

TOWNSHIP OF MIDDLE
TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
WORK SESSION AGENDA
June 18, 2012
4:00 P.M. (prevailing time)

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor's announcement: I hereby declare that notice has been given to the Herald Times, the Atlantic City Press and posted on the bulletin board of the Middle Township Municipal Building, stating the time and place of the following meeting, as required in P.L. 1975, Chapter 231 of the State of New Jersey. (Sunshine Law).

Notice of this meeting was properly given in Resolution No. 16-12 entitled "Establishing Work Session Meeting Nights" which was adopted by Township Committee of the Township of Middle on January 4, 2012.

ROLL CALL:

FLAG SALUTE:

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS AND PROJECT UPDATES:

Administration/Finance:

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Committeewoman DeLanzo spoke of the Housing Advisory Board and how it came into existence, the Visioning Meetings and how proud she is of the Housing Boards dedication.

Committeeman Donohue thanked the audience for coming out tonight and spoke of the critical decisions they have to make and about the plans that are being offered. He stated most do not want high density projects, but explained we cannot meet our obligations to COAH without them. He said he has some recommendations, but will hold off until after the public comments.

Elizabeth Terenik spoke about Fair Housing and the role COAH plays in this. Middle Township has an obligation of 454 units. She explained what the Township has done since 2000, the Fair Share Plan and proposed development by the different contractors. She also spoke of the Master plan and the build out and capacity analysis, the benefit of having affordable units spread throughout the Township as well as the disadvantages, and the Revised Spending Plan that was adopted at the June 4th meeting. She also stated that the township has to get contracts executed with the providers.

Mike Jedzeniak spoke of his firm and who they represent. He said we are not the only municipality struggling with this. He spoke of the July 17th deadline and the Roberts Bill, that we all had 4 years to decide how to spend our money, but that there was an incredible amount of turmoil with COAH that prevented the municipalities from coming to definite decisions. He said COAH does now exist, but they have no quorum, so they are unable to operate. He does know, however, that Middle Township does have a 454 unit obligation to satisfy the Affordable Housing or we are exposed to legal liability if they are not satisfied. We could have a Builders Remedy filed against us by the state and we would then lose control of the funds.

Bob Noel spoke about the Housing Advisory Boards role in Affordable Housing and read their Mission Statement. He said they have been educating themselves on COAH since 2009 and defining the Mission Statement. He said they took trips to view units built by Conifer, had project people come to their meetings and explain their projects. Conifer is meeting with them again on July 7th.

Public Works & Engineering:

Legal:

Tax Collection/ Tax Assessment:

Construction/Plan/Zoning:

EMS

Recreation:

Police:
Buildings and Grounds

Sewer

Grants

Personnel

RESOLUTIONS:

ORDINANCES:

ORDINANCE NO.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS OR DISCUSSIONS:

ARC OF CAPE MAY COUNTY

Tom Hillegas and Sara Matthews, Director of Operations of the ARC spoke. They explained that 7 homes are already in Middle Township. The ARC has been in existence since 1961 and they provide services to persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities. They provide assistance to 100 people in Cape May County and they maintain and oversee their properties themselves 24/7. Their settings ranges from group homes to supported apartment units to private independent with minimal assistance. They employ 242 individuals in Cape May and Cumberland County and they operate the largest thrift shop in Rio Grande. They have 16 people housed in 4 properties and they spend \$134,400 annually in Cape May County, where they have created 32 jobs. Rick Olsen explained that the Township gets 1.25 credits for each bedroom in their units – example 4 bedrooms equals 5 credits. The money from the ARC comes from the Department of Human Services to operate the homes and ARC raises the money to build or buy the homes,

PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ARC

Carol Mattessich wanted to know if ARC would sue if they don't get help with building 4 units.

Tom Hillegas responded no.

Charles King wanted to know if they had access to foreclosed homes?

Sara Matthews said not sure if foreclosed homes had ever come into play, but they would not be opposed to it.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Sean Locklear spoke about Habitat's mission, which is to eliminate poverty housing and homelessness. Habitat would like to see a world where everyone has a decent place to live. They have built over 500,000 houses and families have worked side by side with volunteers. The homes are purchased through Habitat, sell for less than market value and are sold to their families at a no interest mortgage. Their payments average around \$600 a month and that payment includes taxes and insurance. The land is usually donated and they have national companies that donate materials. All their homes are COAH compliant, have Deed Restrictions and must stay affordable for 30 years.

PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR HABITAT

Joe Ravitz praised Habitat and wanted to know why we couldn't take the money we have, purchase the land and then give it to Habitat.

Mike Jedzeniak said that was a good idea, but in speaking with COAH they said it violated the Fair Housing Act and it was inconsistent with their rules.

Barbara Cresse wanted to know if Habitat could use a duplex lot and build townhomes.

Shawn Locklear said that they would be open to that, but they try to be sensitive to what is good for the neighborhood.

Committeeman Donohue wanted to know if they could prioritize who gets the homes in Cape May County.

Shawn Locklear said they cannot prioritize, that have to consider everyone under the same set of rules

CONIFER

Charles Lewis, VP of Conifer spoke about the Railroad Avenue Project. He explained that his company was a full service development and management company and have been in business for over 35 years and have built 12,000 units in 5 states and 2300 units in New Jersey. He said they build to manage, not to resell and they are regulated by the State and inspected once a year by the State. They do tenant screening, criminal background and credit checks, check references, and check with prior landlords. He spoke of the layouts of the units and showed some pictures of how some of their units look. Said they have not yet made a decision on style or material that would be used in the units on Railroad Avenue

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR CONIFER

Chrystal Matthews wanted to know if they incorporated green energy into their units.

Charles Lewis said they meet the Energy Star 2 criteria.

Al Puglia wanted to know if they would be exempt from property taxes and could these units be restricted to senior citizens.

Charles Lewis said they will pay in lieu of what the income on the units are instead of taxes. He stated it is hard to get affordable housing money for senior development.

Ed Dillio wanted to know what happens if the tenant goes below income level after they are.

Charles Lewis said that as long as they stay current with their rent, they cannot evict.

Carol Mattesich expressed concern about what has been agreed to and what has not. Does not feel this is the public meeting that should be held to discuss these issues.

Mike Jedzeniak said that Conifer would start with a 7% pilot, which would increase through the years, nothing is set in stone, we are just trying to protect the Township's Trust Fund. There have been no deals cut, many conversations have been held, the committee is trying to make sure that the public is involved.

Sue Conrad wanted to know if they would be willing to work with non-profits.

Charles Lewis said yes, that they have worked with them before.

Meeting adjourned: 6:50 PM

1st Committeewoman DeLanzo 2nd Committeeman Donohue

Aye: Committeewoman DeLanzo, Committeeman Donohue, Mayor Lockwood