

LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD MEETING
Monday, June 17, 2019

Present: Christopher Bobbitt, Mayor
Maria Connolly
Ian Dember
Philip Duran
James Kownacki, Councilman
Kevin Nerwinski, Municipal Manager
Terrence Leggett, Vice Chairperson
John Ryan
Kim Taylor
Edward Wiznitzer, Chairperson

Absent: None

Excused Absence: Brian Slauch, Planning Consultant
Edwin Kochenour, Traffic Consultant

Also Present: Andrea Malcolm, Acting Planning Consultant
James F. Parvesse, Municipal Engineer
Edwin Schmierer, Planning Board Attorney
Susan Snook, Recording Secretary

Statement of Adequate Notice:

Adequate notice of this meeting of the Lawrence Township Planning Board has been provided by filing the annual meeting schedule with the Municipal Clerk as required by law; by filing the agenda and notice with the Municipal Clerk, posting prominently in the Municipal Building and mailing to the Trenton Times and the Trentonian newspapers.

Public Comment:

Paul Larson, Chairperson, Trails & Open Space and Stewardship Advisory Committee stated Mercedes Benz installed the fence around the facility and is completed. However, he feels they have no intentions of allowing public access to that because the front gate is chained and padlocked as is the back gate. He proceeded that he stopped by and there is a side gate that is unlocked, walked through it to take some pictures and someone showed up from Mercedes Benz. He explained who he was and that a part of the approval process was to grant public access to it. However, he was informed that they do not want anybody in there right now, limited access to it because they are storing leased vehicles.

Mr. Parvesse responded he will look into it.

Minutes for Approval:

April 15, 2019 minutes were approved per unanimous vote.

Resolutions:

Resolution of Memorialization No. 10-19; Major Site Plan – Preliminary and Final Approval Application No. SP-4/18; **Lawrence Shopping Center Associates (LA Fitness) – Signs**; 2495 Brunswick Pike; Tax Map Pages 20 & 20.01, Block 2001, Lots 2 – 5, 60 – 66, and 68 was approved per unanimous vote.

Applications:

None

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Public Hearing:

Master Plan Amendment – Circulation Plan Element and Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan

The Amendment was presented by Andrea Malcolm of Clarke Caton & Hintz stated there was an interest of the Township to add to Sustainability Jersey process by having a bike and pedestrian plan that would help in that process. This is starting plan especially with bridge connections where one is crossing 95 at the Johnson Trolley Line for north/south access and a the pedestrian connection across from Quaker Bridge Mall across Route 1 to connect to the residential development.

There were a number of comments from a representative of the Greater Mercer Transportation Management Association who works with the County on some of the mapping; Ms. Malcolm thought she was consistent with the most recent version of the map; however, it appears that some existing facilities and routes might have to be looked at. There was a comment about a proposed route out of 2009 plan that was not carried forward and this might be something to be considered. The plan can be adopted with the vision that this is consistent with the County map for timing of the amendment.

Mr. Parvesse stated the main goal for adopting the plan is so we have the trail routes on the Master Plan when we apply for funding, so this is timing issue, which is the main goal. The Board should adopt the amendment to the Master Plan and if the Board decides they want to change something it could be postponed.

Public:

- Jerry Foster, Transportation Safety Educator stated the plan looks good, it covers a number of things that we would be wonderful including the Bridge crossing the Johnson Trolley Line and over 295 including the bridge at Quaker Bridge Mall. They are tremendous safety concerns getting across on Route 206 is not good; there are pedestrian fatalities at the Quaker Bridge Mall area trying to cross Route 1 climbing over the barrier because there is no other way to cross. So getting those improvements in will be a benefit to the community and the safety to everyone.
- The issues with the map where it states there are bike lanes at the shoulder. A bike lane is designated for exclusive use of bicycles and a shoulder is for being stopped, like being broken down. The idea that a shoulder is a bicycle lane is not correct. They are two legal distinctions between a bike lane and a shoulder and there are a few places on the map that show bike lanes but are shoulders.
- A project that was referred to called "The Greater Mercer Trails Network" was to get trails into the Master Plan so they can be funded for grants. TSE stated they have not released their work in progress and shared a couple of additions that was identified as part of their public outreach. They spoke to Sustainable Lawrence Mobility Committee and they suggested a few trails: one was to extend the Johnson Trolley Line Trail and a multi-use trail on Cold Soil Road. He spoke about agro tourism which is an effort to discovering Central New Jersey canal region to promote tourism in the area and make extensive use of the farm resources to be available by walking and/or bicycling, copy of handout attached.
- In 2009 the plan did identify a couple of things; however, did not make it into the plan which was a connection between Rider University and TCNJ. Route 206 was also suggested to have bike lanes.

Board members had questions for Mr. Foster regarding Route 206 bike lanes.

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Mr. Foster responded that Route 206 is under the jurisdiction of New Jersey Department of Transportation so one of the things that should happen is a pedestrian signal head at Eggert Crossing and Route 206 because it is a designated a school crossing. Mr. Parvesse commented it was put on the plan but not on the State plan; however, because it is on our plan does not mean it will be initiated by the State.

