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LOWER TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD

A regularly scheduled meeting of the Lower Township Planning Board was held on April 17, 2025, the Lower Township Municipal Building. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M. by Chairman Michael Rosenberg. The Recording Secretary stated that adequate notice of said meeting was given in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act of 1975.

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Chairman Michael Rosenberg Gunär Arenberg Marissa McCorkel Steve Morris Anthony Vetrano Roy Abrams Alyce Parker
MEMBERS EXCUSED:	Frank Sippel Vice Chairman Chris McDuell Roland Roy Lindsey Selby
STAFF PRESENT:	Avery S. Teitler, Board Solicitor William J. Galestok, Board Secretary Patrick L. Wood, Recording Secretary William Cathcart, Board Engineer
STAFF EXCUSED:	Kathryn M. Steiger, Planning Clerk

CORRESPONDENCE:

Handouts:

- List of Board Engineer Vouchers, dated April 16, 2025
- List of Board Solicitor Vouchers, dated April 17, 2025

Mr. Teitler read the agenda aloud for the benefit of the public.

1. Informal review application for the concept of a minor subdivision. Submitted by Joseph Scotti for the location known as Block 499.01, Lot 5.07, 668 Crawford Road

Mr. Ronald J. Gelzunas, Jr., Esq., addressed the Board regarding the review.

Mr. Gelzunas explained that, prior to moving forward, the purpose of this presentation is to obtain Board feedback for the proposed project.

Details of the application and zoning requirements were reviewed, including lot sizes, which will be similar, if not larger, than the Cape Woods Development. Per Mr. Gelzunas, the applicant could push the development farther to the back of the property. Variances would be needed for a front yard setback of the pre-existing lot, and one (1) flag lot, due to being undersized.

Mr. Galestok confirmed a sewer line in the area was provided to a group of individual lots; however, no further sewer connections will be available.

Mr. Gelzunas responded that a one (1) acre lot is required for a septic permit. Those lots where sewer is available, sewer lines will be connected.

Mr. Morris inquired about any issues with flag shaped lots. Mr. Galestok stated that, originally, board members were not in favor of this type of lot configuration.

Continuing, Mr. Galestok advised that attempts have been made with the Lower Township Municipal Utility Authority (LTMUA) to tie both lots into the sewer. Since the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) sewered the lots, there was a condition that no new subdivision is permitted. He is unable to confirm whether that condition is still in effect. If LTMUA approved the sewer connection, it would make it more possible.

Mr. Lindsay voiced general opposition to flag lots, unless the proposed project is aesthetically appealing.

In response to Mr. Lindsay's question on occupancy, the Mr. Scotti stated the intent is to construct a single-family dwelling on the lot to enable a daughter to live in closer proximity.

Mr. Gelzunas thanked the Board Members for this opportunity to review the information and obtain necessary feedback for further planning.

2. Informal review application for the concept of future additions to the pre-existing fishery. Submitted by Lund's Fisheries, Inc., for the location known as Block 793, lot 15.01, 997 Ocean Drive

Mr. Lewis Conley, Jr., P.L.S., P.P., and Mr. Wayne Reichle, owner, addressed the Board regarding the review.

Mr. Conley explained that, prior to moving forward, the purpose of this presentation is to obtain Board feedback for a 95-foot expansion of freezer equipment that would be along the Ocean Drive thoroughfare. In addition, the County Commissioners recommended this Board review a concept design of the project.

The proposed expansion would be in the existing right of way on Ocean Drive. The design would fit the design of the new bridge proposed by the County, in which the Middle Thorofare Bridge would be expanded seaward, turning the road in front of the fishery into a cul-de-sac/dead-end street. Testing has been done with trucks and tractor-trailers. The proposed freezer equipment will have four (4) truck docks. Other than being in the current right of way, this does not present any major issues. Whether that section is purchased or leased, this process would be completed through County approval.

Mr. Morris inquired if this design would eliminate traffic driving on the shoulder of the road. Mr. Reichle responded new conveyor equipment will eliminate this step by transferring the loads into the freezers themselves.

In response to Chairman Rosenberg question regarding the status of the bridge, Mr. Conley confirmed the bridge is being replaced and is now under final design review.

Mr. Galestok questioned the time frame for this project, compared to bridge replacement. Mr. Reichle advised timing is two/three years out. Based on the past 15 years, freezing capacity has declined and been consolidated to maximize capacity for fishing quotas.

Mr. Conley confirmed ownership of Lot 15.02, in response to Mr. Abrams question, and advised this will be the location of the docks.

Mr. Galestok asked the distance from the edge of the cart-way to the new building. Mr. Conley stated approximately eight (8) to 10 feet.

In response to Mr. Morris' question regarding the County's position on ownership of the proposed cul-de-sac, Mr. Conley stated it seems to be dependent on the finalized project for the bridge, however, there is nothing definitive yet.

Chairman Rosenberg inquired if the right of way will be leased or purchased from the County. That has not been determined, per Mr. Conley.

Mr. Teitler inquired about impact to parking spaces, which Mr. Conley confirmed would be affected.

Mr. Arenberg shared he was in the commercial fishing industry for approximately 10 years and understands the need to keep current without being a detriment. Would retro-fitting the existing structure be an option, as it would be more desirable. Mr. Reichle replied that business has become year-round, making renovations of this type impractical.

Mr. Morris noted the large amount of existing cargo and whether it was refurbished. Mr. Reichle stated yes.

Ms. Parker inquired if vessels are allowed into the port during bridge construction. Mr. Reichle advised this is a public right of way and access cannot be blocked.

Mr. Conley thanked the Board Members for this opportunity to review the information and will keep the Board and Planning Department advised as the project evolves.

Mr. Morris concluded that if this was an existing cul-de-sac, it would be an easy “yes” decision. Without that, it is difficult to approve, based on a “what-if” situation.

3. Discussion regarding the potential redefinition of the GB-2 & GB-1 zones in reference to accessory apartment, as well as further details of implementation and sizes.

Mr. Wood updated the Board regarding redefining GB-2 and GB-1 zones. Continuing discussion points included allowing a single residential unit in the GB-1 zone, similar to the GB-2 zone. These zones are in different sections of the Township, thereby, presenting separate challenges – e.g.: proper integration into neighborhoods that may be more densely populated than others, encouraging and sustainability of businesses in those locations.

Mr. Wood will continue researching data and demographics of these areas and will continue further discussions at future meetings.

Mr. Lindsay made a motion to approve the Minutes from the meeting of March 20, 2025, seconded by Mr. Morris. Motion carried.

Mr. Lindsay made a motion to approve the Board Engineer vouchers, seconded by Mr. Abrams. Motion carried.

Mr. Lindsay made a motion to approve the Board Solicitor vouchers, seconded by Mr. Morris. Motion carried.

Mr. Lindsay made a motion to approve the Resolutions from the meeting of March 20, 2025, seconded by Mr. Vetrano. Motion carried.

At 6:47 P.M., Mr. Lindsay made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Morris. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Wood,
Recording Secretary

A verbatim recording of said meeting is on file in Township Hall.

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