

The Minutes of the **Workshop Meeting** of the Township Committee of the Township of Cranford, County of Union, State of New Jersey on **March 7, 2022** at **7:01** p.m.in Room 108.

THIS MEETING IS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE “OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT” AS ADEQUATE NOTICE OF THIS MEETING HAS BEEN PROVIDED BY E-MAILING THE ANNUAL SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS TO THE WESTFIELD LEADER, THE UNION COUNTY LOCAL SOURCE, THE STAR LEDGER, AND TAP INTO CRANFORD, BY POSTING SUCH ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULE ON A BULLETIN BOARD IN THE TOWN HALL RESERVED FOR SUCH ANNOUNCEMENTS AND THE FILING OF SAID NOTICE WITH THE TOWNSHIP CLERK OF CRANFORD. FORMAL ACTION MAY BE TAKEN AT THIS MEETING.

Present: Mayor Kathleen Prunty
Deputy Mayor Jason Gareis
Commissioner Brian Andrews*
Commissioner Gina Black*
Commissioner Mary O’Connor

Absent: None

Township Attorney Ryan Cooper, Administrator Jamie Cryan, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Lavona Patterson and Township Clerk Patricia Donahue were present.

*Commissioner Andrews arrived to the Meeting at 7:03 p.m. Commissioner Black arrived to the Meeting at 7:04 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

On motion of Commissioner O’Connor, seconded by Deputy Mayor Gareis and passed, the following resolution was adopted by roll call vote

Resolution No. 2022-98.6

BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Committee will go into closed session to discuss the following, the minutes of which will be released at some time in the future at the discretion of the Township Committee:

Legal

- Legal Update
- Township Property Inventory
- North Avenue Redevelopment Area

Personnel

- Emergency Medical Technicians
- Building Department – Title and Salary Review
- Collective Bargaining

Minute Review

- Closed Session Minutes of December 13, 2021

Recorded Vote:

Aye: Mayor Miller Prunty, Deputy Mayor Gareis, Commissioners O'Connor

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: Commissioners Andrews and Black*

On motion of Commissioner Andrews, seconded by Commissioner Black and passed, the Township Committee returned to open session at 7:46 p.m.

750 Walnut Avenue Traffic Study Report

Township Consulting Engineers Maurice Rached and Jacqueline Dirmann were present via teleconference (virtually).

Mr. Rached spoke about the recent meeting held with members of the public regarding the applicant's Traffic Study pertaining to 750 Walnut Avenue. He spoke about Hartz Mountain Industries' (Hartz) Traffic Study recommendations including the installation of speed bumps and four (4) way stops. Mr. Rached spoke about the neighbors' feedback and elaborated about driveways and traffic lights. Mr. Rached stated that he would look into anything the neighbors asked him to look into. Mayor Miller Prunty stated that the neighbors requested that the County be contacted to decrease the speed limit (on Walnut Avenue). Commissioner Black commented about a pedestrian crossing and green space, specifically noting that a pedestrian crossing wasn't brought up and should be a consideration. Mr. Rached spoke about lowering the speed limit and increasing pedestrian crossing(s). Commissioner O'Connor noted that the speed limit had been lowered in earlier years on a portion of Walnut Avenue. Mr. Rached referenced New Jersey Statutes Title 39 and the success some counties had achieved in decreasing speed limits. Commissioner Andrews spoke about speed bumps and inquired about road re-design. Mr. Rached spoke about narrowing a road using markings. Commissioner Gareis inquired about "cut-through" streets and changing streets into one (1) way streets. Mayor Miller Prunty inquired about the time frame to assess Hartz' plan. Mr. Rached stated that he was waiting to get emails from residents and stated that he could "wrap" up his recommendation in in four (4) or five (5) days. Discussion ensued.

Gas-Powered Leaf Blowers

Mr. Ben Cohen, Ms. Donna Bacich and Mr. Robert Berns of the Green Team were present.

The Green Team volunteers thanked Administrator Cryan and Department of Public Works Superintendent Erik Hastrup for their assistance with the Township website and tree requests.

