

**LAKWOOD PLANNING BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 26, 2006**

I. CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE

Chairman Banas called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance and Mr. Kielt read the Certification of Compliance with the NJ Open Public Meetings Act:

“The time, date and location of this meeting was published in the Ocean County Observer and posted on the bulletin board in the office of the Township of Lakewood. Advance written Notice has been filed with the Township Clerk for purpose of public inspection and, a copy of this Agenda has been mailed, faxed or delivered to the following newspapers: The Ocean County Observer, or The Tri-Town News at least 48 hours in advance. This meeting meets all the criteria of the Open Public Meetings Act.” Mr. Kielt amended that there was no agenda for this meeting, only a public notice.

2. ROLL CALL:

Mr. Herzl, Mr. Franklin, Mr. Banas, Mr. Dolobowsky, Mr. Gaton,

3. NEW BUSINESS

This is a meeting of the Planning Board that will accept the recommendations from the Master Plan Advisory Committee. Mr. Banas introduced Ben Heinemann who is the chairman of that committee.

Ben Heinemann, co chaired by Mike Sernotti and Mitch Dolobowsky. Members were Stanley Banas, Glen Bradford, Adam Buckwald, Carlos Cedeno, Vincent Corsaro, Ester Coven, Brian Flannery, Meir Hertz, Bill Hobday, Shalom Landman, Mike McNeill, Abraham Penzer, Steve Pfeffer, Dave Quinn, Janet Scher, Charles Silberberg, Lieb Spiera, Craig Theibault, Moshe Weisberg, Elliott Zaks, Ralph Zucker. Also on hand was Kevin Kielt and the professionals, Stan Slachetka, Marty Truscott and Vanessa.

The report was 7-8 months worth of work, first by seeing what Lakewood was all about, then making the recommendations for the future. This document should come out every 6 years. The group was split up into sub committees, including, the downtown area with Charles Silberberg as co chair; zoning areas, those not in conformance or areas that needed to be changed, headed up by Brian Flannery; circulation around town, chaired by Ralph Zucker; Route 9 corridor, chaired by Bill Hobday; housing, chaired by Carlos Cedeno; UDO, Stanley Banas led that subcommittee; economic develops, chaired by Moshe Weisberg; environment committee was chaired by Janet Scher. The committee reached out to seniors, and Dave Quinn represented them. The minorities were also welcomed, with the help of Dave Quinn and Carlos Cedeno. Schools and houses of worship were helped by Meir Hertz.

Mr. Banas then set some procedures. The public is not invited or encouraged to participate. They will have an opportunity to speak at the public meeting. When that date is determined, the public will be directed where to get a copy of the re-examination report.

Mr. Stan Slachetka and Mr. Marty Truscott are the planning professionals for this project.

Mr. Stan Slachetka, from T&M Associates, spoke about the report and handing this document off to the planning board for their acceptance. The planning board has the official responsibility, pursuant to the Municipal Land Use Law, to adopt the Master Plan Re-Examination Report, The Master Plan, and any amendments or changes that may result to the Master Plan. Ultimately, the governing body of the township will be responsible for adopting the ordinances that implement the recommendations contained in the re-examination report. This is the first time the planning board members are seeing this report. The MLUL requires the re-examination of the master plan is the understanding that the master plan is a living document that can change with times as the goals and interests of the township. They can change because of laws, regulations, physical conditions of the community, or demographic changes, both locally and regionally. This gives the planning board the opportunity to either affirm, change, revise, or add in new goals and objectives, or to reject prior goals or objectives. This report is not a replacement of the 1999 report but a supplement to that plan. The statute requires the plan to look back at the various assumptions made in the 1999 report in the first part of the re-examination. The next step is to evaluate what have changed since the 1999 plan; what goals and objectives were achieved or not, or is it still a valid goal or need to be changed because of laws or regulations. The next step is the recommendation to the changes to the master plan. In addition, background reports, information, and documentation as to various issue area, by subcommittees. The last step is a review of any redevelopment plans that have been adopted subsequent to the last master plan, and if those plans should be formally incorporated into the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance of the municipality.

