

**LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP GROWTH & REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**  
Tuesday, December 11, 2018

The following are the minutes of the Growth & Redevelopment Committee meeting, which was held on Tuesday, December 11, 2018, at 6:40 p.m. in the Lawrence Township Municipal Building, Lower Level Conference Room.

**Statement of Adequate 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 and the Trentonian.

**Roll Call:**

Present: Frank Comstock  
Tushar Patel  
Charles Lavine  
Maria Connolly  
Peter Ferrone  
Brian Vaughn  
Andrew Frank  
Christopher LaFlamme

Absent: None

Excused Absence: Lovette Love-Stevens  
John Conroy, Chairperson  
Robert Pluta  
Joan Brame  
Teresita Bastides-Heron  
Melissa Clark  
Ryan Kennedy

Also Present: Andrew Link, Liaison  
Christopher Bobbitt, Council Liaison (7:07 p.m.)  
John Dauber, School Board Liaison  
Susan Snook, Secretary

Vice Chairperson Connolly served as Chairperson.

**Minutes:**

The November 13, 2018 minutes were approved per unanimous vote.

**Approval of REVISED 2019 Meeting Schedule:**

Mr. Link stated the February date is a holiday for the Township, so the Township offices are closed and no meeting will be held. The members stated there will be no meeting in January because Council has to appoint the members or if there are enough members then we can hold a meeting. Mr. Lavine made the motion and seconded by Mr. LaFlamme to adopt the revised 2019 meeting schedule and was approved per unanimous vote.

LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP GROWTH & REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
Tuesday, December 11, 2018  
Page 2

**Public Comment:**

None

**Awards Program:**

Vice Chairperson Connolly stated that Chairperson Conroy is not going to organize the Awards Program for this year and would like a volunteer or volunteers to organize it. Vice Chairperson Connolly stated her concern is that we do not have a sponsor because there is no longer a Mid-Jersey Chamber of Commerce so can we even have the event anymore. Mr. Lavine commented that we can hold the comment and that he had a conversation with Councilman Bobbitt that the awards ceremony is not dying and there is no definite decision made and this Board is 20 years old. Mr. LaFlamme suggested to table Item No. 6 until we have stability of the event itself.

Mr. Lavine stated he would do a section of it with the help of Mr. Link and Ms. Snook and see where the Chamber is going and where the Princeton Chamber is going and where the Mercer Chamber is going because he does not think the business people will let it die. The Board discussed the costs of the award ceremony, there are too many awards; however, there are awards that are not business oriented such as the Historic/Dwyer Award.

Vice Chairperson Connolly stated her concern with us doing it is that a lot of these places want the money in advance such as the bowls, down payment on the venue in advance and we do not have a budget to put the money down, so how do we get the money. Mr. Link stated the committee does have a budget that we can use to get those things started and we get reimbursed from the sponsorships. Mr. Lavine stated we used to do the sponsorships and it worked because Mr. Kennedy had some contacts, he had contacts and about four or five years ago, the Chamber as they grew they decided they would do the sponsorships and it was going to be a chamber event and we wanted the sponsorships from Lawrence.

Vice Chairperson Connolly asked the members if anyone wanted to volunteer to organize it or maybe we should wait; however, we are not going to meet until March. Mr. Lavine stated he can make telephone calls and that Council has a discussion on this. The most important part from this committee is nominations of businesses or individuals and sponsorships and over the 20 years we were able to get sponsors.

Mr. LaFlamme suggested to wait to the next meeting to talk about it and what the event is going to be as it was last year or is it going to be a different venue, a different format and shoot around ideas in March and who is going to organize it and the process of funding it and to consolidate the awards. Mr. Patel wanted to know if there are no sponsors what is the budget for the committee. Mr. Link stated it is about \$3,000.00. Vice Chairperson Connolly stated will start talking about it in March and figure that all out.

Councilman Bobbitt commented that partnering with Princeton Regional. Mr. Link stated that Chairperson Conroy stated they have no interest in taking over for Mid-Jersey; however, they will do e-mail blast to help advertise it. Councilman Bobbitt stated he thinks we should do it and asked about costs. Mr. Link stated that Cobblestone charged \$2,336.00 for 85 attendees. Councilman Bobbitt stated we pulled in \$2,200.00 for sponsorships so there was a cost of \$907.60 and if we have a repeat next year, there would be a wash and questioned the budget. Mr. Link responded we have \$3,000.00 and it is to get the awards up and running.

