

**BOROUGH OF PALMYRA
LAND USE BOARD
MINUTES
JULY 15, 2020 -7:00 PM
Via Zoom**

CALL TO ORDER. The Land Use Board meeting of the Borough of Palmyra is hereby called to order at 7:09 p.m. by Vice Chairman Timothy Beck.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT.

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., and in consideration of Executive Order No. 103, issued by Governor Murphy on March 9, 2020, declaring a State of Emergency and a Public Health Emergency in the State of New Jersey, the Borough of Palmyra does hereby notify the public that to protect the health, safety and welfare of our citizens while ensuring the continued functioning of government, the meeting of the Mayor and Council will be a Virtual Council Meeting. Members of the public are invited to “attend” the Virtual Council Meeting but all members of the public participating in the meeting may be muted and their video image disabled. Notice of this meeting was published in the Burlington County Times on January 19th, 2020 and notification was sent to the Burlington County Times on July 10th, 2020. Notice was posted on the Municipal Door, Official Bulletin Board and the Borough of Palmyra Website and electronic signs on July 9th, 2020 and notice was given to all Council Members.

ROLL CALL Vice Chairman Beck request a call of the roll.

PRESENT: Vice Chairman Beck, Mr. Gural, Mr. Norcross, Mayor Tait, Mr. Yetter, Ms. O’Connor

ABSENT: Chairwoman Cloud, Mr. Keisler, Mr. O’Kane, Mrs. Melvin, Mrs Hui

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: Vice Chairman Beck asked for any questions or comments regarding the proposed June 17, 2020 minutes. Hearing none, he requests a motion to approve the minutes as written. Mayor Tait makes the motions to approve and second by Mr. Gural. At the call of the roll,

AYES: Vice Chairman Beck, Mr. Gural, Mayor Tait, Ms. O’Connor

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: Mr. Norcross, Mr. Yetter

Minutes are approved.

CORRESPONDENCE:

June 29, 2020 Correspondence from Board of Chosen Freeholders County of Burlington regarding a notice of public hearing for an amendment of the proposed Burlington County Highway Master Plan, Northern

U.S. 130 Regional Transportation and Circulation Plan. No action needed. A CD was also enclosed for those who wish to view it let the secretary know.

July 6, 2020 notice served on Property Owners within 200 Feet of Subject Property from a property at 339 Elm Avenue, Riverton for a bulk variance for the purpose of constructing a functional front porch. No action is needed.

Vice Chairman Beck asks if there are any questions regarding the correspondence received. There were none.

LAND USE MEMBER MAYOR APPOINTMENT: Mayor Tait presents Jayson Rossignol as her appointment to the Land Use Board. Mayor Tait asks the Board attorney, Mr. Brewer if she must present the appointment to Borough Council first before Mr. Rossignol is sworn in and Mr. Brewer advises that it must be presented to Borough Council. The swearing in of Mr. Rossignol was tabled until appointment presented to Borough Council.

NOMINATIONS FOR CHAIRPERSON: Vice Chairman Beck requests nominations for the Chairman of the Board. Mr. Gural nominates Lew Yetter. Vice Chairman Beck hearing no other nominations requests a motion appointing Lew Yetter as the Chairman of the Land Use Board. Mr. Gural makes the motion and second by Mr. Norcross. At the call of the Roll:

AYES: Vice Chairman Beck, Mr. Gural, Mr. Norcross, Mayor Tait, Ms. O'Connor

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: Mr. Yetter

The motion is passed.

SWEARING IN: Mr. Brewer swears in Mr. Yetter as Chairman.

Chairman Yetter takes over the meeting.

BOROUGH COUNCIL UPDATES: Chairman Yetter asks if there are any Borough Council updates. Mayor Tait reports that the redevelopment of Route 73 is progressing and that documents are being reviewed. She also advises that there will be 2 additional Veterans parking signs being placed in the Borough. One will be at Legion Field and the other will be in front of the Roger's News on Broad Street.

Mr. Gural discusses and confirms with Mr. Brewer the Route 73 South Redevelopment amendment. Mr. Gural confirms that the amendment will be prepared by the first meeting of Borough Council August for introduction of an Ordinance. The amendment is then sent to the Land Use Board for review and comments for Borough Council. After the review, the Governing Body could possibly adopt the Ordinance in September. Chairman Yetter asks if it is long document and Mr. Gural advises that it is not a long document and is mostly regarding setbacks.

OLD BUSINESS: Chairman Yetter asks the Board members to review the dates for the mandatory class dates available and if anyone wishes to be registered for the class to please advise the Board secretary.

NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Brewer explains that this is a function of the Board whereas the Governing Body identifies an area they want the Land Use Board to look at to determine if the property meets the criteria to be designated an area in need of redevelopment. This would allow for certain additional redevelopment tools for the municipality. The Governing Body directed this Board to conduct this study. Mr. Gerkins has prepared a report that he will be presenting to the Board and give you his opinion as to whether or not it meets the standards and criteria to be designated an area in need of redevelopment. Mr. Brewer states that his office has provided notice of this hearing to the property owner more than ten days in advance. The notice was also published in the newspaper for two consecutive weeks. The last being ten days prior to this meeting. Mr. Brewer then calls on Mr. Gerkins to be sworn in. He is sworn in. Mr. Brewer asks if Mr. Gerkins prepared the report regarding Block 80, Lot 6, 321 East Broad Street. Mr. Gerkins replies yes. Mr. Brewer asks Mr. Gerkins to present his report including both his review of the property, the facts of the property and whether or not, in his opinion, it meets the standard in the Local Redevelopment Housing Law to be declared an area of redevelopment. Mr. Gerkins reads and reviews the report with the Board. He has found that this property is in need of redevelopment due to criteria “B” contained in section 5 of the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law. “The discontinuance of the use of buildings previously used for commercial, manufacturing, or industrial purposes; the abandonment of such buildings; or the same being allowed to fall into so great a state of disrepair as to be untenable.” Mr. Gerkins also believes the study is in conformance with the Palmyra Master Plan and the 2018 Master Plan Re-examination report. The evaluation of the area was based on the area’s existing land use, physical characteristics, history, and accessibility and included site visits by himself and a licensed New Jersey building inspector. The study shows that Block 80, Lot 6 the building and design have been rendered obsolete and meets the criteria of an area of redevelopment. Currently the lot is located in the “TC” zone, which is the Town Center zone. Residential use is permitted on the second story of the building with commercial or other uses on the first floor. Residential use is not permitted on the first floor in the “TC” zone. This building is not configured for such a use. It is undersized for multiple uses. It has a parking lot that is likely too small for multiple uses as well. Recent property websites have listed the property as a warehouse. The property is small sized. It is approximately ½ acre. The structure itself is an outdated design. The building and design have been rendered obsolete. The building has been vacant for over a year and is showing signs of dilapidation per a recent inspection. The design and layout of the building has limited potential for an active use. It is the goal of the Palmyra Master Plan to protect residential areas from encroachment by commercial and industrial uses. Accordingly, any plan for the property should be compatible with, as well as, enhance the residential districts on both sides of the study area. The building and lot serve as a gateway to Palmyra when travelling West on Broad Street. It is the first building you see and it is in the Borough’s best interest to redevelop the property so it serves as a proper gateway. Mr. Gerkins recommends that the Borough of Palmyra pursue the condemnation area in need of redevelopment designation of the property. This will provide Palmyra with an opportunity to ensure that the property is redeveloped in the manner that is consistent with the Borough’s goals. Mr. Gerkins concludes his presentation. Chairman Yetter asks the Board for any questions or comments. Mayor Tait confirms with Mr. Gerkins that the study was only from the outside of the property. Mr. Gerkins states that he did not go inside. Chairman Yetter asks Mayor Tait if the Borough has any vision or ideas for this lot. She replies that Borough Council has none at this time but feels that it needs to be redeveloped or updated. Mayor Tait asks if the owners were present and is

advised no. Mr. Gural states that in regards to the vision of the Governing Body, that would be established through the development of the redevelopment plan. Chairman Yetter asks Ms. O'Connor if she has any comments. She comments that if this Board declares this an area of redevelopment, someone still has to be found to rehabilitate the property or do something else before this can be moved forward and pursue condemnation of the property. The Borough would take the property and then submit it to whoever the redeveloper is. She asks if this is a true understanding. Mr. Brewer confirms that this is correct. Chairman Yetter asks Mr. Norcross if he has any questions or comments. He has none. Chairman Yetter asks Vice Chairman Beck if he has any questions or comments. He has none. No one else has any comments. Mr. Brewer advises that the meeting should be open to the public. Chairman Yetter asks for a motion to open the meeting to the public for questions or comments regarding this property. Mr. Norcross makes the motion to open the meeting, Mayor Tait second. All in favor, none opposed. Hearing and seeing no one Chairman Yetter asks for a motion to close the public portion of this property. Mr. Norcross makes the motion to close, Mayor Tait second. All in favor, none opposed. Mr. Brewer states that, if the Board so chooses, a motion can be made to direct him to prepare a Resolution recommending that the property be deemed an area in need of redevelopment for the reasons set forth in the testimony and Mr. Gerkins report that will be ready for adoption at the next meeting. Mayor Tait makes the motion as stated by Mr. Brewer. Vice Chairman Beck second. At the call of the Roll:

AYES: Vice Chairman Beck, Mr. Gural, Mr. Norcross, Mayor Tait, Chairman Yetter, Ms. O'Connor

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

The motion passes

Mr. Gural confirms with Mr. Brewer that the Resolution will be prepared before the next Land Use Board meeting. Mr. Brewer agrees.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC Chairman Yetter asks for a motion to open the meeting to the public. Vice Chairman Beck makes the motion and Mr. Norcross second. All in favor, none opposed.

Hearing no one wishing to speak, Chairman Yetter requests a motion to close the public portion of the meeting. Mr. Norcross makes the motion and second by Vice Chairman Beck. All in favor, none opposed.

ADJOURNMENT Having no further business to be conducted, Chairman Yetter confirms that the next meeting of the Land Use Board is scheduled for August 19, 2020 and requests a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Norcross makes the motion to adjourn and Vice Chairman Beck second. All in favor, none opposed. Meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Nagle, Secretary