

# MERCER COUNTY PLANNING BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING

Most up to date meeting link can be found on County Planning Department Site:  
<http://www.mercercountv.org/departments/planning/planning-board>

In order to participate by phone, use one of the following phone numbers:  
US: +1 312 626 6799 or +1 929 436 2866 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 346 248 7799 or +1 669 900 6833 or +1 253 215 8782

Webinar ID: 880 5029 9996

## November 08, 2023 9:00 AM

**PRESENT:** Michael Shine, Chairman  
William S. Agress, Vice-Chair  
Kristin L. McLaughlin, County Commissioner  
Samuel Rubino  
Jason Mildenberg on behalf of Basit Muza ffar, County Engineer  
Leslie R. Floyd for Brian Hughes, County Executive

**ALSO PRESENT:** Robert Ridolfi, Planning Board Counsel  
Matthew Zochowski, Planning Board Secretary

Chairman Shine called the meeting of the Mercer County Planning Board to order at 9:02 AM.

### **I. STATEMENT OF ADEQUATE NOTICE**

Mr. Zochowski read the statement of a adequate notice. Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, notice of this meeting was sent to the Trenton Times on October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023 and was published in the Trenton Times on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023

### **II. ATTENDENCE ROLL CALL**

All members were present for September Roll Call except for Dallas Barr.

### **III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Shine announced that minutes have been distributed from the October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023 meeting and asked if there were any comments. There were no comments. Vice-Chair Agress made a motion to approve the October 2023 Planning Board minutes which was seconded by Samuel Rubino. All members voted in favor.

### **IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chairman Shine asked if there were any public comments. There were no questions or comments.

### **V. OLD BUSINESS**

There was no new business to carry over from previous months.

### **VI. NEW BUSINESS**

New County Land Development Standards- Volume I Presentation:



Mr. Zochowski scheduled a presentation regarding the County's new Land Development Standards and Ordinance. This is an effort that County staff have been working on for several years and staff are now at a point where they can share the new Land Development Ordinance publicly. Mr. Zochowski mentioned that staff has spent a significant amount of time reviewing standards from other Counties, especially those that have recently updated their standards.

The new County Standards are divided into two volumes. Volume I is essentially a comprehensive document that deals with the process and all the procedures associated with the County Planning Board. Everything from applicability standards and submission procedures to what is required for a complete application and how to submit digital files. It also deals with Developer Agreements, Traffic Management Plan Agreements and conditional approval items.

Volume II is where applicants and their engineers can find the County engineering standards. The County goes into deep details and discusses requirements for all sorts of things. Everything from types of concrete, required grades, radiuses or tapers, base courses, and things like that. Unlike the existing standards, the new ones outline nearly all improvements that can take place in the County right-of-way so developers will have a standardized reference document they can refer to when working on designs without having to call the County. Several of those items will be outlined by reference to 3<sup>rd</sup> party documents such as AASHTO or MUTCD or NJAC 7:8 which will be updated by others and consequently keep our standards and ordinance up to date.

Mr. Zochowski mentioned that the current standards are over 54 years old and preparation of standards likely took place before the first moon landing. Mercer County standards are likely some of the oldest in the State of New Jersey and are in desperate need of rewrite to reflect changes to State and Federal Standards and Laws. Topics like Complete Streets, ADA, Stormwater Design, and others were not in existence at the time of the preparation of the current standards.

Mr. Zochowski also mentioned the other updates County has undertaken as part of this project. County website has seen significant updates and new information. New electronic submission portal has been created and resources added. A new County application form has been created and templates for items such as right-of-way dedications, right-of-way easements, drainage easements, sight triangle easements, indemnification agreements, cross access declarations and others have been created. Staff have also created new complete streets checklist, fee structure and new 101 Info sheet.

In the presentation, Mr. Zochowski mentioned that most of the changes taking place within Volume I of this ordinance will not change how the Planning Board operates and how the process takes place. Most items are already required by staff and board members on a case-by-case basis and have to be reiterated at every meeting. New ordinance would create consistency and predictability for developers and offer a resource engineers can review prior to drawing plans. Mr. Zochowski went over the major changes that would take place within Volume I and include new sections on things like Traffic Management Plan Agreements (TMPAs), Developer Agreements, Indemnification Agreements, Pre-construction meetings, and more.

County is looking into a new Corridor Improvement Fee that would apply to new site plan developments located along a County Road. This would only apply to sites located along a County Road and a small linear foot cost, similar to what Passaic County charges, would be applied to the application. More will be presented at a future meeting once staff have a draft ready for review.

Mr. Zochowski mentioned the need for an updated fee structure. The current fee structure dates from 1994. Max fees were set at \$2,000 per application so the maximum fee for a combined project would be \$4,000 (site plan and subdivision), regardless of size. A 10 million SF warehouse or 20 story office building would be capped at a \$2,000 - \$4,000 review fee. Staff have been researching fees from surrounding Counties and other NJ Counties to determine a fee which would bring Mercer County in line with other Counties. Most Counties have much higher maximum fees as was shown during the presentation.

**VII. CORRESPONDENCE**

No new correspondence was received.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Shine asked for the motion to adjourn the meeting. Vice-Chair Agress made the motion and Commissioner McLaughlin seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at with the following vote:

Y Michael Shine  
Y William S. Agress  
Y Samuel Frisby

Y Commissioner McLaughlin  
Y Jason Mildenberg- behalf of Basit Muza ffar  
Y Leslie R. Floyd

Respectfully Submitted,



Matthew Zochowski, Planning Board Secretary