

**EAST BRUNSWICK REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY MEETING
FEBRUARY 16, 2021 MINUTES**

Virtual Meeting
1 Civic Center Drive
East Brunswick, NJ 08816

8:00 PM

1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance, Moment of Silence, and Roll Call

Mirah Adah Becker - ✓
Cindy Furgang - ✓
Irina Katsnelson - ✓
Allison Nagelberg - ✓
Councilman Spadafino - ✓
Debbie Wynter - ✓
James Wendell - ✓

Also present: Loren Morace, Agency Clerk; Ron Gordon; Agency Counsel; Frank Guagliardi, Agency Counsel; Joseph Criscuolo, Business Administrator

2. Statement of Notice of Publication

The Township is using the telephone meeting format in an effort to mitigate the chance of exposure to COVID-19, as a part of the Township's ongoing effort to slow the rate of transmission and avoid overwhelming our treatment centers. The Dial in Information and Agenda have been posted on the Township website and are posted on EBTv for members of the public.

Members of the public can call in with the number provided if they have any questions for the Redevelopment Agency Commissioners. You will have five minutes to speak, should you have any further comments or questions, the Planning and Engineering Office is always available by email and phone. Each member of the public shall only have one opportunity to speak during the public portion.

Thank you in advance for your patience as we implement this new technology to continue to move the Township forward during this Health Emergency.

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided as required pursuant to the "Senator Byron M. Baer Open Public Meetings Act," P.L.1975, Chapter 231, specifying the time and date, location, and, to the extent known, the agenda. A copy of this notice has been: posted on the Municipal Building Public Notice Bulletin Board located in the main lobby, provided to the *Home News Tribune* and *Sentinel* newspapers, posted on the Township's website, and filed with the Executive Director of the Redevelopment Agency, in accordance with the law.

3. Reports

- a. Executive Director
- b. Clerk – No report this evening but wanted to mention there is no Bill list this evening
- c. Attorney – Thank you Mr. Chairman we don't have a formal report but we are continuing to monitor the status of the existing agreements that are getting finalized and recorded. We are continuing to look forward to additional applications before the Board. We only have one that's pending. We will stay on top of it and keep the Commissioners advised.
- d. Planner
- e. Chairman – Our Executive Director is unable to attend tonight's meeting. Myself, Mr. Hughes and Jim Kennedy took a ride around East Brunswick and looked at some of the ongoing projects. 39 Edgeboro is looking great. We looked at many properties in town and there will be some new things coming before the agency over the next 12 months. We have to go through the process with the Town Council and Planning Board and our Planner will have to do studies on those properties to see if they meet the criteria. You will start hearing about some things that we are looking at throughout the town to move the town forward with a vibrant Redevelopment Plan. It's exciting and once we start doing the studies you will be the first to hear. The Planner does the study on the properties to see if they meet the criteria, if they do they go to the Council, Council has to vote to refer that study to the Planning Board. The Planning Board makes the decision if they meet the criteria and then it gets referred back to the Council.

Ron Gordon – That's accurate, the function is a process. There are things in the pipeline that will hit benchmarks. The public becomes aware after step 5 or 6 of the process. You need to have the guidance that the tools of the Redevelopment law gives to the municipalities. The first step is take a look around and see what we should be looking at and use those tools to make your municipality a better place. The Chairman has accurately described the process.

James Wendell– If any members see a property please let me know. I would love input from anyone on the agency of places that should be considered. We have many other areas that were not designated condemnation areas. We have to wait for the Landowner.

Mirah Becker – Are you able to share those areas?

Ron Gordon – There are pitfalls toward making that a public document because once it becomes public it is subject to the Open Public Records Act and property owners have made claims in other places that even looking at their property amounts to inverse condemnation to which they have made claims for compensation. I hesitate and caution that anything you put in writing is put on record.

James Wendell – We can all share thoughts and discuss things in groups or individually but contact me.

Debbie Wynter – Is it appropriate to mention 1A?

James Wendell – The PB moved on the amended Redevelopment plan at the end of the year. The township should meet with the landowners of that area to see what their plans are. Area 1A is a gateway to our Redevelopment zone.

James Wendell– We have all discussed, 1a is between Eggers and Ruth Street.

Irina Katsnelson – We need that area done more than any other area.

James Wendell – We should set up a smaller subcommittee of the commissioner to see what we can do with 1A. Meet with property owners’ and see how we can incorporate that with what Russo and River want to do.

Ron Gordon – Mr. Chairman members of the Agency, that is what is absolutely appropriate and that is how its supposed to work. Area 1A is already a matter of public record. We can set up sub committees to set up meetings with property owners to advance the redevelopment of that parcel.

James Wendell – We can talk about this at the next meeting, set up a subcommittee and set up meetings with the property owners. We will put that on the agenda for the next meeting.

Michael Spadafino – Can all of us consider anything on the horizon? Is it necessary to include Redevelopment and does it have to include housing?

James Wendell – Housing is not an integral part of redevelopment. Housing is a critical part in certain areas. Housing is not necessarily what needs to happen. We want to keep our commercial corridor alive.

Ron Gordon – I agree with Chairman Wendell, in recent years as a result of the failures of affordable housing to do its job. The Redevelopment field prior to getting their obligation redevelopment law helped find ways to provide affordable housing and residential became an important component of redevelopment but East Brunswick has a plan. You have a court approved plan to meet that constitutional obligation. Once you have done that residential is no longer a necessary component of redevelopment.

Ron Gordon – Current round of affordable runs through July 1 of 2025 once you go past that day there will be further obligations to provide affordable housing. As you move forward you will have obligations on a going on basis. Any residential development should set aside an affordable housing component to meet future obligations.

James Wendell – When we look at residential going forward we have to look at the future obligations that the town will have to incur. We need to consider what obligations we will have going into the future

Joseph Criscuolo – We need to maintain the 20% satisfied as a minimum on most of those site we don’t want to get behind.

Public Comments

4. Agenda

- A. Approve the January 19, 2021 Redevelopment Agency meeting minutes.
Motion to approve Amended Minutes by Commissioner Katsnelson, second by Commissioner Becker
Mirah Adah Becker - ✓
Allison Nagelberg - ✓
Councilman Spadafino - ✓
Debbie Wynter - ✓
Irina Katsnelson - ✓
Cindy Furgang - ✓
James Wendell - ✓

- B. Approve the Bill List – No Bill List

5. For the Good of the Cause

Michael Spadafino – We had a discussion about the naming of the Hostess area I want to reiterate, you were serious about us trying to come up with names? I think we should make an omission for the people on the Redevelopment Committee. Come up with 1 -5 names you like and we could discuss it at the next meeting.

JW - I think that's a good idea. We can go out to the public and ask for the public's input.

DW- Can you remind us what will be at that location.

JW – Housing, skate rink, retail, mid rise housing, townhouses and some other walk up apartments. It's a mix of residential, retail and recreational facilities.

6. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Katsnelson, second by Commissioner Spadafino

Voice vote – all in favor, none opposed

Adjourned: 8:29pm