Those are the components required by state law and those are the sections addressed in this document. The main document, which is the re-examination report which includes all the above and the second document which is a complimentary document which includes all the various task force reports.

First section in the re-examination of the major problems and objectives relating to land development at the time of the adoption of last re-examination report. This section are the goals and objectives that were made a part of the 1999 report. There are no new goals in this section.

Second section is the extent to which such problems and objectives have been reduced and increased. This report placed a reference to the recommendations that come in the later section of the report, which is Section IV and make a statement that represents the changes and assumptions that are being made pursuant to the prior goals and objectives. Any changes in the re-examination reports from the 1999 report, the 2006 changes would apply.

Mr. Truscott addressed Section III which is the significant changes in the assumptions, policies, and objectives and he will highlight some of the key changes. He had exhibits to show how much Lakewood has grown by the demographics, starting on page 9. On pages 10 & 11 it compares Lakewood to the county and state in terms of total population and overall land area population density. The population growth is based on the 2000 Census; Lakewood had 60,352 residents and it has grown substantially since, and is the fastest growing community in Ocean County, which is the fastest growing area in the state. The town is growing and the prediction is that Lakewood will have of 87,000 people by the year 2030, and that forecast is probably conservative. The demographic section also covers population by race, Hispanic origin, and age, and there are charts. The township has a high birth rate, but also has a vital senior population. Population by school enrollment was also discussed. Household size was discussed, the information in the report was that family size was 3.6 persons per household, where household size was 2.9 persons. The family size is greater, household size is unrelated individuals, while a family size in related individuals. Household trends were projected to be doubling to the year 2030. There is information on employment, employment trends, breakdown of business in the community, by type, # of establishments, retail trade, wholesale trade, etc. Income information is listed and Lakewood is a little below the state and county median income. There is a discussion of the housing stock. In 2000, Lakewood had over 21,000 housing units, which is an increase of over 3,000 units from 1999. There is a breakdown of owner occupied, renter occupied, also the age of the stock. It is a fairly new housing stock overall. There is also a list of the building permits issued since 1980 with breakdown by year, single family, two family, multi family. Over 9,000 building permits have been issued since 1980.

On exiting land use, there is a map in the back of the report which shows that. This was based on GIS report, based on land cover, whether forested, commercial use, residential use, different density, and the colors represent that. They started with a 1995 aerial and updated it based on 2002 land use aerial photography. Changes were noted in the southwest and southeast part of town, with hug amount of development, primarily residential. Mr. Banas what the brown part of the map was, and was told it was the vacant, undeveloped portion, including wetlands.

On page 33 and from that point on, the report runs along with the reports from the subcommittees and they provided a brief concise summary of those reports. Mr. Truscott wanted to add an addendum to page 33 of a summary of intersections by type that was submitted by Bill Hobday. Mr. Heinemann felt this should be added because it lists the schools, intersections signage of Route 9, and it should be added as 32a because circulation appears of page 32.

Also discussed in Section III was E -community facilities; F-the downtown area; G- economic development; H- environment with natural resource characteristics, the Metedeconk River, which is designated as C1 status; I- Housing is covered with recommendations; J – re-zoning; K – schools and houses of worship L - Senior Housing; M – higher education; and N - Stormater water management. The Planning Board did adopt a Stormwater Management Plan as an element of its' master plan. Section O – utilities, include water and sewer which is provide by 2 agencies as well as septics and well. This section outlines the status and capacity by each agency and concludes with each agency

having sufficient capacity for both the MUA and NJ American Water. Section P covers the consistency with other plans, a required portion of the master plan documents; whether it is consistent with other towns, etc.

Mr. Slachetka, stated that the township is a vibrant, growing community that needs to ensure that that development done with a smart growth approach, making communities and developments livable and walk able. There is a corresponding need to ensure that the environmental resources, the open spaces and the natural resources of the community are appropriately protected. The recommendations contained in the report addresses these issues.

Mr. Klein has appeared.

