

**Town of Westfield
Planning Board
MINUTES
June 7, 2021**

The Westfield Planning Board met on June 7, 2021 at 7:30 pm. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, this meeting was held remotely through Zoom Webinar. The public was provided with access to join the webinar through Zoom.

In compliance with Chapter 231 P.C. OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT in the State of New Jersey, adequate notice of this meeting was provided to all members of the Planning Board and the newspapers that have been designated to receive notice, the Star Ledger and the Westfield Leader.

REGULAR MEETING:

Mr. McAloon called the meeting to order and opened the meeting by calling all present to join in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

PRESENT: Mayor Shelley Brindle, Kris McAloon
Ross Goldstein, Asima Jansveld, Matthew Ceberio,
Alexandra Carreras, Ann Freedman
ABSENT: Michael Ash, Anastasia Harrison, Linda Habgood, Michael La Place
ALSO PRESENT: Donald Sammet, Town Planner and Alan Trembulak, Esq., Board
Attorney.

ADOPTIONS OF MINUTES:

Mr. McAloon called for a motion to adopt the minutes of the May 23, 2021, meeting. Shelly Brindle made a motion to adopt; Matthew Ceberio seconded.

ALL IN FAVOR: Mayor Shelley Brindle, Ross Goldstein,
Asima Jansveld, Matthew Ceberio, Alexandra Carreras, Ann Freedman
OPPOSED: None
ABSTAINED: Kris McAloon
ABSENT: Michael Ash, Anastasia Harrison, Linda Habgood, Michael La Place

Motion carried.

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS:

Mr. Sammet stated there were no resolutions to be approved at this meeting

NEW APPEALS:

Mr. Sammet stated there were no new appeals to be approved at this meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Public Hearings:

Public Hearing on Amendment to the Housing Element and Fair share Plan

Mr. Sammet summarized the 2021 Amendment to the 2018 Housing Element and Fair Share Plan. He described how the amendment would allow for the commercial development of the so-called Handler building site which is located in the North Avenue TOD inclusionary housing zone. In order to accommodate the 6-unit affordable obligation generated by residential development of the Handler site, the 6-unit obligation will be required to be built on the Williams site which is located in the RA5A zone district.

Open to public questions and comments. None

Open to Board for deliberation or to pass a motion.

A motion was made to approve this amendment by Ross Goldstein and seconded by Ann Freedman.

ALL IN FAVOR: Mayor Shelley Brindle, Ross Goldstein, Kris McAloon, Asima Jansveld, Matthew Ceberio, Alexandra Carreras, Ann Freedman

OPPOSED: None

ABSTAINED: None

ABSENT: Michael Ash, Anastasia Harrison, Linda Habgood, Michael La Place

Motion carried.

Chairman Ash joined the meeting.

Mayor Brindle thanks Mr. Sammet for his hard work.

Public Hearing on the Unified Land Use and Circulation Element of the Master Plan

Mr. Sammet described the work leading to the completion of the Unified Land Use and Circulation Element of the Town Master Plan. He introduced the Consulting Team members: Ms. Sanyogita Chavan and Mr. Paul Cancilla of H2M and Mr. John Federico of WSP. The Consulting Team presented their plan.

Ms. Chavan described the content of a master plan as required by the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law. She also described how the municipal master plans provide policy guidance for a community in land use matters once adopted by the local Planning Board. She provided an outline of the plan, describing how land use and circulation are interrelated.

Ms. Chavan then described the public participation and explained that the plan includes a study of existing conditions, including existing zone districts, the roadway network, mass transit network, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities. She stated that the Community Form Analysis section of the plan analyzes both physical shape and form of the Town's built environment. She explained that it includes recommendations for the types of buildings, spaces, and uses emphasizing that these are in the form of recommendations, and are not a zoning ordinance. Amendments to the Town's zoning ordinance would need to be prepared based upon the recommendations in the plan, and only after careful consideration of neighborhood conditions.

Ms. Chavan also stated that the plan contains broad based recommendations for redevelopment areas, not specific ones. These include a recommendation to incorporate or utilize the arts as part of downtown revitalization, to create public spaces, to utilize architectural design guidelines, to encourage office uses, and to strategically locate ground floor retail. She also stated that the Town should explore opportunities to use powers contained within the New Jersey Local Redevelopment and Housing Law outside of the downtown area. Ms. Chavan concluded her presentation by addressing the issue of residential teardowns that were raised in the Master Plan Reexamination Report. She stated that the plan includes some recommended zoning techniques that can be built into Westfield ordinances. She explained that a zone-by-zone analysis should be conducted before any bulk standard amendments are adopted, to ensure that few non-conformities are created by an ordinance change. She also stated that ordinance amendments should require building that is in scale with neighborhood conditions.

Next, Mr. John Federico described the circulation recommendations contained within the plan. He stated that the plan includes a number of both short and long-term recommendations, with an emphasis on multi-modal transportation to reduce dependency on the automobile and demand for parking. The multi-modal recommendations include prioritizing a sidewalk improvement plan, town-wide pedestrian crossing improvements, bicycle networks, improving train station access, and bus stop improvements. He also stated that the plan includes a recommendation that there be an off-road connection between the Lord and Taylor site on North Avenue with the Westfield train station. Mr. Federico continued by describing recommended roadway improvements. These include traffic signal upgrades, new traffic signals at recommended intersections, and road diets for parts of North and South Avenues. He then followed by describing parking and loading recommendations including curbside management which includes the creation of pickup and drop-off areas, the consideration for a payment in lieu of parking program, a reconsideration of downtown parking ratios and requirements and recommendations regarding bicycle parking requirements. Mr. Federico completed his summary of the circulation portion of the plan by describing the roadway, streetscape, and public realm guidelines that are recommended in the plan. He stated that street typologies have been identified based upon existing conditions and that there are streetscape design standards recommended for each street typology. He stated that these

are guidelines which may be incorporated into various redevelopment plans, development projects or municipal projects.

