

Franklin Borough Planning Board
Meeting Minutes for
May 28, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by the Chairman, Mr. John Cholminski, who then led the assembly in the flag salute.

Mr. Cholminski read the Statement of Compliance pursuant to the "Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, PL 1975."

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Fred Babcock, Mr. John Christiano, Mayor Crowley, Mr. Nathan Foulds, Mr. Jim Williams, Mr. Steve Zydon, Mr. John Cholminski, Mr. James Nidelko

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Ken Nelson, Nelson Consulting Group
Mr. Dave Brady, Brady & Correale, LLP

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Williams made a motion to approve the **Franklin Borough Planning Board Meeting Minutes for April 20, 2015**. Seconded by Mr. Babcock.

Upon Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Christiano, Crowley, Foulds, Williams, Zydon, Cholminski,

NAYS: None ABSTENTIONS: Babcock

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTIONS:

There were no resolutions for approval.

APPLICATIONS FOR COMPLETENESS:

There were no applications for completeness.

ADJOURNED CASES:

There were no adjourned cases.

APPLICATIONS TO BE HEARD:

There were no applications to be heard.

PAYMENT OF BILLS:

Mr. Foulds and Mr. Christiano questioned concept invoices on the Escrow Report dated May 28, 2015. Mr. Cholminski explained a concept meeting can occur before an application is submitted to the Planning Board. A brief discussion took place regarding concept meetings.

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Mr. Foulds made a motion to approve the **Franklin Borough Planning Board Escrow Report** for May 28, 2015. Seconded by Mr. Christiano.

Upon Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Babcock, Christiano, Crowley, Foulds, Williams, Zydon, Cholminski,

NAYS: None ABSTENTIONS: None

DISCUSSION:

Electronic Sign Subcommittee Report:

Mr. Zydon addressed the Board and discussed the Electronic Sign Subcommittee Report. He stated the subcommittee reviewed sign ordinances in other municipalities and indicated electronic signs have to still meet our standard sign ordinance.

Mr. Cholminski stated the next step is to draft a suggested ordinance to Mayor and Council. He commented on how prior draft memos were handled and asked if funds are available for Mr. Nelson the board's planner to draft the memo. Mayor Crowley said before we draft an ordinance we should draft a memo and include the concept of the ordinance to the Mayor and Council. A discussion took place on who will be drafting the memo. Mr. Cholminski volunteered to draft a memo which would indicate the Planning Board has researched and would like approval to move forward with the ordinance if the Council agreed. Mr. Nelson indicated three to four hours of work and estimated the cost approximately five hundred dollars. Mr. Brady the board attorney said he would also be included in the review. Mr. Cholminski concluded his draft letter would indicate ordinance changes and would recommend this to be completed by our professionals at the cost of approximately one thousand dollars.

Board Members discussed the difference between Billboards and Electronic Signs. Mr. Brady clarified any change to a billboard will go before the Zoning Board of Adjustment on a case to case basis. He commented on variances and non-conforming structures. Board Members had a discussion on signs inside and outside of businesses.

Master Plan Reexamination Report:

Mr. Ken Nelson discussed his report dated May 20, 2015 regarding the Route 23 HC Zone and Master Plan Reexamination Report which covered the remaining sectors 7 through 12 discussed at the last meeting. He suggested a reduction in minimum lot sizes on some properties and said the Board should consider looking into the permitted uses. He indicated some of the permitted uses listed in the HC Zone now cannot fit on a half-acre lot or an acre lot. He said his next step will be to offer some suggestions for each sector.

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Mr. Nelson commented on the tele-communication facility next to the Golf Course and said the property is not a retail service use it is an industrial use. He pointed out that some properties along Route 23 Corridor are not being used for commercial purposes and in sectors 1 thru 6 of his report there are a fair amount of residential development. He commented on their small lot sizes and talked about declining population.

Mr. Nelson talked about consolidating smaller lots into larger lots. He discussed developers adjoining lots together and talked about an incentive to developers. He indicated his next step is to present ideas and other alternatives to the Planning Board.

Mr. Nelson referred to memo dated May 20, 2015 which highlighted potential land use items not related to Route 23 Corridor. He suggested board members consider including these items in the Reexamination Report. He commented on item #3, Beezer site/MAAH Zone and said a perspective developer has been interested in the property. He suggested the property should be incorporated in the Rexam Report if there is going to be a zone change. He asked board members to review his memo dated May 20, 2015 and advise if any additional properties should be added.

Mr. Cholminski said we need to think about what Franklin wants to be in the future and not react to the market conditions today. He talked about apartment housing and zoning ordinance changes. He commented on properties along Main Street and said people see Route 23 as the face of Franklin. Mr. Christiano commented and agreed with Mr. Cholminski. Mayor Crowley commented on properties along Main Street. He indicated many small stores are vacant and the owners would like to convert them into small apartments. Mr. Christiano said he sees a lot of people walking towards Main St. from the Walmart and Shop Rite area. He said residents have to leave the core of town and walk to Route 23 to shop.

Board Members discussed properties along Main Street and commented on the issues and problems. Mr. Williams suggested a restaurant would draw attention to Main Street. Board Members had a lengthy conversation on restaurants in other towns that have a similar Main Street area like Franklin and discussed how it draws attention to the town. Mr. Zydon said he wants Franklin to be the town people go to for their shopping.

Mayor Crowley talked about big box stores and feels people are still looking for property on Route 23 to open up a business. Mr. Zydon said he would like to see all abandoned homes and buildings build up on Route 23 and commented on how we maintain it. Mr. Christiano suggested the board focus on the Route 23 area. Mr. Zydon commented on the Highway Commercial Zone. He discussed area north of Mabie Street. Mayor Crowley commented on an increase of businesses in that area. He said some businesses in that area have converted residential into businesses. Mr. Zydon commented on mixed use zones and said you can still have homes and

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businesses mixed in. He referred to the B-2 Main Street Mixed Use Zone. Mr. Brady commented on non-conforming lots, acre changes, and different business sizes that could fit along the HC Zone. Mr. Foulds commented on contaminated areas along Route 23 and talked about the cost of removal. He mentioned the areas across from the Irish Cottage and the buildings across from the Franklin Diner. Mayor Crowley stated the buildings across from the Franklin Diner are in the process of being demolished. Mr. Nelson discussed his involvement with the Department of Community Affairs and indicated they could help with ideas for Main Street and the Zinc Properties.

OPEN PUBLIC SESSION:

Mr. Christiano made a motion to **Open to the Public**. Seconded by Mr. Williams. All were in favor.

Mr. Shawn Kidd resident of 3 Evans Street stepped forward. He commented on the growth of businesses along Route 23 and discussed shopping in other towns for things he may need. He indicated Main Street needs restaurants and we need to promote organic growth. He talked about the state DOT and the traffic flow on Route 23. Mr. Cholminski explained the tools and functions of the Planning Board and talked about the box stores created along Route 23. Mr. Kidd feels a mixed use is the best idea for the Route 23 corridor but is concerned about the traffic. Mr. Cholminski commented on the traffic and zoning along Route 23.

Mr. Williams made a motion to **Close to the Public**. Seconded by Mr. Zydon. All were in favor.

Mayor Crowley informed the Planning Board Mr. Shawn Kidd will fill the vacant Alternate #2 position and stated he will be appointed at the next Council Meeting. Mr. Cholminski thanked Mr. Kidd for volunteering his time.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:37 PM on a motion by Mr. Williams, seconded by Mr. Christiano. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Osellame
Secretary