Mr. Slachetka then spoke about Section IV of the report, which starts on page 56 of the re-examination report. It is the specific changes recommended for the master plan or development regulations including underlying objectives, policies and standards or whether a new plan or regulation should be prepared. The committee is not recommending a new comprehensive plan as of yet. This sections various subsections: the first subsection is A – which is a vision statement and a series of statements for community vision. It is a work in progress, and the committee is seeking the boards input in further refining the community vision. The first series of recommendations fall under B – circulation, page 58. There was a lot of discussions on circulation and it is an important issue. It has a main area, then broken down to sub areas with objectives within those goals. A lot of discussion is with Route 9, with the general improvement with circulation within the township. Ease traffic congestion in the main arterials, such as Route 9, as well as downtown. Also discussed was increasing the range of transportation options, including enhancing mass transit. Intersection improvements downtown, to look at flows through potential designated streets and campus area possibly as one way streets was also discussed. Parking was also discussed, with recommendations for multi level parking garages, park and ride facilities, possible creation of a municipal parking authority as part of a multi model transportation network, consistent with smart growth planning policies of the state.

On page 60 subsection C – deals with community facilities. It is broken down into 3 sections; education, recreation and health and public safety. The critical concern and objective was to provide sufficient community facilities in those areas as growth and development occurs; support and strengthen existing facilities and ensure that new community facilities are available in each are as new growth and accessible to where the needs are. Under education, the burgeoning school population, the basic goal is for all children have adequate access to quality primary and secondary education, whether public or private; also to ensure that Lakewood support the continuation of private school development. Under recreation area, there is a general recognition of the high quality and recognition that there needs to be a continued focus to providing sufficient recreation from both the township and developments. Mr. Gatton questioned the goals and objectives, but has there were any suggestions included on how to do that? Mr. Heinemann stated there are definitely recommendations such as alternate roads that can be used to minimize traffic of Route 9, one way streets from 1st to 9th Streets, etc. There is a zoning section that was discussed to allow for growth along with schools.

Mr. Banas commented that the planning boards can only suggest, the governing board make the law.

Mr. Slachetka continued with the breakdown of the report. Under health and public safety (page 60), they identified areas of improvement. One of the goals is to promote the creation of a farmers market to promote the NJ fresh brand, possibly in the downtown area. There is also a recognition of the various community bases organizations, that provide and address the social service needs of the residents. On page 61, under the downtown area, the recommendation made reiterate some of the other sections such as circulation, intersection improvements, ban truck traffic on Fridays, etc. but basically continue to support the downtown area as function as the center of town. Under economic development, there are a number of sub goals; transportation, circulation, creating gateways, such as the Jamesway area, provided for the expansion of small business or retail hubs, possibly at that site. Also creation of shopping areas approximate to new developments to lessen the traffic. There were also specific recommendations, such as the goal of encouraging the existing industrial parks remaining as industrial uses, because of its' importance to the community for employment and economy.

Under F - environment (page 63), it is broken down to sub areas, flora, water, open space and other. Protection of the environment is important. Under flora, there is a recommendation to encourage and preserving existing trees and planting of new ones, with specific recommendation of hiring a forester for the township; launching a tree planting and forestation initiative within the township and potentially considering a landscaping ordinance that prohibits exotic of invasive species that may be a hazard to existing flora. Under water; preserving the supply of clean water for Lakewood and surrounding municipalities. The specific objectives are: encouraging requirements with state buffer requirements; document the adequacy of water supply for future growth; consider a stream corridor protection plan; adoption of a bulk head protection plan. Under open space, the plans recommends looking at increasing open space inventory to meet community growth which includes acquisitions, the completion of the acquisition of the Crystal Lake Preserve, using the Ocean County Land Trust, considering a passive open space zone for environmentally sensitive areas such as Lake Carasaljo. Also to continue to maintain open spaces networks and linkages to ensure the protection of critical habitat areas. Under other objective, to update the sewer service area mapping to reflect environmentally sensitive areas, consider the preparation and adoption of a historic and preservation element of the master plan.

