

Franklin Borough Planning Board
Meeting Minutes for
January 17, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 7:44 PM by the Chairman, Mr. Suckey, who then led the assembly in the flag salute.

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

ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS:

Mr. Wes Suckey, Chairman (Present)
Mr. John Christiano, Vice Chairman (Present)
Mr. John Sowden, Mayor (Present)
Mr. Concetto Formica, Council liaison (Present)
Mr. Floy Estes (Present)
Mr. Jim Williams (Present)
Mr. John Friend (Present)
Mr. Michael Raperto, (Present)
Ms. Sharon Schultz, Alternate #1(Present)

ALSO, PRESENT:

Michael Brown, Planning Board Attorney
Tom Knutelsky, Planning Board Engineer

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mr. Suckey asked for approval for the **December 19, 2022** meeting minutes.

Mr. Friend made a motion to approve the **December 19, 2022** meeting minutes.

Seconded by **Mr. Estes**.

Upon Roll Call Vote:

AYES: **Christiano, Estes, Friend, Sowden, Raperto, Suckey, Williams, Schultz**

NAYS: None ABSTENTIONS: **Formica**

Approved

PAYMENT OF BILLS:

Mr. Williams made a motion to approve the escrow report for **January 17, 2023**

Seconded by **Mr. Raperto**

Upon Roll Call Vote:

AYES: **Christiano, Estes, Friend, Raperto, Suckey, Williams, Schultz**

NAYS: None ABSTENTIONS: **Formica, Sowden**

Approved.

APPLICATIONS FOR COMPLETENESS

NONE

DISCUSSION:

Planning Board member James Nidelko's resignation letter.

Mr. Suckey asked for a motion to accept Mr. Nidelko's letter.

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Mr. Christiano made the motion with regrets. Seconded by Mr. Estes

Upon Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Christiano, Formica, Estes, Suckey, Williams, Schultz

NAYS: Friend, Sowden ABSTENTIONS: Raperto

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Mr. Friend made a motion to send Mr. Nidelko a letter thanking him for serving the Franklin Borough Planning Board for as long as he did.

Seconded by MS. Schultz.

Approved

Upon Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Christiano, Formica, Friend, Estes, Sowden, Suckey, Raperto, Williams, Schultz

NAYS: NONE ABSTENTIONS: NONE

Approved.

Mr. Suckey asked for a motion to have Mrs. Babcock write a letter to the council, asking them to bump Ms. Schultz up from alternate member to a regular member.

Mr. Friend made the motion. Seconded by Mr. Williams.

Upon Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Christiano, Friend, Estes, Suckey, Raperto, Suckey, Williams

NAYS: ABSTENTIONS: Formica, Sowden, Schultz

Approved.

Mr. Suckey stated that second item under discussion is the workshop meeting.

Mr. Suckey stated that he thinks it would be a good idea to hold a workshop meeting in February.

February 1st would be the first Wednesday in February to hold the workshop.

Mr. Suckey explained why he thought it would be beneficial to the board members to have a workshop meeting refreshing the members on what their duties are as board members.

Mr. Suckey stated that it has been a long time since most of the board members took the mandatory class that they need to take with the NJPO.

Mr. Suckey stated that many things have changed since then and it would be helpful for the board to be refreshed on certain aspects of the planning board that may have changed since they attended that mandatory class many years ago for most of the members that are still members.

Mr. Suckey stated that he spoke to Mr. Brady & Mr. Brown and they agreed that the workshop meeting on February 1st would be a good idea to refresh the board on variances, policies, procedures, and TCC meetings. Giving the board members a better understanding of how the board works and what their responsibilities are.

Mr. Formica stated that he had a question and asked if the board thought it was a good idea to have a workshop like that after the board denied an application just over a month ago dealing with those exact topics.

Mr. Brown stated that this workshop could not be used against the board. Mr. Brown stated that the board can hold a workshop such as this one every year if they wanted to.

Mr. Brown reassured Mr. Formica that an applicant would not be able to use this in litigation.

Mr. Suckey stated that the meeting will be very helpful to the board members and it will be on February 1st at 7:30.

Mr. Estes stated that he was for the meeting and he believes that this type of meeting would be beneficial to this board. Mr. Estes stated that the members on this board including himself need a refresher on

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variances, especially with a town that has a lot of variances needed when an applicant is looking to build or develop in our town.

Mr. Suckey agreed.

Mr. Knutelsky stated would it be appropriate to ask the board to go over the checklist and review changes that need to be made on that as well.

Mr. Suckey stated that he thinks that would be better suited as a committee.

Mr. Suckey asked if there were any members that would like to be a part of that committee.

Mr. Raperto asked when the sub committee would be meeting.

Mr. Suckey stated that it could be done in the evening. **Mr. Christiano, Mr. Estes and Mr. Raperto**, volunteered to be on the committee.

Mr. Suckey stated he would also be on the committee along with Mr. Knutelsky.

Mr. Suckey stated that he would be in touch with everyone at a later date to set up a date and time to meet.

Mr. Suckey stated that the next thing to be discussed is the response the board would like to give the council in regards to the joint meeting with the Mayor and Council about the redevelopment of Main Street.

