

**TOWNSHIP OF ROBBINSVILLE PLANNING BOARD
REORGANIZATION MEETING
TOWNSHIP OF ROBBINSVILLE, MERCER COUNTY, NJ
WEDNESDAY, JULY 2, 2008 7:00 P.M.**

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Planning Board of the Township of Robbinsville was called to order on July 2, 2008 at 7:05 p.m. in the, Senior Center Building located in Robbinsville. Ms. Post presided over the meeting until the Chair was voted upon.

ROLL CALL

The call of roll showed the following to be present: Mrs. McGowan, Ms. Caffrey, Mr. Lesniak, Ms. Breyta, Ms. Ward, Mr. Lasky, Ms. Burns

Absent: Mr. Calcagno, Mr. Cettina, Mrs. Fett, Mrs. Van Nest

Also Present: Ms. Post and Ms. Persicketti.

SUNSHINE STATEMENT

Ms. Post read the following statement: Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided as required under Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, specifying the time and place, with such notices being sent to the Times of Trenton, the Messenger Press and the Trentonian and being posted on the Municipal Building Public Notice Bulletin Board.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Planning Board members present led the salute to the flag.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A motion was made to open the meeting for public comment by Ms. Burns and seconded by Ms. Ward. There being no one from the public wishing to speak, a motion was made to close the public comment portion of the meeting by Ms. Burns and seconded by Ms. Breyta.

BUSINESS TO DISCUSS

A. Reorganization

(This reorganization meeting was held to appoint the Board members to their respective positions). The positions open are listed below as follows:

Election of Officers:

Chairperson
Vice Chairperson

Appointments:

Board Attorney
Township Engineer
Consultant Planner, Traffic & Engineer
Architectural Consultant
Administrative Officer
Board Secretary
Recording Secretary

Meeting Schedule:

Set 2008 Meeting Schedule

Official Newspaper:

Designation of Official Newspaper

Ms. Post began the reorganization meeting by voting on a Chairperson.

CHAIRPERSON

Class IV Board members eligible: Breyta, Fett, McGowan, Ward, Calcagno and Van Nest.

Ms. Caffrey made a motion to nominate Mrs. McGowan to serve as Chairperson. The term of the position would be for one year. Ms. Burns seconded the motion. No other nominations were announced.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Lesniak, Breyta, Ward, Caffrey, Lasky, Burns and McGowan
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

Chairperson: Mrs. McGowan was voted in by all Board members to serve as the 2008 Robbinsville Township Planning Board Chairperson. Chair McGowan “thanked” everyone for their confidence in her to re-appoint her as chairperson.

(At this time, Chair McGowan took over the meeting).

VICE CHAIRPERSON

Class IV Board members eligible: Breyta, Fett, Ward, Calcagno and Van Nest

A motion was made to re-nominate Ms. Ward to serve as Vice Chair by Ms. Caffrey and seconded by Ms. Breyta. The term of the position would be for one year. No discussion.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Caffrey, Lasky, Breyta, Lesniak, Burns, Ward and McGowan

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

Vice Ms. Ward was voted in by all Board members to remain
Chairperson: serving as the 2008 Robbinsville Township
Planning Board Vice Chairperson.

APPOINTMENTS: Chair McGowan stated that the below positions will be a one (1) year re-appointment to their respective positions. There will be a one (1) time roll call unless there is a disagreement with the position.

Board Counsel – Mr. Jerry Dasti, Esq. No discussion. (Re-Appointment)

Township Engineer – John M. West serves currently as the Township Engineer. The term would be for one year. No discussion (Re-Appointment).

Consultant Engineer, Planner & Traffic - Remington, Vernick & Arango Engineers are the current engineers for the town. Ms. Abby Kooper represents the firm and is present at the Township of Robbinsville Planning Board meetings. Rehire the firm of Remington, Vernick & Arango to serve as the Engineers. Discussion took place (see below minutes) NOTE: This position will be on hold until the Councilman McGough matter is resolved. The next Planning Board Meeting will commence on July 16, 2008.

Architectural Consultant – Edmund Wilson serves currently as the Architectural Consultant. The term would be for one year. No discussion (Re-appointment).

Administrative Officer – John West to be re-appointed for a one-year term. The purpose of this position is to deem applications complete as they come in and coordinate the application as they come before the Board. The Board is very happy with the work presented by Mr. West. At meetings, Mr. West explains and is very familiar with the applications and also answers any questions which may arise. No discussion. (Re-Appointment)

Board Secretary – Elide Post to be re-appointed for a one-year term. No discussion. (Re-Appointment)

Recording Secretary – Phyllis Persicketti be for a one-year term. No discussion. (Re-Appointment)

At this time, Mr. Lesniak indicated that he had one concern with Remington, Vernick & Arango. Mr. Lesniak said that Councilman Tim McGough works for the firm as an engineer. A resident and an attorney who sits on the Ethics Board in Mercer County said that is a “no, no”. Mr. Lesniak feels that this is not permissible and provided a copy of the law stating such. Mr. Lesniak read the following, which was taken from: New Jersey Administrative Code, N.J.A.C. 13:40-3.5 A4iii that states:

“iii. A licensee shall not solicit or accept a professional contract from a governmental agency upon which a principal, officer or employee of his firm or organization serves as a member, advisor or employee.”