The Township volunteers then spoke about the Green Team and the Environmental Commission's interest in the gas-powered leaf blower matter. They spoke about their concerns, i.e., the leaf blowers were very loud, disruptive and caused pollution. The Township volunteers stated that they had compiled language suitable for a proposed ordinance pertaining to this

matter. The Green Team volunteers stated that they were seeking a targeted reduction in use of the gas-powered leaf blowers. They noted that they were not seeking a ban of the gas-powered blowers. The volunteers noted that such reduction could be achieved during the summer months. They suggested that the Township and schools not use gas-powered blowers in the summer months. Mayor Miller Prunty inquired whether the volunteers had viewed educational resources from other towns regarding this matter. Commissioner Black inquired about landscapers and the use of gas-powered blowers. Mr. Cohen suggested that outreach occur to landscapers. Deputy Mayor Gareis spoke about his dislike of gas-powered leaf blowers but noted that he disliked the idea of Township's Police Department dealing with this issue. Mr. Cooper suggested that the Code Enforcement professionals may be able to handle the complaints. Commissioner O'Connor inquired about the number of complaints received pertaining to gas-power blowers and the cost differential between blowers.

Mayor Miller Prunty suggested that the next step was for the Green Team to develop a plan. Mr. Cohen inquired whether the Township could stop using the gas-powered leaf blowers in the summer. Mayor Miller Prunty and Commissioners Andrews and Black stated they were in support of such a ban. Deputy Mayor Gareis stated that the City of Summit received a lot of recognition for such a ban last summer but were not planning on continuing the ban this year. Commissioner Black inquired about grants for the leaf blower conversions. Mayor Miller Prunty stated that she would wait to receive the volunteers' plan regarding gas-powered leaf blowers. She asked Administrator Cryan to speak to the Department of Public Works regarding discontinuing their use of gas-powered leaf blowers.

Township Policy on Curbing with Road Improvements Projects

Township Consulting Engineer Jacqueline Dirmann were present via teleconference (virtually).

Township Consulting Engineer Jacqueline Dirmann spoke about the benefits of curbing, specifically that roads would last longer and that curb (installation) works hand in hand with drainage. Referring to her March 4th memo about "Proposed Curbing Policy in the Township of Cranford", Ms. Dirmann spoke about five (5) matters to consider when considering the installation of curbing, i.e., whether the majority of the roadway had existing curb and whether there was sufficient gutterline slope. She then spoke about situations when curbing wasn't possible. Discussion ensued including how the Capital Budget would be affected by Ms. Dirmann's proposal (Commissioner O'Connor).

North Avenue Redevelopment Area

Township Consulting Attorney Michael Edwards and Township Consulting Planner Annie Hindenlang were present via teleconference (virtually)

Ms. Hindenlang spoke about the proposed North Avenue Redevelopment project, She stated that proposed Plan entailed a four (4) story building that would not encompass greater than forty (40) units. Commissioner Black inquired about the improvements. Ms. Hindenlang noted that eight (8) of the forty (40) units would be considered Affordable Housing units. Commissioner Black spoke about the municipality-sponsored housing project in Millburn. Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Andrews inquired about the court-mandated timeline associated with the Redevelopment Plan. Mr. Edwards responded and noted that the Township's conditional judgment expired on May 11, 2022. Discussion ensued including discussion about condemnation and eminent domain (Commissioner O'Connor) and whether the Township could get an extension (Mayor Miller Prunty).

Commissioner Black inquired about the next steps. Mr. Cooper stated that Ms. Hindenlang would prepare a Redevelopment Plan which would include the role of the Downtown Management Corporation (DMC). Commissioner Black inquired whether the DMC had been involved in other development processes. Mr. Cooper and Mayor Miller Prunty responded that DMC had been involved in other development processes.

Year-End Township Tax Statement

Chief Financial Officer Lavona Patterson stated that the Township, by statute, must present the annual Tax Statement. Ms. Patterson provided an overview of the distributed 2021 Year-End Report. She noted that the cash percentage collection was 99.25 per cent (%). A brief discussion ensued.

