

RULS - AD - 1965 - 70

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Bedminster Planning Board Regular meeting notes

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The Planning Board of the Township of Bedminster met in regular session on this date at 8:15 P.M. at the Municipal Building. Members present were Chairman Fales, Messrs. Field, Philip W. Smith, Robert E. Smith, Kean, Winkler and Slater. Others present were Planning Consultant Agle, Counsel Bowlby and the Secretary.

Chairman Fales advised that the application of Elizabeth Stevens Ballantine for approval of a major subdivision, under a preliminary filing, would be held over for consideration at the next regular meeting of the Board.

It was on motion by Mayor Kean, seconded by Col. Field and unanimously carried that the minutes of the Special Meeting of April 12, 1965 be omitted.

Chairman Fales advised those present that the purpose of this meeting was to hold a formal hearing on the proposed Master Plan. He generally discussed the prior action of the Board.

Mayor Kean advised the Board that he has received correspondence from several sources relative to a number of items in connection with the Master Plan. The Mayor presented the correspondence to the Secretary for filing. The Mayor then advised those present that the Board was in the process of conducting an official hearing this evening.

Chairman Fales officially opened the hearing on the Master Plan, and asked if anyone in attendance wished to comment.

Robert King, Esq. of the firm of Smith, Price, Schenck and King, Morristown, N.J. advised the Chairman that he was appearing for Clifford W. Starrett, Esq., Counsel for Messrs. Detwiler, Lonegren and Nichols. Mr. King requested that the Board not close out further comment after this hearing but allow time for experts to testify in behalf of Mr. Starrett's clients. He then questioned the Chairman as to whether a further hearing might be anticipated. The Chairman advised that consideration would be given to Mr. King's request.

Mrs. Elizabeth E. Egan of Larger Cross Rd., Bedminster advised the Board that she was sorry that she could not attend the last meeting but was in Florida due to her husband's recent death. She further advised that she was "shocked and stunned" at the Master Plan to return to find that her property located west of Route # 206 is in a Flood Plain and Park Zone. Mrs. Egan advised that the firm of Grassmann, Kreh & Mixer had furnished her with a report indicating that her land is five feet above the Flood Plain Area. Mrs. Egan further advised that the river adjacent to her property had been deepened to a depth of ten feet with the permission of the Township Committee. She further stated that she wanted to erect a building that would be an asset to the community; that she had lived here for 20 years and takes pride in her reputation here. She requested a revaluation of her property and advised the Board that she does not intend to maintain a park for Bedminster Township school children.

Mayor Kean stressed the importance of the fact that what we have before us in a Master Plan is not a Zoning Ordinance. He then stated that the Township Committee will not zone land to completely conform to the Master Plan. The Mayor drew attention to the fact that nothing on the map has been re-zoned. He stated, secondly, that the line designating the Flood Plain area is taken from the U.S. Geodetic Survey Map. The Mayor noted that this only means that caution should be taken by residents before building in this area because of the possibility of flooding.

Mrs. Egan advised that she will voice her opinion in writing.

Mr. Frank Richards of Route # 206 asked what will happen to Route # 206. Mayor Kean advised Mr. Richards that the same question had been raised at the last meeting. Mr. Slater advised Mr. Richards that the best information available indicates that Route # 206 will be dualized within a period of five to ten years. Mr. Slater also explained the proposed 60 foot right of way provision for future heavily travelled roads within the Township.

Mr. Allan Grady of Hillside Avenue questioned as to whether the Master Plan takes into consideration sources of water to support the larger projected population. Mayor Kean advised that the extension of mains to the 5 acre zone would not be economical.

Mr. Agle further discussed the water and sewer problem. He advised that facilities are adequate and will never be a problem as long as the Master Plan is followed.

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(Continued)

Mr. John D. Munro of Hillside Avenue, Bedminster asked if there is any definite information as to when the sewer system will be started. The Chairman advised that that is another problem apart from the Master Plan,

Mr. Robert McCurdy of Bedminster stated that, at the last meeting, he had questioned as to facilities for the First Aid Squad. He further stated that he was told that space would be allocated for First Aid facilities. He questioned as to how this matter would be handled.

The Mayor indicated that if Township owned land were used by the First Aid Squad, said land would probably remain under Township ownership.

Mr. Douglas Armstrong of River Road advised that three-quarters of his property is shown to be in the Flood Plain area. He stated that the property on one side of the road may justifiably be in the Flood Plain but his property north of River Road should not be so designated. He questioned as to whether the Township's criteria for determining Flood Plain area is realistic.

Mr. Agle advised that, not being able to make use of gauging stations along the river, use must be made of the Rutgers Soils Maps (topographic) for this purpose. He further stated that the character of the soil in the area designated as Flood Plain shows past flooding evidence.

Mr. Armstrong questioned as to whether the large area colored in green and shown on the eastern border of the Township actually would be used for park purposes.

Mr. Agle advised Mr. Armstrong that the area in question is so steep that it is not practical for building purposes. He indicated that it is the hope of the Township that it can remain as open space.

The Mayor discussed the concept of Cluster Zoning and explained that it involves the placing of buildings in tight configuration, leaving the balance of the land adjacent in open space. He noted that such development has caused difficulty in another Somerset County municipality.

Mr. Robert Gies of Old Farm Road questioned as to whether the Master Plan eliminates zoning or dovetails with zoning.

Chairman Fales advised that the Master Plan indicates the "hopes and aspirations of the Township for the future". He noted that the Master Plan is not tied up with zoning.

Mr. Agle advised that the Master Plan is a guide or a general statement of policy, and that it indicates anticipated future land use, a major thoroughfare plan, and a community facilities plan. Mr. Agle then explained the three major components of the Master Plan. He then advised that the Zoning Ordinance is a separate tool.

Mrs. Elizabeth Egan advised that, as a resident of the Township, she firmly believes that the Master Plan should be reconsidered before it is put into effect. She stated that she feels that the natural growth caused by highways coming in should cause the Board to take into consideration the natural growth possibilities for 5, 10, 15 and 20 years. She then noted that Bernard's Township went through this and now find themselves without ratables. Mrs. Egan then stated that it is not fair to send residents of Bedminster Township elsewhere to do business, and the Township should prepare for these people to have their businesses here.

The Chairman advised that the Planning Board listened to the advisors that the Mayor gave them and that the Advisory Committee was opposed to doing anything that would change the Township from its present atmosphere. He stated that the desire was to keep the Township rural and without business. He further stated that this matter was brought up several times and quickly thrown out. The Chairman further stated that Counsel doubts that the Township could defend an increase in lot size over the present five acre zone. He further stated that, in his humble opinion, the majority of the people don't want change from the rural atmosphere. Chairman Fales advised that the usage of the land can be changed from time to time as the people require it.

Mayor Kean advised that there had been some discussion both in correspondence and in the newspapers relative to the enlargement of the commercial zone. He stated that he feels that there is agreement that residents should be supplied with the facilities that they need but they don't want a "statewide shopping center".