

**WEST AMWELL TOWNSHIP
PLANNING BOARD – REGULAR MEETING
February 21, 2023 Minutes – 7:00 PM**

The West Amwell Township Planning Board meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Tomenchok followed by the salute to the flag.

The following statement of compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act as listed on the meeting agenda was read into the record by Chairman Tomenchok: This meeting was called pursuant to the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. This meeting was noticed as a regularly scheduled meeting transmitted to the Hunterdon County Democrat and the Times of Trenton on January 26, 2023. A copy of this notice is available to the public and is on file in the Office of the Planning Board and Township Clerk.

The following general policy statement of the Planning Board was read into the record by Chairman Tomenchok: The Board's general policy is to end the presentation of testimony on applications by 10:30 PM and to conclude all Board business by 11:00 PM. When necessary, the Chairman may permit a reasonable extension of those time limits.

Attendance – Roll Call

Present: Jim Cally
John Dale
Nella Hamtil
John Haug
Carl Ippolito
Joe Petrucci – (*arrived at 7:10 PM*)
Rob Tomenchok
Connor Montferrat – Alt. #2
Attorney Tara St. Angelo
Planner Joanna Slagle

Excused: Bob Balaam
Christopher Morgan
John Flemming – Alt. #1

Approval of Bill List

It was noted for the record that no bill list was received from the Finance Department.

New Business – Other

Public Hearing: Approval of Amended Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan per SADC's 10 Year Review Requirement for Amendments and Updates

Present for the discussion was Planner Slagle. She explained that in order for the Township to remain eligible for funding opportunities the Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan (FPP) must be updated to comply with any criteria that may have been changed by the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC). She clarified that there is a 10 year review requirement. Planner Slagle stated this FPP is simply an update to the previous plan and does not change any of the targeted preserved areas within the Township. She also noted that the plan has already been endorsed by SADC and the Township's Ag and Open Space Committees.

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Ms. Hamtil pointed out some minor edits that needed to be corrected.

Mr. Montferrat asked for clarification on the chart related to the assessments. Planner Slagle explained the data comes from the “mod 4” software the Assessor uses and she noted the market value for a farm parcel in West Amwell is approximately \$10,000 per acre. Mr. Montferrat also asked about residual dwelling sites (RDS). Planner Slagle explained an RDS allows for someone to construct a residential unit and other appurtenant structures on a parcel and she noted West Amwell does not have many of these sites.

Mr. Cally asked for clarification on the reference to housing permits. Planner Slagle explained that the data comes directly from the DCA database.

Chairman Tomenchok opened the floor to public comment. It was noted for the record that there were no members of the public present at the meeting at this time. A motion was made by Cally and seconded by Dale to close the floor to public comment. The motion was unanimously approved by voice vote.

A motion was made by Ippolito and seconded by Haug approving Resolution #2023-07, authorizing the adoption of the Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan to the Township’s Master Plan. The motion was approved by roll call vote.

Cally: Yes, Dale: Yes, Hamtil: Yes, Haug: Yes, Ippolito: Yes, Petrucci: Yes, Tomenchok: Yes, Montferrat: Yes

Unfinished Business

Chairman Tomenchok commented on the content and format of the Master Plan expressing that he would like to see it simplified. Attorney St. Angelo remarked that many of the Master Plan elements are redundant because the language and data show up in multiple places. Planner Slagle added that often times the elements are done as “peel off” documents which is why they are set up in certain formats vs. other elements, such as the Conservation Plan Element which is used to support the Township’s zoning regulations.

Mr. Cally commented that the Circulation Plan Element needs to be reviewed because he said certain residents are constantly requesting speed limit and stop signs.

It was noted that the next steps for reviewing the Master Plan will be:

1. Reformatting of the document
2. Review of the Land Use Plan Element
3. Review of recommendations on the spreadsheet that was distributed

Open to the Public

Chairman Tomenchok opened the floor to public comment. It was noted for the record that there were no members of the public present at the meeting at this time. A motion was made by Cally and seconded by Dale to close the floor to public comment. The motion was unanimously approved by voice vote.

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Minutes

A motion by Hamtil, seconded by Cally to approve the Board's 1/17/23 meeting minutes with no revisions noted was unanimously approved by voice vote.

Adjournment

A motion by Montferrat, seconded by Hamtil to adjourn the meeting was unanimously approved by voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 8:07 PM.

Maria Andrews, Planning Board Secretary