The Board made comments and discussed the Route 206 bike lanes and the Eggert Crossing Road/Route 206 intersection. Mr. Parvesse stated there is a push button but does not have the standard count down and that is what is needed to be done which has been requested several times to New Jersey Department of Transportation.

Mr. Foster spoke about level of traffic stress that is used to determine what roads and facilities might be comfortable for different types of bicyclists. Level 1 is the lowest which is suitable for anybody (children) and goes to Level 4 for hardened road warriors. If this plan was completely implemented, would children be able to ride their bikes to LIS but did not see that analysis on the plan. Mr. Foster recommended that an analysis should be performed on levels of stress on the roads.

There were two girls from the Girl Scouts who is researching a safe way to get from one side of town to the other side of town and bike friendly roads. Mrs. DiMarco stated the Girl Scouts are going to the elementary schools to promote bike safety in town and safe places to ride.

Eleanor Horn, Lawrence Hopewell Trail; stated they did not get a chance to review the plan and make comments but is speaking as a resident of the Township. She made suggestions for the Board to consider revising the plan: Review the plan in light of the Mercer County Master Bike Plan that has recently been released to see how the plan can be improved on the basis of the overall Master Plan; A number of the adjacent towns are talking about extending trails and it would be very important what Ewing, Trenton, Hopewell and Pennington are doing; Be aware of the work of the circuit trails which is an integrated network of 800 miles; The importance of connecting any neighborhoods to the schools so that there will be less pressure on busing, fewer cars on the road and young people having the ability to get more exercise.

Chairperson Wznitzer asked Ms. Malcolm if any of these recommendations are on our plan. Ms. Malcolm responded they did look at the Mercer County Bike Plan, did some tweaks and adjacent towns are shown to some extent; however, she is not aware of the Circuit Trails

Mayor Bobbitt commented that the Mayor of Princeton reached out to him and wanted to know about Rosedale who received grant money for a shared pedestrian/bike lane and we should keep that connection; also a shared path along Route 206 from the Hun School along Hutchinson Road in their Circulation Element adopted November 2, 2016; on Mercer Road and changes to Princeton Pike in our Township with a new shared path.

Dave Mizenko, Friends of the Lawrence Greenway and Trails of the Open Space is happy about the plan, very well written and likes the vision for the Township. He spoke about the trail network by Bossio's and Eggert Crossing Road and west of Route 206 that can get you to Turtleback Park and to Drexel Woods; the Shabakunk Creek from Colonial Lake Park up to Drexel Woods. If the two trails are built then the north and south are complete and the east in the future. The other item was about Eggert Crossing and Route 206 where New Jersey Department of Transportation is looking into the designing of a traffic signal with a countdown clock.

Lisa Serieyssel, Chairperson, Princeton Bicycle Advisory Committee stated the Committee works with Council and the Mayor and advises bike routes and safe routes to school programs. Currently they are in every school from K-8 where 100 kids ride bikes to school and 150 to 200 students walk. The level of stress is a big part of the Master Plan in their Bicycle Mobility Plan where they work with the Police and Fire Departments to find the best routes for the kids to get to and from school. She believes that the connection to the Circuit Trails and surrounding towns would be beneficial for the recreational rider but also for people who cannot afford a car.

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Donald Pillsbury, Lawrence Resident who is a cyclist commented that he firmly encourages the connection of the two pieces of the Johnson Trolley Line as soon as possible; the town should be unified; Route 206 is not bike friendly; have the bridge over 295 and connect the two pieces to get south to the Lawrence Hopewell Trail is wonderful which also should be done as soon as possible. Connecting the Delaware & Raritan Canal to Quaker Bridge Mall, over Route 1 which would allow the west side to have better access to the east side of the township.

Paul Larson, Township resident stated this is a great plan, a great core to build off of and could come up with 15 small trail projects or to connect to different neighborhoods in south Lawrence.

The Board members had concerns about adding a bike path at Bakers Basin to Lawrence Station Road and why not a multi-path suggested instead of only a bike path; there are no sidewalks for the residents so they walk in the roads. We should keep in mind to put a multi-lane use pedestrian and bike lane on that road. We should consider when an application is approved to build homes, a pathway should be provided. It was not mentioned about skateboards or motorized skateboards which are becoming popular; Eggert Crossing Road at Route 206 has been unsafe and inadequate and should be like the intersection at Gainsboro Road; proposed bike lane from Hopewell Township to Fackler Road be continued to connect to the southern end to Carter Road. The Colonial Lanes area has a problem to get to the library and the post office which should be showed on the map as well as a walking route or bridge to get Colonial Lake residents to the other side of Route 1.

Mr. Parvesse commented the County is planning to build from the northern most part of Lawrence down to the Canal at Bakers Basin Road so the intent was to show a bike lane going the rest of the way but is still undecided. Mr. Parvesse stated the bike lane from Hopewell Township can be an amendment to add Route 206.

The Board accepted the plan per unanimous vote.

Old Business / New Business / Correspondence:

None

Closed Session Resolution

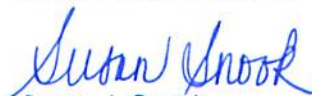
None

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Digital audio file of this meeting is available upon request.

Respectfully submitted,



Susan J. Snook
Recording Secretary

Minutes approved: _____

Aug. 5, 2019