

MINUTES
HOPATCONG PLANNING BOARD
MEETING
Hopatcong Borough Hall, Hopatcong, NJ
August 7, 2007

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Pete Ecklund called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT: The Chairman stated that this meeting is held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act 10:4-1 et seq. Annual notice having been forwarded to the Jersey Herald and the Sunday Herald and posted on the bulletin board maintained in the Municipal Building for public announcements.

SALUTE TO THE FLAG: The Members joined in a salute to the Flag.

ROLL CALL PRESENT: Mayor Hodson, Mark Jenkins, Sam Hoagland, Chairman Peter A. Ecklund, Board Attorney William Haggerty, Board Engineer John Ruschke, Board Planner Ken Nelson

ABSENT: Cliff Lundin, Mollie Comerford, Councilman John Armeno

MINUTES:

A motion to approve the minutes of the June 13, 2007 meeting was made by Hodson, seconded by Jenkins.

Roll Call: Hodson – yes, Jenkins – yes, Hoagland – yes, Ecklund – yes.

NEW APPLICATIONS:

BOROUGH OF HOPATCONG BLOCK 50002, LOT 4 Mohawk Trail

Shooting range. Courtesy Hearing. Board Attorney Haggerty explained that this Board would make a recommendation based on this hearing but had no approval or denial jurisdiction; the governing body would make the ultimate decision. Chief of Police John Swanson explained that this is a Police Qualification Range to be used exclusively by the Police Dept. for mandatory qualification. They need to qualify semi annually for their weapons. They are now qualifying in Jefferson Township, but they are downsizing. Other locations were discussed but most had shortfalls. Byram uses Hudson Guild but because this is located in Hopatcong, there might be a conflict of interest if there was an investigation and they don't have a dedicated pistol range.

Morris County Indoor range doesn't meet the needs for personal defense weapons training that requires 50'. This is a weapon that is more accurate especially in a corridor of a school. Plus there is an air quality issue in indoor ranges. You cannot accurately train for realistic situations in a static corridor.

Sparta is a temporary solution but traveling to Sparta calculates to \$6700 annually for overtime, mileage, etc.

The Police Dept. has 28 sworn officers and will use the proposed facility for training only. They will use it four times a year. They have afternoon qualifications and evening qualifications for about a week in the spring and fall. They will have a one-day familiarization for the personal defense weapon, 8 to 4 pm. They only other time the range would be used would be for a make up session or new hire training.

The 7-acre site was illustrated and was chosen because it was owned by the Borough and had the right topography. Other locations had been researched but were not as remote. The EPA has no problem with lead contamination because the lead will be contained in a ph-balanced sand medium and this lead can be removed and recycled.

They contracted an engineer to do a sound study. They selected several locations that would be closest to adjacent property owners. The site was shown and the landmarks noted. After firing all the weapons the results were listed in Tables of the study in decibel readings. There was a lot of ambient background noise also; the increase was 7-12 decibels at the different locations. The engineer summarized that they didn't violate any decibel requirements or were above 80 that is considered a nuisance. They will be firing

north into a backstop toward Weldon Quarry. He felt this was the best site, it will not be an environmental problem, Hudson Farm is to the West. They can notify property owners if they desire of the date of qualification. This is not going to be an expensive project, the police will clear the area and they have two trailers for this. They will clear the road and fill in the gravel and can get power up there.

The public had discussion on the noise study and noted that there were leaves on the trees at the time the study was done. Swanson answered questions from the public about the set up, operation and cost of the range. Some people were not in favor of this range at this location and expressed this. The real estate values in this area could be affected. An abutting neighbor of the shooting range said the tests were not done in the proper location and he had other concerns about the validity of the noise study. Some property owners wanted to do another study and even pay for it. A member of the public presented documentation substantiating that the study was not done properly and more information about the potential noise and it's effects. Swanson did not want to expend a lot of Borough money on an extensive noise study and pay the engineer to attend this meeting.

The DEP would do a sound study if there is a complaint. Ruschke said that the State has regulations that the 80-decibel threshold cannot be violated and the Borough has to adhere to that. The measurement is taken at the property line. A member of the public recommended a more extensive study be done.

