

LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP GROWTH & REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
Tuesday, May 14, 2019

The following are the minutes of the Growth & Redevelopment Committee meeting, which was held on Tuesday, May 14, 2019 at 6:38 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: Lovette Love-Stevens  
Charles Lavine  
Robert Pluta  
Joan Brame  
Teresita Bastides-Heron  
Maria Connolly  
Peter Ferrone  
Melissa Clark  
Andrew Frank  
Chris LaFlamme  
James Kilduff

Absent: Brian Vaughn  
Ryan Kennedy  
Hannah Rhoades

Excused Absence: Tushar Patel

Also Present: Andrew Link, Liaison  
Christopher Bobbitt, Council Liaison  
Cathy LeCompte, School Board Liaison  
Susan Snook, Secretary

The Committee members welcomed our new member, Mr. Kilduff.

**Minutes:**

The April 9, 2019 minutes were unanimously approved. (Motion by Ms. Connolly and seconded by Mr. Frank).

**Public Comment:**

John Ryan wanted to thank Mr. Link for his service of 25 years.

LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP GROWTH & REDEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
Tuesday, May 14, 2019  
Page 2

**Business Outreach:**

Ms. Connolly stated we discussed the framing store on Texas Avenue, the art store in the Domino's shopping center and the Dance Studio and Beauty Bar owner and the photography shop in Lawrence Shopping Center. Ms. Connolly stated she went to the art store, which is a chain and the owner is West Virginia and the Manager of the store does not have authorization to come and speak to us so she declined. Mr. Frank reached out to the other businesses and they did confirm; however, they could not make it.

Violette, owner of the Dance Studio on Brunswick Pike was present. She stated she has been in business in Lawrence Township for 11 years. She started with a small dance studio and added another room. She continued that she cannot complain about any construction difficulties, it was smooth and easy. Inspectors were accommodating and explaining everything clear. The signage was the only thing impossible, which was a nine month project. The traffic on Route 1 was supposed to be slower during the renovation, 25 mph and there is an accident every other week. It is supposed to be a walking area but the cars travel really fast.

Many years ago, she was promised that the paper street next to the building would give her more parking. She tried to speak to the previous manager and he commented no. Her business is planning to have local businesses to join, currently she has ten, to hold something like a jubilee. Signage, have some events and have somehow to reach Lawrence residents to promote the businesses.

The Committee members asked questions. Violette commented signage is the biggest issue and spoke about putting signage on the windows. She stated that 80% of her clients are children and have classes at the middle school/high school. She also owns a non-profit and is always doing fund raisers.

Chairperson Pluta stated that we should make this one of our projects to change the signage for windows and he will reach out to Mr. Parvesse to find out the exact rule about signage and try to change it. Violette also asked about how hard it is to change the speed limit on Route 1 to 25 mph in the vicinity of the new round-about. The committee discussed who owns the section of Route 1 where the new construction was done, the State or Township. Ms. Connolly stated that the Planning Board just recently started discussing changes to the signage ordinance.

Chairperson Pluta questioned Violette about the paper street near Burger King to use as additional parking and to get an easement. Violette was informed by Mr. Parvesse to speak to our Manager. Violette used to live in Lawrenceville and that is why she opened a business in the Township and informed the Committee members that only 10% of residents come to her business. She questioned about putting her event on our Facebook page. The Committee thanked Violette for coming and stating what her concerns were.

Chairperson Pluta wants on the next agenda the window signage; 25 mph issue on Business Route 1 by Whitehead Road and the paper street by Burger King. Mr. Frank asked if the Committee still would like Ms. Connolly and himself to reach out to more business owners.

Ms. Connolly suggested Explorations Day Care and stated the owner had issues. Others suggested were to get a business that has survived a long time in the Lawrence Shopping Center like the Karate Studio, Manhattan Bagel, the Nail Salon, Hallmark, the Sun Cleaners. Mr. Ryan commented that the Lawrence Shopping Center is looking fantastic; but the Manhattan Bagel shop is unhappy with his sign because he is corporate owned which is white letters with a white background, so you can't see it. He is trying to get the owner to change it and is thinking about moving to the Mercer Mall. Mr. Kilduff stated since it is a chain, he is stuck with the logo and is not something the Township has anything to do with. The owner needs to speak to the Management Company of the Lawrence Shopping Center.

**Categories for Awards Program:**

Mr. Frank suggested it is simple communication and suggested for the awards ceremony we reconfigure it a bit limited to two awards, we reformat it slightly, give out awards, speeches are done, have one speaker and then at the tables you have guided discussion groups who report back to each other and each one would take a table to help record the session and get to know one another to get new ideas to come out of it and give the businesses and the community to interact informally, but with some guidance.

Chairperson Pluta stated some of the issues we are having with the categories are obsolete, too many, the historian award and environmental, which should be both listed and see what we get. The Committee's comments were to leave it as a development / business awards only; don't take formal action and if something comes up then an award can be given out; should be Google Forms which might make more people to make nominations.

The date is undecided so it will be anywhere between October 23<sup>rd</sup> to October 30<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 a.m. and Green Acres was a suggested venue (Robert will reach out to them). The Princeton Chamber stated they will not help get sponsorships or pay for the Awards Ceremony; however, they will help promote the program by advertising.

The Committee members suggested Debbie Schafer, owner of Mrs. G's, the marketing director from Rider; Leslie Floyd from the Mercer County Planning Director and Ed Andriessen from Mercer. Ms. Brame will reach Lorraine Allen and see if she knows anyone.

**Sign Ordinance:**

Chairperson Pluta spoke with Mayor Bobbitt and said the changes we made are still going through the channels. Mr. Link stated it first will go to Clarke Caton & Hintz, our Planning Consultant to draft the ordinance and then to Council, back to Planning Board, then to Council. Chairperson Pluta thanked Ms. Connolly for working on the sign ordinance.

**Other Business:**

Ms. Connolly wanted to know who will be taking over Mr. Link's spot on this Committee. Mr. Link stated he did not know and Piazza and Associates will be taking over Affordable Housing. The Committee members all thanked Mr. Link for his service.

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Digital audio file of this meeting is available upon request.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Susan J. Snook  
Recording Secretary

Minutes approved: June 11, 2019