City of Estell Manor Planning & Zoning

Meeting Minutes

February 28, 2024

The regular meeting of the Estell Manor Planning & Zoning Board was held at the City Hall, 148 Cumberland Avenue, Estell Manor, New Jersey.

The meeting was called to order at 7 p.m.

**SUNSHINE ANNOUNCEMENT**

**FLAG SALUTE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE**

**ROLL CALL:**

Present: Christine Masker, Karen Mesler, Samantha Ambrose, Aaron Buchanan, Carolyn Wigglesworth, Joseph Condo, Mayor Elizabeth Owen and Chairman Stephen Teasenfitz.

Absent: Helen Giercyk, Dennis Miller and Monty Holt.

Also in attendance were Chase Farabella, Zoning Officer/Code Enforcement and Robert Belasco, Board Solicitor.

David Scheidegg, Board Engineer was not present.

**APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 24, 2024 MEETING MINUTES**

A motion to adopt the minutes was made by Mayor Owen, seconded by Ms. Mesler, and approved. Abstain: Condo.

**ZONING OFFICER REPORT FOR JANUARY 2024**

A motion to accept the zoning report by Chase Farabella, Zoning Official, was made by Mayor Owen, seconded by Ms. Masker, and approved.

**PUBLIC PORTION**

A motion to open the meeting to the public was made by Mayor Owen, seconded by Mr. Buchanan, and approved.

David Kelton, 159 Broad Street, Estell Manor, discussed the need for a planning meeting to discuss the Master Plan and other issues. Mayor Owen stated the current Master Plan expires in September 2024. A review date has not yet been scheduled.

A motion to close the meeting to the public was made by Mayor Owen, seconded by Ms. Masker, and approved with all in favor.

**INFORMAL BOARD TRAINING**

Solicitor Belasco presented a planning and zoning board training class using the information that was forwarded to the board members. He reviewed the cheat sheets regarding the Municipal Land Use Law, Chapter 291, Laws of New Jersey 1975 and Land Use Regulations/Laws.

Mr. Belasco reviewed the difference between the planning board and the zoning board. He reviewed the number of members able to vote on an application and who must recuse themselves. No more than 7 members of the board can vote on an application. The mayor and council cannot vote on a use variance. The Class II and Class IV members can vote so long as a conflict is not present.

He discussed the process for deeming an application complete and scheduling an application on the agenda.

He suggested the board familiarize themselves with each application and go through the plans to know the relief being requested. He stated that driving by the subject property is helpful but do not go on the property. Do not discuss a pending application with an applicant and be very careful about posting anything on Facebook or other social media sites stating how you feel about the outcome of an application. Only consider the information being presented by the applicant.

He stated that no one should be talking on the phone or texting during an application. It was determined that Solicitor Belasco will swear in applicants and their professionals before any testimony is given.

Mr. Belasco reviewed hardship variances. He stated that voting a certain way on an application does not set precedents and that each application is determined on its own merits.

Mr. Belasco stated that the board should review the goals and objectives in the master plan. Board members should summarize the testimony given and state why they are voting in favor or against. Board members should review the memorializing resolution prior to adoption for any errors. JIF training deals with conflicts of interest. A JIF training session will be scheduled for a future date.

**ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mayor Owen, seconded by Ms. Wigglesworth, and approved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Submitted by,

Shelley Lea