The Board will make a comment to the Council to research other sites, provide a sketch for what is proposed on this site showing the layout and target, provide a contour map of this site, research mitigation of noise such as plantings or berm and that a sound analysis be done.

A motion to make the recommendation set forth above to the governing body was made by Hoagland, seconded by Jenkins.

Roll Call: Hodson – yes, Jenkins – yes, Hoagland – yes, Ecklund – yes.

EDGERTON, C. MARK & SUSAN BLOCK 31201, LOT 11 133 Maxim Drive

Home Occupation for Real Estate sales and referrals. Mr. Edgerton has been a realtor for 20 years and is facing a three-year recovery from an illness so he would like to work out of his home. His wife will retire in four years and at that point they will move his office out of the house into another location. He works by phone or computer for one to three hours a day at this time. His computer database is in Warren County and will stay there. He is not interested in street traffic and doesn't want to attract people with a sign so he is not interested in a professional office. His business is mostly commercial done on the website and he also meets clients for residential needs at the properties. The home is located between two business zones but is in the R-1 zone. This home used to be "The Martinique."

No additional agents would work out of the home, there will be no signage except for a small signplate in the front door, 2" x 3". He will comply with the Home Occupation Ordinance and that does allow one employee. The Home Occupancy will be temporary and not transferred with the property.

A motion to approve as a Home Occupation subject to Mr. Edgerton's compliance with the Home Occupation Ordinance was made by Hoagland, seconded by Jenkins.

Roll Call: Hodson – yes, Jenkins – yes, Hoagland – yes, Ecklund – yes.

RESOLUTIONS: Wiss 30408/28

A motion to approve the Resolution was made Hoagland, seconded by Jenkins.

Roll Call: Hodson – yes, Jenkins – yes, Hoagland – yes, Ecklund – yes.

BILLS:

Dolan & Dolan

Board of Ed.	10001/3	\$32.50
Bedford Woods	20002/5	\$188.50
LaBrunda	20112/11	\$58.50
Syto	10101/6	\$65.00

Kim	30707/11	\$26.00
General		\$1209.00

A motion to approve the bills was made by Jenkins, seconded by Hoagland.

Roll Call: Hodson – yes, Jenkins – yes, Hoagland – yes, Ecklund – yes.

Hatch Mott MacDonald

Bedford Woods	20002L5	\$110.00
Gen. June mtg.		\$275.00
Atkins	10712/38	\$30.00

A motion to approve the bills was made made by Jenkins, seconded by Hoagland

Roll Call: Hodson – yes, Jenkins – yes, Hoagland – yes, Ecklund – yes.

Nelson Consulting

Trivedi	30707/11	\$80.00
Tax Abatement		\$850.00
COAH		\$750.00
Mtg. Attendance	7/17/07	\$350.00

A motion to approve the bills was made by Jenkins, seconded by Hoagland

Roll Call: Hodson – yes, Jenkins – yes, Hoagland – yes, Ecklund – yes.

OLD BUSINESS:

COAH – Trust Fund: Nelson used a format on the COAH site for the spending plan but had some questions and was waiting to speak to Thompson before completing it.

NEW BUSINESS:

August 17, 2007 Planning Board Meeting – Cancellation

A motion to cancel the meeting was made by Hoagland, seconded by Jenkins.

Roll Call: Hodson – yes, Jenkins – yes, Hoagland – yes, Ecklund – yes.

Ordinance Change: The last item to be resolved was the parking requirements. The developer wants 2.8 instead of 3 spaces per unit but the spaces are 10’ x 20’. This does not include the garage. The Board felt this was sufficient. Haggerty will review the ordinance again and give it to the Governing Body, then have comments. The Master Plan needs to be updated. Nelson will do the update on the Master Plan and have it ready for the September 4, 2007 meeting. The Master Plan Public hearing will tentatively be scheduled for September 18, 2007.

Business Study: The Mayor made minor changes, Nelson will attach appendices, the maps were supplied by Ruschke. Because of the lateness, Nelson did not give a formal presentation. A final copy of the business study will be the focus of the Sept. 4th meeting. Businesses could be invited for comment.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

The meeting was open to the public. No one from the public commented. The meeting was closed to the public.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion to adjourn was made by Jenkins, seconded by Hoagland.

ALL WERE IN FAVOR. MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:53 p.m.