Pay to Play Ordinance

Commissioner O'Connor stated that former Commissioner Ann Dooley and she were asked about Township vendor contributions to campaign fund raising (during a previous campaign season). Commissioner O'Connor stated that she did not accept vendor contributions during her most recent campaign. Mayor Miller Prunty stated that this was a good second step in good governance. She asked Township Attorney Ryan Cooper to look into this matter. He stated that he would conduct an analysis of how a Pay to Play ordinance would have affected the Township's contracting. Discussion ensued.

Reconsideration of 2022 Township Committee Meeting Schedule

Commissioner O'Connor stated that during the previous consideration of the Township Committee Meeting schedule, she thought the Township Committee was only adopting the January 2022 Meeting schedule. Commissioner O'Connor stated that she had a conflict with the schedule. She then stated that Combined Meetings were not working and briefly elaborated. Mayor Miller Prunty stated that she also had a conflict with the July 12th Township Committee Meeting. Mayor Miller Prunty spoke about keeping tight agendas for the Combined Meetings. Discussion ensued regarding Township Committee consideration of a new resolution to update the 2022 Township Committee Meeting schedule.

Review Official Meeting Agenda

Commissioner Andrews inquired about Official Meeting Agenda Item Number 12 pertaining to the Canoe Club (specifically proposed Resolution No. 2022-157 which pertained to authorizing the Township Clerk to advertise for bids for the demolition and renovation of flood-damaged

components of the Cranford Canoe Club) and whether the opening of the Canoe Club would be delayed. Administrator Jamie Cryan responded that per Recreation Director Steve Robertazzi, the opening of the Cranford Canoe Club was not expected to be significantly delayed.

Minute Approval – Closed Session Minutes of December 13, 2021

Commissioner Andrews made a motion to adopt the December 13, 2021 Closed Session Minutes. Commissioner O'Connor seconded the motion. Mayor Miller Prunty, Deputy Mayor Gareis and Commissioners Andrews and O'Connor voted to approve the Closed Session minutes of December 13, 2021. Commissioner Black abstained from voting on the Closed Session Meeting Minutes of December 13, 2021.

Review Official Meeting Agenda (continued)

Commissioner Black spoke about the December 13th Workshop Agenda Minutes which would be considered for adoption at the following evening's Official Meeting. She recommended edits to the section pertaining to "2022 Township Committee Meeting Schedule". Township Clerk Patricia Donahue stated that she would send an updated version of the December 13th Workshop Meeting Minutes to the Commissioners.

Public Comments

Mayor Miller Prunty opened the public comments portion of the meeting and asked if there were any questions or comments.

Ms. Loretta Smith of 21 Oneida Place - stated that consideration of the 750 Walnut Avenue situation must include the area from Lexington Avenue to Mohawk Drive.

Ms. Cindy Capodice of 312 Retford Avenue - inquired about Topology NJ LLC.

Ms. Rita LaBrutto of 104 Arlington Road - inquired about the role of the DMC. She then inquired about Affordable Housing credits. Discussion ensued between Ms. LaBrutto and Township Attorney Ryan Cooper regarding credits.

Ms. Chrissa Stulphin - inquired about Redevelopment, including whether the Redevelopment Plan would include off-site parking (specifications). Mr. Cooper responded.

Ms. Rita LaBrutto of 104 Arlington Road - inquired if the Redevelopment Plan would address the building height of three (3) stories or four (4) stories. Mr. Cooper stated that it would.

Hearing no comments, Mayor Miller Prunty closed the public comments portion of the meeting.

CLOSED SESSION

On motion of Commissioner O'Connor, seconded by Deputy Mayor Gareis and passed, the following resolution was adopted by roll call vote

Resolution No. 2022-98.6

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Recorded Vote:

Aye: Mayor Miller Prunty, Deputy Mayor Andrews, Commissioners Gareis, Black & O'Connor

Nay: None

Abstained: None

Absent: None

On motion of Commissioner O'Connor, seconded by Deputy Mayor Gareis and passed, the Township Committee returned to open session at 11:25 p.m.

On motion of Commissioner O'Connor, seconded by Deputy Mayor Gareis and passed, the Township Committee adjourned at 11:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Donahue
Township Clerk

Dated: March 7, 2022