625 units are permitted only when construction has been completed on a passenger rail station.
An additional 375 units following these phases only if designed for LEEDS.

This project will create traffic. Three major cooperative projects to improve both local and Route 1 traffic – without these improvements traffic will get worse, with no project planned or funded to correct the existing traffic problems.

Possibility of Introduction of ordinance is March 1st and Second Reading and Public Hearing on March 15th

Maurice Rached (Maser Consultant)– NBTOD Traffic Study

Study Tasks:

- Data Collection
- Traffic Analysis
- Alternate Analysis
- Recommended Improvements
- Cost Analysis

Study Parameter: no credit for existing use – focus on significant existing problems – no degradation is allowed – more stringent rules than NJDOT – all cost to be borne by applicant.

Trip Generation Comparison: advantages of TOD – internal trip – capture combine uses – mass transit access – decrease trips – walking and bicycling.

The following summarizes the improvements that the developers will be required to complete prior to the sites being rezoned (see attachment).

Cost Summary: Final Phase – overall improvement to public after Phase I is done – opportunity to address existing problems – insurance against development without mitigation – no cost to township – completion of the Missing Gap.

Mayor Womack opens the Public Hearing at 9:05 PM.

Mr. Schwartz – resident of South Brunswick – thanked government officials and for this presentation – traffic study – impact on Rte. 1 South of here – Finnigans Lane and Ridge Road have become a parking lot – 2 lanes on each side – is the train station approved? – were putting the cart before the horse – first build the train station – state required 2,500 units – who will finance the station? Parent company?

Mr. Seber – resident of Linder Avenue – claims this is a “bait and switch” – big box stores – traffic meetings – no presence from D.O.T. Rte. 1 not on capital funding list – not changing zoning – does not want big box stores – what if Rt. 1 is not widened? – what happens to Rte. 1? Immediate terms – Commerce Blvd. and Cozzens Lane.

Ms. Potter – need to assure widening of Rt. 1 will happen – this is not Palmer Square in Princeton, this is North Brunswick.

Mr. Greico – resident of Arlington Avenue – Arlington by-pass – block Jersey Avenue to Arlington Avenue – train station on Jersey Avenue.

Ms. Miller – resident of Nathan Drive – compared to Princeton – no big box stores in Princeton - impact to local neighborhood – school – who will fund it – new housing – change whole picture – take out big box stores – more support.

Councilman Socio arrives to the dais at 9:40 pm.

Public Hearing con't.....

Ms. Kaye – resident of Seminole Road – office parks are empty – residences – 300 – no guarantee – ratable will not pay for a new school – referendum will.

Mr. Puleio – resident of Shady Glenn Drive – hearings started five years ago – he is against this project 150% - meetings with Planning Board and DOT – gambling with quality of life – 67,000 square feet of empty space – already empty stores at other shopping centers – what we have now is viable – six – seven years ago – J & J gave notice – closing plant and moving out – how much conversation did the town have with J & J? - strong rumor – J & J international headquarters – finished building in New Brunswick – strong rumor – office buildings with partner – 8 million donation.

Mr. Gianaras – resident of Salem Road – resident for 20 years – traveled roads – county needs to widen bridge at Adams Lane – 8:30 – 9:00 am – still bottleneck – gridlock at other lanes when bridge was closed – township to take an investment in this – retail space – Shop-Rite – Quiznos is gone, card store and Ace Hardware are closed or closing.

Mr. Bernasky – resident of Parkside Drive – who is going to be parking at the transit village? – where will people be coming from? – back up plan if plans do not go through? Township view as the major problem with this plan? (big box stores) – what if Final Phase does not go through?

Mr. Besold – so shocked – not what the public was presented with four years ago – received Master degree in Urban Planning – not going to build-out – not going to be sheek and trendy – movement of automobile - not the movement of people – 60% parking space – very disappointed in entire project.

Mr. Scialabba – do we allow the change if they do the improvements? What happens if they build B.J's and Costco's? - make improvements first and then build – residents are guaranteed traffic is better – we know we have problems – eliminate bottlenecks.

Ms. Paszaman – resident of Quince Place – different “footprint” from two years ago – Transit Village – cute little town with shops – live there – need things – pizza, cleaner, etc. – something more unique – give small businesses a chance – sense of community – center square – what about wildlife? – detention ponds – away from highway.

Mr. Theokas – resident of Woodmere Drive – commend Mayor and DPW on snow removal. This is 2010 – North Brunswick is not what it used to be – what are we going to build on the property – think differently – support the project – support North Brunswick events – “think” – keep up – stop the bleeding and have some fun!

Mr. Josephson – resident from Princeton – drives a lot on Rt. 1 – economy changed 180% - make progress on site.

Mr. Maimone – resident of Salem Road – give credit – brought out to the public – some good things – very disappointing – think practically – do not know what the answer is – no big box stores on Rt. 1 – fine-tuning – hotel and conference center – model for development.

Mr. Haas – resident of Hidden Lake Drive – opposed to dumb, stupid planning – 60% parking and big box stores – something is wrong here – serious consideration – does not look smart – people will drive through Hidden Lake Drive to get to the new complex – need ways to reduce traffic.

Councilwoman Narra leaves the dais at 10:59 pm.

Ms. Brew – resident of Gerry Road – resident for 27 years in Colonia Gardens – heard about a transit village – retire – go into the city – Quality of Life – young people – what kind of people attracted to live above big box stores? – library is too small – need a community center – growing community of young professionals – why aren't they staying in North Brunswick? – attract people to stay in area – companies looking for people with higher education.

Mr. Schwartz – if it was up to him he would he would build a nice golf course – commended Maurice on his presentation – will the timing of lights change? – Rt. 1 remain slightly decrease before the extra lanes – need to improve traffic from east to west.

Mr. Seber – will traffic from north to south decrease? – why is the library gone from community center- anyone from TOD here? – this is not Palmer Square – there are no big box stores in Princeton – 2010 wake up and smell the coffee – put big box stores on Jersey Avenue – Church & Dwight gone – widen Rte. 1 – hurt Farmer's Market, Exxon and Middlesex Welding – any plans to connect to Renaissance Blvd.? – widening of Adams Station – additional traffic from Rte. 130 – what happens if we do not widen Rte. 1?

Mr. Gianaras – how much actual land is being built on? – how much land is left over? – use land for sports frontage – in favor of Arlington by pass plan – suggestion of a traffic light – Orchard Street and Arlington Ave. is a dangerous intersection – using Arlington Avenue to get to Jersey Avenue to get to Jersey station – Jersey Avenue exit only – Jersey Avenue only to Rt. 1 – 3-way traffic lights – cross lights – in one direction.

Mayor Womack called for a motion to adjourn the Public Hearing. So moved by Mr. Davis, second by Mr. Socio.

Roll call:

Ayes: Messrs. Andrews, Davis, Socio and Corbin

Nays: none

Absent: Ms. Narra, Ms. Nicola

Mayor Womack asked for a motion to adjourn the "Special Meeting." Motion made by Mr. Davis, second by Mr. Socio.

Roll call:

Ayes: Messrs. Andrews, Davis, Socio and Corbin

Nays: none

Absent: Ms. Narra, Ms. Nicola

Adjourn at 11:29 PM

**Lisa Russo
Municipal Clerk**