Mr. Suckey stated that Mr. Nelson has sent in a report giving some bullet points giving the board and the council ideas from the re development.

Mr. Suckey stated that he still did not feel like there was a concrete vision on where the council wanted to start the redevelopment at the meeting.

Mr. Nelson's report breaks it down into smaller projects so that some of these ideas can be implemented in a timely fashion.

Mr. Suckey asked everyone to read over Mr. Nelson's report.

Mr. Suckey stated that it would be helpful if the members came back to the February meeting with ideas to recommend to the council.

Ms. Schultz made a suggestion about figuring out a better parking situation for Main Street.

Mr. Suckey stated that is listed in phase one as well.

Mr. Schultz suggested purchasing a portion of the zinc mine property for a parking garage.

The board discussed at length different options zinc mine property.

Mr. Friend asked if this could be an eminent domain situation.

Mr. Suckey stated that would be entirely up to the town council.

Mr. Friend stated that sooner or later the town is going to have to put money into something.

Mr. Formica stated that he is 100% against eminent domain and he would be the first one to fight against that.

Mr. Christiano stated that he is also not for eminent domain.

Mr. Christiano stated he believes that more are against than for eminent domain.

Mr. Suckey stated that it was brought up a number of times at the joint meeting.

Mr. Suckey stated that there seemed to be some council members that were for eminent domain.

Mr. Friend asked Mr. Formica why he was against eminent domain.

Mr. Formica stated that it was a government over reach.

Mr. Formica stated that it has its purposes this should not be one of them and explained why.

Mr. Suckey stated that there is a redevelopment plan that the town is not doing anything with.

Mr. Suckey stated that is why as a town we are constantly spinning wheels. Mr. Suckey asked how many re- development plans do we need until something gets done.

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Mayor Sowden stated that the meeting was to bring everyone together to get everyone on the same page.

Mayor Sowden stated that it has been 30 years of spinning wheels.

Mayor Sowden stated that it is time to make some improvements and start somewhere.

Mr. Estes stated that if the town does take over the zinc mine Property are they essentially taking over the headaches that may come from that property, especially the environmental issue that may come from that property.

Mayor Sowden stated that there is funding through the DEP that we can get to do the cleanup.

Mayor Sowden stated that he likes to work with people, he does not want to use the eminent domain either.

Mayor Sowden stated that the council has to work out some of this stuff amongst themselves before we decide what route the borough is going to take.

Mayor Sowden stated that he just wants the council and planning board to be on the same page and agree on something to move forward with the Main Street projects.

The members spoke at length about the explosion that happened on the property in the 70's they also talked about the contaminated soil from the explosion, the subdivision that the applicant had done in the early 2000's, the leans on the property, etc. Ultimately agreeing that they like the council would like to stop talking about things and would like to see something happen on Main Street.

Mr. Friend stated so the plan for now is to read Mr. Nelson's report and come back to the meeting in February with some questions or ideas to recommend to the council on where to start the improvements.

Mr. Suckey stated yes.

APPLCATIONS TO BE HEARD:

NONE

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION:

Mogul Enterprises LLC, 151 Main Street, Authorization for field change of site plan approval
Block 609 Lots 20, 21, 22&23

Mr. Williams asked if he should leave because he always leaves because he has a conflict of interest with the applicant's attorney.

Mr. Brown stated that he does not have to leave the meeting he can just abstain from voting.

Mr. Friend made the motion to approve the Resoultion as printed. Seconded by Mr. Raperto.

Upon Roll Call Vote:

AYES: **Christiano, Formica, Friend, Estes, Sowden Suckey, Raperto, Suckey, Schultz**

NAYS: ABSTENTIONS: **Williams**

OPEN PUBLIC SESSION:

Mr. Suckey opened the meeting to the public.

Not seeing anyone come forward. Mr. Suckey closed the meeting to the public.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Williams stated that the project at 116 Rt 23 looks like it has picked up again.

Mr. Knutelsky stated that he would reach out to the applicant's engineer and see if they did in fact receive their permits from D.O.T.

Mr. Raperto asked for an update on the board getting iPads.

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Mr. Suckey stated that there were no new updates on the board members receiving iPads.

Mr. Knutelsky stated that he would like to bring it to the board's attention that if any of the board members are in the Hampton area at night, they should take a ride past the Toyota car dealership and look at the purple lights that are all around the parking lot.

Mr. Knutelsky stated that this is something he and his office is looking into because of the LED lights now changing colors. These types of lamps may become more of an option and something this board should think about making a rule not to have the colors changed. Mr. Knutelsky stated that it would be better to have a consistency when driving down Rt 23 opposed to seeing, red, green, blue, etc.

Mr. Knutelsky stated something to keep in mind if something like this should ever come the boards way.

Mr. Suckey thanked Mr. Knutelsky and asked if there was any other business that needed to be addressed.

Mr. Christiano asked about the council giving us an update on the vape shop ordinance.

Ms. Schultz gave a brief update and stated that she is still waiting to hear back from the council to see what direction they are looking to go in.

Mr. Suckey stated that is something we can look into at the next meeting and discuss further.

NEW BUSINESS:

NONE

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Estes made a motion to adjourn.

Seconded by **Mr. Sowden**

All were in Favor.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 P.M