

**GROWTH & REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**  
September 8, 2015

The following are the minutes of the Growth & Redevelopment Committee Meeting, which was held on Tuesday, September 8, 2015, at 6:43 p.m., in the Lawrence Township Municipal Building, Lower Level Conference Room.

**Statement of Proper Notice**

Adequate notice of the regular meeting of the Lawrence Township Growth & Redevelopment Committee has been provided by filing an annual meeting schedule with the Municipal Clerk, and by filing the agenda with the Municipal Clerk, posting prominently in the Municipal Building, and mailing to the Trenton Times, the Trentonian and the Lawrence Ledger.

The roll was called as follows at 6:45 p.m.:

Present: Christopher Bobbitt, Ryan Kennedy, Lovette Love-Stevens, Charles Lavine, John Conroy, Jose Ramos, Donald Addison

Excused Absence: Tushar Patel, John Schloesser, Danielle Delprato, Andrew Bedryk

Absent: Boynton R. Weekes, Howard Nelson

Also Present: Andrew Link, Principal Planner/Business Advocate, Susan Snook, Secretary

**Approval of Minutes:**

The August 11, 2015 minutes were unanimously approved.

**Public Comment:**

None

**Lawrence Shopping Center:**

Mayor Lewis stated the parking lot is finished; however, there is a huge assessment. It was because they were waiting to see exactly how much it was going to cost and it was an overage of the capital improvement fund had in there; so now the auditors are getting together and discussing with management on what they could do. The good news is the parking lot is done which means that now they can actually advertise for tenants, because you can't get tenants if there are large sink holes. The bad news is that it cost them a lot more than what they thought it was going to cost. The tenants and the owners are going to have to figure out on how to adjust the fees.

Mayor Lewis met the new owners of the Bistro (old Merry-Go-Round) and they want to make it into a flex office space and meeting place and some other community assets and it is a local company.

**Awards Program:**

Chairperson Bobbitt stated the venue is at the Boys & Girls Club and has struck out with a speaker twice; both Wawa CEO's are out of town. Mr. Link stated the person that sent out the grand opening notices is the one who responded to the inquiry that they will be accepting the award. Mr. Lavin stated the company is big enough to have plenty of people to accept the award.

Mayor Lewis stated we could ask the new Rider president or the Lawrenceville School president. Mr. Conroy asked about a speaker from the Boys & Girls Club and he is going to speak anyway. Mayor Lewis stated if you want to learn about the Boys & Girls Club, then you will be coming because of where it is being held.

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Mr. Addison stated Comcast is a big contributor to the Boys & Girls Club and will get the name and also the new executive Director of NJBIA, Michele Siekerka and he will reach out to her as well as Mayor Lewis. Mr. Link asked if there is a second choice if she is not available. Mayor Lewis stated the President of Rider used to be the Dean of Hobb School of Business at St. Joseph University. Chairperson Bobbitt stated if that does not work, it will be Rider, then Boys & Girls Club.

Chairperson Bobbitt opened the floor to the Board members on who they would like to present the award to.

The Board members selected the following:

Mayors Award:	Cathleen Lewis (Captain Paul's)
New Large Business:	Christopher Bobbitt (Wawa)
New Small Business:	Lovette Love-Stevens (Gingered Peach)
Business Service Award	Charles Lavine (Boys & Girls Club)
Residential:	John Conroy (Buckmiller, LLC)
New Building/Renovation:	Don Addison (Mrs. G's)
Podmore/Dwyer Historic:	Max Ramos (Lawrence Intermediate School)
Ralph Copleman Env.:	Ryan Kennedy (Lawrence Hopewell Trail)

Mr. Conroy asked if we could ask Gingered Peach to contribute something to the Awards Ceremony; however, Mr. Link stated the Chamber does the breakfast food. Mayor Lewis stated it is not a bad idea to have the Chamber asked the Gingered Peach if they would like to donate any food. Mr. Ramos stated to give out a coupon for a free item and Mayor Lewis stated then Wawa should be asked also for a free cup of coffee. Mayor Lewis stated she would love to see the Chamber do a "goody bag" with the awardees to give out. Mr. Addison asked about the length of the speech and it is 20 minutes.