The next sub section is G – housing. It is broken down into COAH requirements zoning, financial mechanisms and structural levers. It is a portion of a creation and adoption of a housing element and fair share plan for the community which is a requirement under the Mt. Laurel doctrine in the requirements of the council for affordable housing. The township is in the process of preparing such a plan. Specific recommendations will be addressed more comprehensively in that fair share and housing element plan that the planning board will ultimately consider. A draft should be done by this fall, and the board can consider it then or by 2007. One of the objectives under the COAH requirement is to support the efforts of NJ Hand, STEPS, and the Lakewood Housing Authority to expand the stock of affordable housing. There are recommendations under zoning for modifying the UDO to

be more supportive of affordable housing, potentially density bonuses for developers to provide a substantial amount of affordable housing, looking at mixed use developments as an option etc. Regional Contribution Agreements were discussed, where other towns contribute money into Lakewood for affordable housing.

Under subsection H – senior housing issues, there are substantial recommendations made by this subcommittee. One is to provide accessibility of services and provide options from both a transportation and housing perspective and to ensure there is sufficient community facilities supporting senior needs within the community. Circulation was also very important, and recommendation is to close the gaps in existing streets and providing alternatives to Route 9 is a recognized need from this community. Specific recommendations were made to areas that were appropriate for age restricted multi-family residential as versus where they may not be appropriate. Service and shopping needs were considered critical under their development recommendations. Specific recommendations were mentioned. Open space was recommended for consider acquisition of private lands adjacent to public lands in the vicinity of Massachusetts Avenue, between Cross Street and Prospect Street, where those lands are currently zoned R20/12 cluster and RM. Seniors wanted to facilitate their involvement with downtown community life to make it more attractive and welcome to them. Mr. Banas questioned what Ordinance 05111. Mr. Slachetka was unable to answer but Mr. Truscott thinks it had something to do with the B5 zone. Mr. Gatton questioned the second objective and asked if the professional had any detail on that. Mr. Truscott stated the recommendation is to review the provisions to allow multi family residential development in the B2 downtown area. It was not a site specific recommendation.

In Subsection I – The UDO, there were a whole range of recommendations that were presented and reviewed by the committee, but they were there to address the issues that both the zoning board and planning board have encounter during the course of the new UDO. Mike Sernotti spoke about how Stan Banas and himself talked about some of the things that have been coming up at the 2 boards that need clarification. These 28 recommendations were items they needed clarification on. Mr. Banas said the problems they encountered on the planning board were with flag lots. Mr. Slachetka emphasized that any specific recommendation will be discussed at the public hearing.

In Subsection J – Utilities, it is broken down into water, sewer, solid waste and expansion of the systems. There was a recommendation by environmental committee limiting the infrastructure so it does not move into identified environmental sensitive areas. The other issue addressed is to ensure sufficient water and sewer are available for the current community and future community in a manner that balances private development financing opportunities with public investment opportunities. Under water, one goal is to upgrade existing infrastructure; including retention/detention basins, underground systems in older established areas, provide for and maintain an effective stormwater management system throughout the township; looking at the possibility for surface water reservoir in the township, create and implement a well head protection plan, and provide adequate water. Under sewer: provide for adequate public sewage services in appropriate areas for the township, consistent with the waste water management plan. Under the expansion of systems: identify innovative strategies and partnerships to finance existing and future facilities; promote public infrastructure such as public and quasi-public including water supply and treatment, wastewater treatment, and energy supply and preparedness for emergency management.

Under Subsection K – zoning, it was difficult to determine the best thing to do because there are 35 zones that are suggested to be changed. Mr. Sernotti spoke on these recommendations; he said the recommendations came from the zoning applications that came up in the last 5-6 years, starting from year 2000, and made an inventory of approvals, denials, and requests that came before the zoning board. Reduced lot size, multi family homes, etc. based on land available. It was to recognize the character of the area, and change the zone to reflect that. Mr. Slachetka mentioned 3 areas were identified for a mixed use zoning scenario. The maps furnished showed the existing zones and the proposed zones. The zone designation in red is the proposed zone, and each area on the map corresponds numerically to the text in the master plan re-examination report. Mr. Heinemann stated there was a mistake on the map; on center bottom of the map; #32 for HD7; it should not be HD7 but B5 zone. Mr. Gatton had a technical question, about the people who made the recommendation, was that a vote by majority? Mr. Dolobowsky said it was a majority. Mr. Heinemann stated all but 4 were voted unanimously. Mr. Gatton questioned what mid rise was and Mr. Dolobowsky stated 65 feet. (approximately 5-6 floors) Mr. Slachetka also had a clarification on page 75, items # 10 & 12; they are located off of New Hampshire and Highway 88, and 2 different zone recommendations; 10 is for the ROP-M and the remaining (12) for B1. This is technical in nature, and they are still working on the aspects for the ROP-M zone and the recommendations will be made available to the board prior to the public hearing.