Mr. Lavine stated that people deserved to be honored and where two-thirds have gone to public schools and there are things on there that are not straight business related. Councilman Bobbitt commented on some of the environmental issues such as solar panels and things are tapering off. Since 2008 the home renovation has not been given out forever.

LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP GROWTH & REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
Tuesday, December 11, 2018  
Page 3

**Sign Ordinance:**

Vice Chairperson Connolly stated she asked for comments from Ms. Brame and Mr. Pluta and she did not receive comments from them yet. So over the next couple months she is going to look at the recommendations she has and especially for the A-frame signs in the shopping centers and the Highway Commercial zone. She spoke with the Township Engineer and he thinks it would be okay for the store fronts with some conditions. She drafted some ordinance changes and she will go back and add in Mr. Parvesse's comments and conditions and we can look at it at the next meeting and she will check with Ms. Brame and Mr. Pluta too see if they have any comments.

Vice Chairperson Connolly stated this committee has been looking at the sign ordinance and looked through it to see what changes we can make to have it more business friendly. About two years ago we made some recommendations and brought it to the Manager (Krawczun) and the Engineer and the recommendations were not accepted, so with the new Municipal Manager we decided to make some recommendations and try again. One particular was allowing A-frame signs, which are currently allowed in the neighborhood commercial zones, which are GEPNA and Lawrenceville Main Street and not allowed in highway commercial zones. Business owners were complaining that they would like A-frames signs allowed at the Lawrence Shopping Center and Mercer Mall with some conditions.

The concern of Mr. Parvesse was that the businesses in Mercer Mall would put them up on Route 1. Ms. Connolly stated she could do a presentation or write up a memorandum with the recommendations and see if they are accepted. Mr. Lavine stated part of the issue is grand openings with banners or signs attached to poles and this is prohibited. Ms. Connolly stated another issue was temporary signs and lawn signs except in certain circumstances such as grand openings, yard sales or real estate signs are allowed and the issue is where they put them. We do not want to make too many changes because we want to be reasonable in our requests. Mr. Lavine stated Lawrence has a very tight sign ordinance especially on buildings such as fast food or gas stations because they have certain logos and need to get approval from the Zoning Board.

Vice Chairperson Connolly stated she will write something up and bring in back in March and she explained about doing a brochure to explain what they can and cannot do.

**Recruitment of New Members:**

Mr. Link stated they are all at large and has three vacancies. There is category one which is Planning and Zoning, category two which is the positions from other committees and category three is businesses which allows people who have businesses in Lawrence who may not live in Lawrence and are all filled and category four is for everybody else, which has three vacancies, and they live in Lawrence.

The application is on-line and once filled out it should be forwarded to the Clerk's office.

**Other Business:**

Mr. Lavine asked about the Lawrence Shopping Center and the possibility of a food store. Councilman Bobbitt stated the owners of the Shopping Center are doing everything they can to revitalize the shopping center as evidence by the on-going façade work, the fact that LA Fitness is coming in, there is an electrical supply company going into the old auto parts store and other new stores. It was also mentioned about Acme's lease not being up yet, so Councilman Bobbitt will reach out to see when their lease is done.

LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP GROWTH & REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, December 11, 2018

Page 4

Mr. Vaughn asked about the Shake Shack and when it was going to be constructed. Mr. Dauber questioned the stores across the Lawrence Shopping Center on route 1. Councilman Bobbitt stated there is Dance for Less and they purchased the Pizza Hut site for flexibility of additional parking. The dress shop is still vacant, an urgent care opened, the old Lab Corp is a behavioral health called Timeless and the little shops at Hopatcong are still vacant.

Councilman Bobbitt stated we have to plow Whitehead South because that was part of the deal that in order to get the roundabout and shrink down the size of the road, it is not State controlled anymore, it is the Township. We have not taken it over yet because of the landscaping issues. We received a grant for the Brunswick Pike Streetscape.

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Digital audio file of this meeting is available upon request.

Respectfully submitted,



Susan J. Snook  
Recording Secretary

Minutes approved: March 12, 2019