

MORRIS TOWNSHIP
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, MARCH 28, 2016- 6:00 P.M.

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CALL TO ORDER

The March 28, 2016 Regular Meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Committee was called to order by Chairman Paul Staudt, 6:00 P.M., in the Municipal Building, 50 Woodland Avenue, Morris Township, New Jersey.

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ATTENDANCE

Mr. Edward Burwell
Ms. Kathleen G. Hyland
Dr. Nicole Saphier
Mr. Paul M. Staudt
Mr. Leonard Posey

ABSENT MEMBER

Ms. Suzanne Kiall Benedetto
Mr. Bruce D. Sisler
Mr. Scott Schubiger
Ms. Susan M. Young
Kathryn Viarengo, Assistant Tax Assessor

APPOINTED OFFICERS

Timothy F. Quinn, Township Administrator

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PRESIDING OFFICER'S STATEMENT RE: ADEQUATE NOTICE – O.P.M.A. – (RECORD INSERT)

Chairman Staudt issued the following statement of adequate notice:

“Adequate Notice” of this meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Morris, was given as required and defined by the Open Public Meetings Act, as follows:

Written Notice was given on February 15, 2016 to the official newspapers, Morris County Daily Record, by email at least 48 hours prior to the date of this meeting, and a copy of the Notice was posted on the Bulletin Board in the Municipal Building of the Township of Morris by the Township Administrator and a copy of the Notice was likewise filed in the Township Clerk's Office and copies of this Notice were mailed by certified mail to all persons who have requested individual notice, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-19, all of which Notices were given at least 48 hours prior to the date of this meeting, and that said notice will be retained in the Office of the Township Clerk.”

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Staudt, led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES- JANUARY 25, 2016

GENERAL BUSINESS/DISCUSSION

- Short discussion on the EDAC brochure- the recommendations from the Committee were made, just need more images
- 340 Mt. Kemble Avenue update, the property is vacant and in bankruptcy, got its receivership. We were hoping to bring someone in to talk about the future of the property but, as Kathy found out, Colliers, who owns the property, is putting the building up for sale by a live online auction (ten-x.com). Information on the property will be posted on April 12th (item#B181-109). Auction dates: May 31st- June 2nd. Once the Committee finds out who bought the property, the Committee should discuss potential re-uses with the new owners. Currently is a commercial property but can go through the process of having it rezoned with the Planning Board and Twp. Committee. The space is valuable, especially once rezoned, it will have more flexibility. The Township might even hear from aggressive buyers sooner about the process of having it repositioned or redeveloped.
- 412 Mt. Kemble Avenue (class A office building) recap, purchased several years ago and renovated, almost ¾ occupied. Also, 350-360 Mt. Kemble Avenue occupancy level is at 50-60%.
- Tim brought the Committee up to speed on what is taking place with our low and moderate affordable housing. The Town had to file a declaratory judgement; determining what our fair share housing needs are. It was approved by the Planning Board/Twp. Committee last month. Included whether the housing will stand alone or be a part of different projects, also, the number of required units which fluctuate.

Kathy asked if we have an obligation as to how many units. Prior to COAH being disbanded and going into round three, we had approximately 126 credits. The Town gets credits (ie, if units are apts. or extending the affordable controls on existing property) so there are a lot of numbers in the mix. The number used to be 350 but has been reduced to 294 and the Township's consultant still needs to go to court.

The Township will have 24 units from the Honeywell Project, and a part of the Township's plan is working with the Morris County Affordable Housing Authority for 44 units adjacent to Morris Mews which will be a big part of the obligation. Also, a number of different, smaller projects are included. The Town's planner has put together a very viable plan that will meet the obligations. It actually exceeded the obligations.

The Township had two properties, Colgate and 1 Cory Road Associates that wanted to be included in the plan and develop apartments and reduce the commercial. The Twp. Committee felt it was more important to maintain the commercial and bring jobs to Morris Township, so those two properties were not included in the final plan for the housing element. That can certainly change with litigation. Leonard asked, "so we as the Township have an opportunity to deny the Colgate project because we want to make that space commercial?" At this point we would like to keep the property as a commercial entity, want more of a mix, don't want to lose commercial ratables, and create jobs and, as long as we meet our goal, and we already have 350 low and affordable units, we are looking at our obligation of another 300. We have been working with Colgate, similar to what we did with Honeywell, trying to determine the best use for the property, especially because it's zoned as Industrial.

Paul asked what role this Committee can play in all these decisions; obviously the Committee is here to help maintain and attract businesses to the Township. Would it be out of line to write a letter of recommendation? It would not be out of line and of course a letter from this Committee

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will certainly be taken into consideration. Paul followed up stating the filings for this project have been done, so has the Committee's opportunity to contribute passed? The filings have been done to meet the court deadlines; there will be a lot more with the court hearings and the Kingsley report, which is fair share housing representing most of the builders, and they have come in with another number.

Kathy asked if they give us a number of years to meet that obligation. It still has not been decided; you have to be able to build it and fund it, and that's the biggest consideration, making sure it can be funded. We need to make sure it's a viable plan, that each project proposed in the plan has a suitable funding source. Kathy complimented the Town saying, "The Town has always been aggressive and well over the quota."

Leonard asked if credits are given for different types of units. As part of your affordable housing plan, you need to have 25% of your plan. We are going back to the old COAH rules, following those guidelines because no one really knows what the guidelines are right now. The old COAH rule states that 25% of your affordable housing should be rentals: the Town has 120 rental units at Morris Mews and is looking to boost that number up with other projects. Also, get credits for family units (three bedrooms for two credits).

Ed asked do the units need to be occupied or just available. They have to be built in conjunction with every unit being built, can't be separated and labeled affordable housing. Ed asked if they would then go unoccupied. There is a waiting list; the Town contracts out to the Housing Partnership who qualifies and takes care of our sales. They have a broad market in the County and NJ, not just Morris Township. The Housing Partnership takes care of the marketing through the closing of the unit.

Will email/notify Paul the Planning Board Agendas so that he can monitor projects and see what the Economic Development Advisory Committee can contribute in terms of submitting a letter of recommendation/denial to the Planning Board/Township Committee.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Staudt, in accordance with standard procedure, opened the meeting for comments by the general public. The name, address and summary of comments and response, as appropriate, follows:

No Public Comment.

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ADJOURNMENT

The March 28, 2016 Meeting, with no further business to be considered, on motion duly made, seconded and unanimously (5-0) adopted, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 P.M., next to convene at the 6:00 P.M., May 23, 2016 in the Municipal Building, 50 Woodland Avenue, Township of Morris.

Virginia Murphy
Assistant Personnel/Public Info/EDAC Secretary