Mr. Addison asked if the Boys and Girls Club is going to have an opportunity to do a tour. Mayor Lewis stated to give them the opportunity to speak. They are doing a fund raiser called the Taste of Lawrence on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Sign Ordinance:**

Mr. Addison asked if we decided on moving forward and spoke about getting some people in to speak on the issue and where are we on this or are we just going to talk about it. Chairperson Bobbitt stated he is the only person on the sub-committee. Mr. Addison stated we should look for a topic of discussion and getting some visibility and letting the public know more about us. Mayor Lewis stated the original discussion was determining from the sub-committee what piece they wanted to tackle and actual proposal and part of the reasoning was to have it narrower in scope because if we have an open meeting and just talk about signs we will get 80 different types of signs and not get to the stuff you are looking at. We identified the problem, temporary signage, such a seasonal type sale and the only thing we allow now is "Grand Openings" and "Going Out of Business" as temporary signs.

The Lawrence Shopping Center technically are not allowed to have sandwich boards and there was a zoning issue about that because sandwich boards are only allowed on Main Street. The point of the sub-committee was to narrow that focus and if we were going to do a public meeting so that people were addressing either a proposal or at least what the issues are that need to be addressed on that topic.

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Mayor Lewis also stated about the membership of this committee and how are we going to address that because we have a problem with quorum and have people who want to participate who do not have the ability to be Board members. Some people submitted resumes and the rest of Council decided that they did not want to move forward with any applicants at this point because we are half way through the year and they also wanted to look at how we address the membership issues within this group before we add new seats. We have to figure out what to do there because part of the problem is this is a very large committee and we might be able to get more members; a sub-committee of one is not going to get us what we need; however, there is nothing that says a sub-committee only has to be members of the actual committee, so we have some members or people who have said they want to participate before that are not members and we can ask them if they wanted to serve on a sub-committee; for instance, someone from Main Street or from the Lawrence Shopping Center.

Mayor Lewis stated to re-focus and look at who we want to invite on that sub-committee; figure out what recommendations the committee wants to bring to Council on how to change the makeup of the Board and really spell it out and then come January the Board makes appointments and we can make the right appointments and we can have a sub-committee that may or may not started a meeting already and then we can have a public quorum. The Board members agreed and Vice Chairperson suggested to put on the agenda for November for a work session to put together what to give to Council.

Mr. Addison stated to stick to the one issue and make that productive and this is what our focus is. Mayor Lewis asked to circulate a list all of the spots on the Board, who the current members are and which spots are empty, because there are different classifications (and bring copies to meeting) and know the attendance of the Board members for January meeting. Vice Chairperson Kennedy asked if the ordinance states what classes are, like if someone did not participate in years, is it up to the Board to recommend to the Council that they be asked make up that spot for someone or is it just for the Council to do or is it for us to do ourselves. Mayor Lewis stated that Council has not removed anyone and the only time Council removed someone is for failure to do the DCA statement; however, this Board does not have to file. All of the appointments are three years so if you did not put your name in for re-appointment, we would not put you back in. This would be good idea for January is to know the attendance of the members of the Board so that if someone asked for re-nomination and the Board then states they haven't shown up for three years, you may not know that. Mayor Lewis does not think there is a process for removal.

Chairperson Bobbitt commented that if someone moves out of town. Mayor Lewis stated there are also a lot of liaisons for this group, like Charlie and Max. A discussion has to be about liaisons and members and if we want them to be a liaison or an actual member. Mr. Link stated that the Trails are Open Space and there are two slots and one for Planning Board and one for Zoning Board and there are the liaison and they are members. Mayor Lewis stated we need to look at the list with names; what they are; when their term is up; any empty spots and maybe could change a class. Mr. Link stated that Recreation had a space but that was changed awhile back.

Mr. Addison stated is there some topic we would want Michele Siekerka to speak on. Mayor Lewis stated maybe suburban redevelopment, economic update and trends.

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**Other Business:**

Mr. Link asked Mr. Conroy if he was interested in doing the brochure this year. Mr. Conroy stated he will let Mr. Link know. A question also about the same order of the presentation that was done last year, will it remain the same. Mr. Conroy stated last year the Chamber ended up doing it because there was a lack of communication. Mr. Link stated last year the order was the Mayor's award, the environmental award, new building renovation award, small business award, new large business award, business service and the Podmore/Dwyer and there was no new residential award. Chairperson Bobbitt stated to keep this order it worked well last year and the residential award will be scheduled last.

Mr. Link questioned if there is going to be a parking issue. Mr. Lavine stated there is a huge parking lot in the back.

A motion was made by Charles Lavine, seconded by Don Addison to cancel the October 13, 2015 meeting. It was passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:26 p.m.

Digital audio file of this meeting is available upon request.

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Susan Snook, Secretary  
Growth & Redevelopment Committee