Ms. Chavan concluded this presentation by indicating that the hazard vulnerability assessment is now required and is included in the plan as per the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law. Also, an identification of additional areas for electric vehicle charging stations will be included. Finally, an implementation matrix which lays out the tasks in the plan was explained, similar to what was in the Master Plan Reexamination Report, and the next steps for Westfield to adopt this master plan. The consulting team thanked the Board.

Chairman Ash opened the session to the public. No questions were asked.

Chairman Ash opened to discuss to the Board for deliberation and a motion.

Mr. Sammet asked about the offices not being permitted on spaces on the ground floor. Ms. Chavan explained it was for the overall vibrancy of the downtown areas. Mr. Federico explained that it was best to allow a downtown mix of offices, businesses, and restaurants in appropriate locations to keep the area vibrant. Mayor Brindle asked how do we implement this process for accountability. Mr. Sammet responded that the planning staff begins the implementation process and the redevelopment planners, engineer and governing body all follow in the implementation. Adopting ordinances would be one of the next steps. Ms. Freedman would like a 2-page press release to allow residents of Westfield to have the opportunity to review. She asked the board their opinion. Mr. Sammet will contact the communications professional and town administrator. Ms. Chavan agreed to place hyperlinks in the executive summary to assist the public. Chairman Ash likes this option. Ms. Chavan agrees to make this change before submitting the final master plan.

A motion was made to adopt the Unified Land Use and Circulation Plan Element. It was approved by Matthew Ceberio and seconded by Ann Freedman.

ALL IN FAVOR:	Michael Ash, Mayor Shelley Brindle, Ross Goldstein, Kris McAloon, Asima Jansveld, Matthew Ceberio, Alexandra Carreras, Ann Freedman
OPPOSED:	None
ABSTAINED:	None
ABSENT:	Anastasia Harrison, Linda Habgood, Michael La Place

Motion carried.

Chairman Ash thanked H2M, WSP, Susan Blickstein, THA Consulting, parking/steering committee, special acknowledgement to Mr. Jeff Janota. Also, a big thank you to Mr. Sammet for pulling this all together and making it happen. Mayor Brindle thanked the Consulting Team.

General Ordinances:

General Ordinance No. 2217 – An ordinance amending the Land Use Ordinance of the Town of Westfield to Address the Requirements of the Fair Housing Act Regarding Compliance with the Town’s Affordable Housing Obligations was summarized by Don Sammet. This plan amends the land use ordinance pertaining to the RA-5A zone district.

Mr. Sammet explained that this ordinance is consistent with the master plan or rather not inconsistent with the master plan that was just adopted. The ordinance allows for the 6 affordable unit obligation on the Handler site to be built within the RA-5A zone on the Williams site.

Open to public questions and comments. None

Open to Board for deliberation or to pass a motion.

A motion was made to approve this ordinance by Mr. McAloon and seconded by Mr. Ceberio.

ALL IN FAVOR: Michael Ash, Mayor Shelley Brindle, Ross Goldstein, Kris McAloon, Asima Jansveld, Matthew Ceberio, Alexandra Carreras, Ann Freedman

OPPOSED: None

ABSTAINED: None

ABSENT: Anastasia Harrison, Linda Habgood, Michael La Place

Motion carried.

General Ordinance No. 2218 – an ordinance of the Town of Westfield Prohibiting the Operation of Any Class of Cannabis Business Within its Geographical Boundaries and Amending the Land Use Law of the Town Code of the Town of Westfield was presented by Don Sammet.

This review is to determine if Ordinance No. 2218 is consistent with the master plan. Mr. Sammet described that the town would like to prohibit cannabis business at this time as there is incomplete information to make an informed decision to allow this business. This does not affect alternate treatment facilities for medical marijuana in zone C. The town may choose to opt in later if it is in the towns best interest.

Open to public questions and comments. None

Open to Board for deliberation or to pass a motion.

A motion was made to approve this ordinance by Ann Freedman and seconded by Kris McAloon.

ALL IN FAVOR: Michael Ash, Mayor Shelley Brindle, Ross Goldstein, Kris McAloon, Asima Jansveld, Matthew Ceberio, Alexandra Carreras, Ann Freedman

OPPOSED: None

ABSTAINED: None

ABSENT: Anastasia Harrison, Linda Habgood, Michael La Place

Motion carried.

A motion was made by Mr. McAloon to move the meeting to Executive Session and seconded by Ms. Freedman.

Executive Session:

A Litigation issue was discussed with the Board members in a closed session.

Mayor Brindle thanked Mr. McAloon for his 21 years of service in Westfield. All Board members expressed their gratitude and that he will be missed. Mr. McAloon thanked all of the board members.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. McAloon, seconded by Ms. Freedman and carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristine Burd
Planning Board Administrative Secretary