Subsection L – minorities; there are a series of 5 goals. They are not land use and planning goals, but need to identify the concerns of all the constituents of the community. The goals are: The township should work through community groups in supporting development of training programs designed for minority residents; require employers to register as a means of ensuring full payment for work performed; revisit the sections of the rent control ordinance with relations to “permissions” and “exceptions”; support passage of legislation to allow issuance of a social security card and sponsorship to citizenship after completing an approved course of study in graduation from the 12th grade; create a township position of community service aid minority affairs reporting to the Township Committee.

Subsection M – schools and houses of worship. Mr. Slachetka recommends the board look at the attachment/addendum. There is a lot of data included and provides the appropriate context with regards to some of the recommendations to schools. Under goals for school: address current education facility needs; address land needs for projected growth in school enrollment; set aside approximately 100 acres to address needed educational lands, parcels of 3 to 4 acres in area. Under houses or worship: address acute need for neighborhood sites for houses of worship; coordinate sale of surplus municipal owned property in relationship to houses of worship.

Finally, the last section (Section V) is a statutory required section and is the recommendations concerning the incorporation of the redevelopment plans into the land use element of the master plan. There was an identification of 2 redevelopment areas within the township: The Franklin Street Redevelopment Area, and a plan was adopted in 2001 for that area, currently on hold because of brownfield issues. The second is the CedarBridge Redevelopment Plan, adopted in 1990, or the southwest acquisition area, 400 acres in size, and a redevelopment plan has to be identified on the Lakewood Zoning Map.

It was encouraged that the board members read through the background studies to see where the recommendations came from.

Mr. Banas has some procedural questions for the planners. When the changes are made, the insertion of page 32A, then the change with the zoning, when will it be available for the citizens to look at. Mr. Slachetka has one unbound copy for the public, but Mr. Banas preferred it be done on the internet, literally tomorrow. Mr. Kielt questioned whether it would be put on the Lakewood website. Mr. Slachetka said it would be convert the document into PDF format and given to the webmaster, and the suggestion was that be made. The hard copy will be available to the public at cost. Mr. Kielt questioned whether the members of the subcommittee would have copies available to them and was told that the planners would provide a free copy to the advisory committee. Mr. Kielt requested the exhibit boards be left with him. It is available to the public as a draft immediately.

Motion was requested to set the date, time and place for a public hearing on the re-examination report of the master plan and UDO.

Motion made by Mr. Dolobowsky, seconded by Mr. Herzl to reconvene on October 24th at 6:00 pm to begin the discussions and have a public meeting.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Herzl: yes, Mr. Franklin: yes, Mr. Banas; yes, Mr. Dolobowsky; yes, Mr. Klein; yes, Mr. Gatton; yes

Motion made by Mr. Dolobowsky, seconded by Mr. Herzl, that the board is accepting this copy of the draft as the official copy.

ROLL CALL: Mr. Herzl; yes, Mr. Franklin; yes, Mr. Banas; yes, Mr. Dolobowsky; yes, Mr. Klein; yes, Mr. Gatton; yes

4. PUBLIC PORTION

The public questioned whether both sections would be on the web. The answer was yes. Another question was raised whether restrictions would be placed on the public portion. Mr. Banas stated they begin as promptly at 6pm as they can, and end as promptly as they can at 9pm. It is the discretion of the Chairman to restrict excessive talking or repetition, he will act on it.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was hereby adjourned. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted
Chris Johnson
Planning Board Recording Secretary