

**Borough of Watchung
Planning Board
Reorganization Meeting
January 9th, 2007
Minutes**

Acting as Chairman Pro Tem, Speeney called the meeting to order at 7:53 p.m. and stated that notice of this meeting had been posted at Borough Hall, filed with the Borough Clerk and given in the way of notice to the Courier News, Echoes Sentinel, the Reporter and the Star Ledger in conformance with the N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.

Present at the call of the roll were: Speeney, Boyd, Havas, Haveson, Page, Addario, Bennett, Schaefer, Ellis and Pote.

Chairman Pro Tem Speeney turned the meeting over to Mayor Ellis for the purpose of swearing in the Board members and election of Officers. Mayor Albert Ellis said that he needed to be sworn in first, and Mr. Rusignola swore in Mayor Ellis. Mayor Ellis said that Mr. Pote was the next person to be sworn in as the designated member of the Borough Council. Mr. Rusignola swore in Councilman Stephen Pote. It was announced that Carol Spratford could not be present at this meeting, and therefore could not be sworn in this evening. Mr. Addario was sworn in next by Mr. Rusignola. Mayor Ellis moved on to reorganization for officers of the Planning Board. Mayor Ellis asked for a nomination for Chairman. Mr. Haveson made a motion to nominate Mr. Don Speeney as Chairman. Mr. Haveson nominated Don Speeney, and Mr. Page seconded that motion. A roll call was taken and Mr. Donald Speeney was unanimously approved as Chairman. At this point, Chairman Speeney took over the meeting, and asked for a nomination for Vice Chairman, who would also be site visit committee Chair. Mr. Haveson nominated Mr. Jim Boyd as Vice Chairman, seconded by Mr. Havas. A roll call vote was taken, and Mr. Jim Boyd was unanimously voted in as Vice Chair. Mr. Boyd thanked the Board. Chairman Speeney then asked for a nomination for Secretary of the Planning Board. A motion was made by Mr. Haveson to

nominate Mr. Peter Havas as Secretary, seconded by Mr. Boyd. A roll call vote was taken, and Mr. Havas was unanimously approved as Board Secretary. Chairman Speeney said that the Board Secretary was also the chairman of the ordinance committee of the Planning Board. Chairman Speeney submitted a nomination for Mr. Robert Rusignola as Board Attorney. Mr. Havas seconded that motion, and there were no more nominations. A roll call vote was taken and Mr. Rusignola was unanimously approved as Board Attorney. Chairman Speeney said that Mr. Rusignola has been invaluable to the Board and has also been on the Ordinance Committee. Next on the agenda was to appoint Board Engineer. Chairman Speeney submitted a nomination for Mr. Tom Herits as Board Engineer. Mr. Havason seconded that motion, and a roll call vote was taken and Mr. Herits was unanimously approved as Board Engineer. Chairman Speeney submitted a nomination for Carolyn Taylor as Board Clerk. Mr. Schaefer seconded the nomination. There were no more nominations and a roll call vote was taken and Carolyn Taylor was unanimously approved as Board Clerk. Chairman Speeney, Mr. Rusignola and Mayor Ellis made supportive comments to Carolyn.

Havas read: PB07-R1, resolution to set dates of meetings for the 2007 year. Chair accepted the reading of the resolution as a motion to approve. Karen Pennett seconded the motion, and a voice vote was taken, and PB07-R1 was unanimously approved.

Havas read: PB07-R2, resolution to accept the By-Laws as they stood in 2006. Chairman Speeney accepted the reading of the resolution as a motion to approve, seconded by Mrs. Schaefer. Mr. Boyd asked that the masculine pronouns references in the By-Laws be changed to more generic pronouns. Mr. Rusignola discussed that some review would take place this year. A voice vote was taken and PB07-R2 was unanimously approved.

Havas read: PB07-R3, resolution to accept the Star Ledger, Courier News and Echoes Sentinel. Chairman Speeney accepted the reading of the resolution as a motion to approve. It was seconded by Councilman Pote. Chairman Speeney asked for discussion. Carolyn Taylor reviewed some research on costs with affidavits of publications and asked if we could use the papers with lower costs. A voice vote was taken and PB07-R3 was unanimously approved.

Havas read: PB07-R4, resolution to approve Board professionals. Chairman Speeney accepted the reading of the resolution as a motion to approve. It was seconded by Mayor Ellis. During discussion, Board Planners were discussed. It

was announced that Mark Healy would be leaving the firm of Heyer and Gruel. Mr. Healy will be available for the meeting of January 16th, and this opens up the possibilities of future planners and planning firms. It was mentioned that we might need a planner for the February meeting. Mr. Addario said that since Mr. Healy was familiar with the applications pending, it would benefit the Board to see if Mr. Healy could work on a consultant basis if his new job would allow it. Chairman Speeney said he would call Susan Gruel to ask if this was possible. There was no more discussion, and a roll call vote was taken on this resolution, and PB07-R4 was unanimously approved by the Board.

Havas read: PB07-05, resolution to appoint Carolyn Taylor for the 2007 year as Planning Board Clerk. Chairman Speeney accepted the reading of the resolution as a motion to approve, seconded by Mrs. Schaefer. A voice vote was taken, and resolution PB07-R5 was unanimously approved.

Chairman Speeney asked Councilman Pote, if he would lean on the Mayor to bring him up to speed. Chairman Speeney asked that more Board members be available to attend site visits when possible. Mayor Ellis suggested that Board members can visit sites independently of the site committee. The Chair listed the committees and their members as follows.

Site Plan & Subdivision Committee-Don Speeney, Jim Boyd, Tracee Schaefer, Alan Haveson

Ordinance Committee-Peter Havas, Alan Page, Alan Haveson, Don Speeney, Robert Rusignola

County Planning Liaison- Mayor Ellis, Stephen Pote, Don Speeney

Finance Committee- Peter Havas, Carol Spratford, and Carolyn Taylor

Chairman Speeney urged the Planning Board members to review the Master Plan reexamination report of 2005, and read from that report, the Land Use and Development residential plan goals. Chairman Speeney said he is very concerned that the Board take a look at this and the content of this document that will impact many one and two lot subdivisions that will not meet standards. Mr. Addario voiced concern about the knock down and build up going on in the area, and said that other towns were passing ordinances that limit sizes of homes and lot widths to keep this problem in check. Chairman Speeney said he thought it was important that both the Borough Ordinance Committee, and the Planning Board Ordinance

Committee work from the same page.

Mayor Ellis voiced some concern about expediting some of the process. He said the idea of getting a resolution to the floor by email or hard copy by the Friday before the meeting, it would be most helpful. He said his biggest pet peeve, was the reading of the resolutions at the actual meeting, once the Board has reviewed it and changes are made. Chairman Speeney said his experience was that there might be things in the resolution that the planning board did not want, but was passed anyway if they did not read it ahead of time. Mr. Haveson said that he wanted to make sure that everyone at the meeting have a hard copy of the resolution in front of them during the reading of the minutes. Chairman Speeney said that he would take these matters under advisement. Mr. Page said as far as infill development, he thought that it was important for a lot to meet minimum lot size. He thinks the FAR (floor area ratio) formulas are very important to pay attention to. This way, a house that was inordinately large could not be built, even though it was compliant with the standards.

Chairman Speeney presented the vouchers and accepted the reading as a motion to approve the vouchers. Mrs. Schaefer seconded the motion to approve, and the vouchers were unanimously approved by roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at the call of the chair, at 9:06 until the next meeting of January 16th, 2007

Respectfully Submitted,

Carolyn Taylor