Chair McGowan indicated that Mr. McGough is not a member of the Planning Board. Mr. Lesniak responded that Mr. McGough is a member of governmental agency. The government agency is the Council, who pays the bills.

Ms. Caffrey said that since Mr. Dasti was not present to affirm or rebut this matter, the appointment of Consultant Engineer, Planner & Traffic should be deferred until the next scheduled meeting. Ms. Caffrey indicated for the record that Councilman McGough thoroughly investigated the matter, prior to accepting his employment at Remington, Vernick & Arango to include discussing the matter with every member of the current Township Council. As the issue was raised internally amongst the members of Council, he solicited an opinion from the National licensing body for the engineer organization. (Ms. Caffrey is not familiar with the formal name of the national engineers). Mr. McGough also expressed his intention to solicit an opinion from the Local Finance Board which serves as the Ethics Body for Local Government when a local government does not have its own ethics board. Given Mr. McGough’s intention to thoroughly investigate this matter, the most prudent course of action for the Planning Board to take is to defer the matter until such time that there is an attorney present and the findings are reported back from the various entities which Councilman McGough has sought input from. Ms. Caffrey also stated that before Mr. McGough accepted employment from Remington, Vernick & Arango, he did investigate this matter with the Township Attorney and reiterated that the matter was discussed with every member of the current Township Council before accepting employment with Remington, Vernick & Arango. Mr. Lesniak replied that at the time, Council took Township’s Board Attorney, Mark Rosselli’s word for it. Council did not want to interfere with someone’s employment at the time. Now, Mr. Lesniak indicated that it is a new term. Ms. Caffrey pointed out that one of the key words is “solicit”. Remington, Vernick & Arango has been the township’s consultant since 2005, which predates Councilman McGough’s employment with that firm. Mr. Lesniak responded and said that the law says “solicit or accepts.” Mr. Lesniak said that he is relaying the information which he received from an Ethics Board attorney. Ms. Caffrey feels that this information came from Ms. Walter. Mr. Lesniak said that the information came from a neighbor, who is also an Ethics Board attorney. The above matter will be forwarded to Mr. Dasti and heard at the next scheduled meeting per Chair McGowan.

A motion was made to reappoint Mr. Jerry Dasti as Board Counsel; Mr. John West as the Township Engineer and Administrative Officer; Mr. Edmund Wilson as the Architectural Consultant; Ms. Elide Post as the Board Secretary and Ms. Phyllis Persicketti as the Recording Secretary by Ms. Burns and seconded by Ms. Breyta. All Board members were in favor. Note: The Consultant Engineer, Planner & Traffic position will be on hold until the Councilman

McGough matter is resolved. All Board members voted in the affirmative “AYE” vote. There were no “NAY” votes with respect to any of the above re-appointments. Therefore, Mr. Dasti, Mr. West, Mr. Wilson, Ms. Post and Ms. Persicketti were all reappointed to their respective positions for another year.

2008 Meeting Schedule – The meetings will take place on the third and fourth Wednesdays of the month. The meetings would commence at 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. A motion was made by Ms. Burns and seconded by Ms. Breyta with respect to keeping the meetings on the 3rd and 4th Wednesdays of the month commencing at 7:00 p.m. with a hard stop at 10:00 p.m. All Board members were in favor.

Designation of Official Newspaper – The township adopted three newspapers for notice purposes and one for legal advertising. The **official newspaper is the “Times of Trenton”** for legal advertising. Also included are the “**Trentonian**” and the “**Messenger Press**” as newspapers to receive official notices of the township meetings. The “Times” “Messenger Press” and “Trentonian” were the three newspapers previously designated and will continue to remain. Ms. Post stated that an applicant has to notice for their application and the Times is designated. Special meetings are also stated in the Times. (The township does not pay for meeting notices in the Messenger Press and the Trentonian). A motion was made by Ms. Burns and seconded by Ms. Caffrey. No discussion. All Board members were in favor of using the above three newspapers.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chair McGowan said that the contact information form needs to be submitted to Ms. Post as soon as possible, if there are any changes.

The next Planning Board meeting will commence on July 16, 2008.

No other business came before the Board.

ADJOURNMENT

At this time, Ms. Burns made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Lesniak seconded the motion. No discussion. All Board members were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Phyllis Persicketti
Recording Secretary

ADOPTED: JULY 16, 2008