

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION
STONE HARBOR PLANNING BOARD**

December 15, 2014

4:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Hand, who stated that all requirements of the "Open Public Meetings Act of 1975" had been met with the Press of Atlantic City having been notified of the Board's schedule for 2014 in December 2013, and the schedule having been posted on the Municipal Clerk's Bulletin Board.

ROLL CALL:

Members Present

Mayor Suzanne Walters
Jill Gougher
Thomas Hand, Chairman
Robert D. Bickford, Jr.
Wayne Conrad, Vice-Chair
Perry Conte
Joselyn O. Rich

Board Solicitor

Andrew D. Catanese

Board Secretary

Diane Frangiose

Zoning Officer

Joanne Masica

Alternate

Julian Miraglia

Review 2015 Proposed Schedule of Meetings

Mr. Hand asked members to look at the proposed schedule of meetings for 2015. It was agreed that meetings would be the second Monday of the month at 4:30 p.m. and if needed, a meeting will be held on the fourth Monday of the month in the evening at 7:00 p.m. Motion by Mr. Hand to approve the 2015 schedule of meetings and seconded by Mr. Conte. Affirmative votes by all members.

Waterfront Business District Discussion

Mr. Catanese stated that the only changes made to the Resolution and proposed Ordinance amending the Waterfront Business District regulations are in section 3D which allows people to provide for off-street parking in a manner other than getting a Permit from the Borough and people will be told what is acceptable and what is not and they always have the backup of the Borough parking permit so there will always be a solution. Mr. Miraglia wanted to know where the number of 1,320 feet of a residential unit for an off-street parking space came from and Mr. Catanese advised it is a quarter mile and it is the same as the existing regulation applied to boutique hotels.

Mr. Conrad raised a question regarding section D (5). Mrs. Mascia stated that a minimum of 14 linear feet for a first floor unit width measured at the entrance has always been this way. Mr. Catanese stated that Linda Weber prepared the original document and the mindset was about having first floor commercial units with 2nd & 3rd floor boutique hotels so you had a small entrance

to make your way up to the boutique hotel via stairs or elevator. Mr. Miraglia wanted to know if you are then telling someone that the entrance has to be 14 feet wide which is not necessary. Mr. Conrad said he was okay with it. Mr. Bickford stated it only applies to the first floor unit.

Motion by Mr. Hand to adopt the Resolution with the package recommending adoption of the Ordinance. Mr. Conrad seconded the Motion. Mrs. Rich requested a discussion. She stated that she has a hard time perceiving the idea of buying a permit to park and that she does not think it is a good idea. Mr. Conte stated that this is the reason the Board came up with a Plan to address the parking issue. Mrs. Rich stated she has a hard time understanding the Waterfront Business District; that perhaps the goal that was set isn't happening and now it's happening a different way. Mr. Bickford stated that the advice given by the Planner was that the reason it wasn't working was because it didn't contemplate 2nd and 3rd floor residential and that's the fix that we are trying to implement to stimulate development in that area and create a more vibrant street level retail and commercial area. Mr. Conrad stated that another thing is that Stone Harbor went through a horrible business cycle in which the allure of such an opportunity was not very appealing given what was happening to the general economy; as this community becomes more affordable to more people and we see that reflected in the rising prices of residential properties, it may be a different ball game than it was in the last five years. Mrs. Rich stated that prices of real estate have gone down not up. Mr. Conrad stated they are now starting to come back up again and one of the responsibilities of the Planning Board is to begin to anticipate what is going to happen in what we are calling the Waterfront Business District. Mr. Conte stated we are not trying to grow our business district, we are trying to keep it from shrinking; the loss of our business district could be a permanent one that we can't get back. Mrs. Rich stated that she thinks differently; that the basin needs respect; that it has changed a lot and will change more; that two sides are residential and the other is business; that we have to be careful. Mrs. Rich stated she is voting against it because she is not in favor of the Waterfront Business District and the idea; that she has not seen the success of what was started and planned years ago happening now. Mr. Bickford stated that as an outsider meaning he wasn't around for the first plan, the plan started years ago was flawed not to have permitted 2nd & 3rd floor residential when that is the highest and best use for those sights, that you are not going to get 2nd floor commercial in Stone Harbor. Mrs. Rich agreed that 2nd floor commercial does not work anywhere. Mr. Conrad stated that the thing that will have an immediate effect is not going to happen unless we create the conditions where we allow the market over time to exercise its own power; I think it becomes more alluring if you can have your office on the first floor and make an investment to have two residences above it or have an office which is largely paid for by the revenue of the 2nd & 3rd floor usages. Mrs. Rich stated that she has read all of it over; that some parts of the Ordinance as it exists are not current to right now such as words like public walkways, view sheds, appropriate outdoor uses, vehicular and pedestrian linkages between the waterfront business district, and parking. She stated she reads into it differently than other people read into it. Mr. Conte said he remembers that the area looked like it was in blight 10 years ago and now it looks better so things have changed. Mrs. Rich said yes, they do, there's a new hotel and one empty space where something is going to happen someday and she is not disagreeing that there has not been improvement.

Motion by Mr. Hand to end the discussion and roll call vote on moving forward with the Waterfront Business District Ordinance.

Roll call taken by Secretary. **Affirmative votes:** Mr. Hand, Mayor Walters, Mr. Conte, Mr. Conrad, Mrs. Gougher, Mr. Bickford, and Mr. Miraglia. For the record, Mr. Miraglia's vote will not count as the alternate. **Opposing vote:** Mrs. Rich.

Public Comment

No one spoke. Public Session Closed.

Old Business

Mr. Conrad stated that he would like to revisit the hotel/motel district in the new year with respect on how it will be resolved.

Mr. Conte asked what is happening with the Library. Mayor Walters stated we are waiting for the architect to design the construction and once that is done, they will go to the Freeholders and then come to the Planning Board and have a public hearing and then it will go out to bid. Mr. Catanese asked the Mayor if the plot plan and layout will come to the Board and the Mayor stated yes. Mr. Conrad asked if anything the Board said to the County regarding the plan would be as an advisory with a right of voice but no other input and the Mayor stated yes, that's it. The Mayor stated that we have had a Committee that has been working a year and half to two years with the architect and freeholders and a number of other people trying to get the look that we want for the building. Mrs. Rich stated there have been two or three different designs so far. Mr. Conrad stated there is a lot of frustration in town and rightfully so but on the other hand it will be something the town will have to live with for the next 100 years.

Adjournment

Having no further business to discuss, Mr. Hand called for a motion to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Mayor Walters. All members present voted in the affirmative.

APPROVED: January 12, 2015

ATTESTED:

Diane Frangiose
Diane Frangiose, Secretary Stone Harbor Planning Board