

READINGTON TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
February 10, 2025

The Meeting was called to order by Chair Villa at 7:00 p.m. stating that the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act have been met and that this meeting had been duly advertised.

ROLL CALL

Board Members in Attendance:

Barton
Becker
Hendrickson
Izzo
John
Mueller
Panico
Rhoades
Villa
Somonski

Board Members Absent:

Hindle

Mr. Hendrickson moved, and Mr. Becker seconded a motion to excuse the absence of Board member Hindle. The motion carried unanimously.

Others Present

Board Attorney Jonathan Drill, Board Planner Michael Sullivan, Board Engineer Rob O'Brien, and Board Secretary Ann Marie Lehberger.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chair Villa stated that the January 27, 2025 minutes will be tabled for approval until the next meeting.

Chair Villa announced that the order of the agenda will be revised to have the public comment portion first. He opened the meeting to comments from the public.

Susan Masinda commented on a discrepancy in the reported runway length for Runway 422 at Solberg Airport.

Rick Molinaro voiced his disappointment in the public information meeting held at Solberg Airport and the lack of opportunity for members of the community to ask questions and voice their concerns. He inquired if any studies have been done regarding noise levels, property values, rural character changes and environmental concerns.

Julia Allen emphasized spoke the need for communication with the Department of Transportation (DOT) through a clear and effective master plan and zoning ordinances. And the importance of farmland preservation.

Tom Curtis inquired if there has been any communication with the State Assembly.

Pearl Buccine spoke to the Solberg Airport website and expressed concern about environmental impacts and pollution and emphasized the need to protect the rural character and the community.

Eric Zwerling stated that he has been a longtime volunteer in the community and expressed concern that he learned at the public information meeting that the crosswinds runway would be oriented to directly line up with Readington Middle School, Holland Brook, Branchburg Central Middle School and White Oak Park. He also expressed concern about the use of EVTOLS (Electric Vertical Takeoff and Landing Aircraft) that are similar to drones or helicopters and stressed the importance of protecting the community.

Barbara Nastro inquired as to what the Township is doing to react and address the concerns of the community and emphasized that there is not a need for an advanced service airport in the community with one already nearby in Morristown.

Deputy Mayor Panico stated that the Township has hired airport professionals.

Tom Auriemma inquired if an ordinance is currently being worked on. He spoke about negative impacts on property values from air traffic, the effects of noise and safety on our schools. He also expressed concern about increased infrastructure costs.

Laurie Fisher expressed concern about the use of EVTOLS, the dangers and the impacts to the power grid.

Chair Villa closed the public portion of the meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

EXECUTIVE SESSION RESOLUTION

WHEREAS N.J.S.A 10:4-12 (the Open Public Meeting Act) authorizes this Board to exclude the public from that portion of a meeting at which this Board discusses certain matters;

WHEREAS, the Board is about to discuss such a matter, specifically a matter falling within the attorney-client privilege where confidentiality is required for the Board Attorney to exercise his ethical duties as a lawyer with respect to attorney-client privileged legal advice he wishes to give the Board regarding the Affordable Housing.

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Readington Township Planning Board on February 10, 2025 that this Board now go into closed session and the public be excluded and that the Board believes that the discussions conducted in the closed session may not be disclosed to the public because they will involve attorney-client privileged advice and information.

Mr. Panico moved, and Mr. Mueller seconded to adopt this resolution. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Panico moved, and Mr. Mueller seconded a motion to come out of closed session. The motion carried unanimously.

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS

There were no resolutions presented for Board consideration.

ADJOURNMENTS OF ANY SCHEDULED HEARINGS OR OTIONS

There were none.

TRC UPDATE

There was no update.

OLD BUSINESS:

Chair Villa reviewed and provided updates on the old business as follows:

1. Municipal Climate Resilience Planning-Ongoing
2. Application Checklists-Ongoing
3. Subcommittee Updates-None since last meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Ordinance Referral from the Township Committee Ordinance #01-2025

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING AND SUPPLEMENTING PORTIONS OF THE LAND USE ORDINANCE FOUND IN CHAPTER 148 ENTITLED "LAND DEVELOPMENT" OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON, COUNTY OF HUNTERDON AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY PERMITTING UP TO TWO DETADHED SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLINGS ON LOTS WITH AN APPROPRIATE LOT SIZE IN THE SRR SPECIAL RESOURCE RESIDENTIAL AND RR RURAL RESIDENTAL ZONES.

Michael Sullivan, Township Planner, provided an overview of the ordinance and discussed his opinion on consistency with the Township Master Plan.

Mr. Panico moved, and Mr. Mueller seconded a motion to advise the Township Committee that the Boards finds Ordinance #01-2025 to be not inconsistent with the Master Plan. The roll call vote follows:

Member	Motion	2 nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Not Eligible	Recused
Barton			X					
Becker			X					
Hendrickson			X					
Izzo			X					
John			X					
Mueller		X	X					
Panico	X		X					
Rhoades			X					
Villa			X					
Hindle						X		
Somonski							X	

Ordinance Referral from the Township Committee Ordinance #02-2025

AN ORDINANCE SUPPLEMENTING AND AMENDING VOLUME II CHAPTER 148 ENTITLED "LAND DEVELOPMENT" OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON, TO CREATE THE HVC HIGHWAY VILLAGE COMMERCIAL, HC HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL, AND THE ROM-3 RESEARCH OFFICE AND MANUFACTURING ZONING DISTRICTS, AND TO PROVIDE USE PROVISIONS, SPATIAL AND DESIGN STANDARDS, AND DEFINITIONS RELATD THERETO; TO REMOVE THE PO PROFESSIONAL OFFICE DISTRICT, AND TO REMOVE THE VILLAGE RESIDENTIAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING-1 DISTRICT, AND AMEND THE ZONING MAP OF THE TOWNSHIP TO REFLECT THE AMENDNED ZONING DISTRICTS.

Deputy Mayor Panico discussed some changes that were made throughout the process from public feedback. Michael Sullivan, Township Planner, provided an overview of the ordinance and discussed his opinion on consistency with the Township Master Plan,

Mr. Panico moved, and Mr. Mueller seconded a motion to advise the Township Committee that the Boards finds Ordinance #02-2025 to be not inconsistent with the Master Plan. The roll call vote follows:

Member	Motion	2 nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Not Eligible	Recused
Barton			X					
Becker			X					
Hendrickson			X					
Izzo			X					
John				X				
Mueller		X	X					
Panico	X		X					
Rhoades			X					
Villa			X					
Hindle						X		
Somonski							X	

Apartments at Three Bridges Holdings

Application# PB24-005- Block 81, Lot 1 - 702 Route 202

Request to modify two conditions of the resolution of approval adopted July 30, 2024.

Mr. Mueller, Mr. Panico and Mr. Somonski recused themselves and left the meeting.

Attorney Nicole Magdziak was present on behalf of Apartments at Three Bridges Holdings. She stated that the applicant received Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan with Variance approval in July of 2024 and provided a status on the project. She explained that the applicant is requesting to modify condition #19 which requires outside agency approvals and condition #15 which requires a developer's agreement for them to meet the milestones required for the project financing.

Ms. Magdziak reviewed the outside agency approvals that were still required and noted that they are requesting a letter agreement instead of a full developer's agreement. It was noted that the Township attorney's office had drafted and signed the letter agreement.

Board Attorney Jon Drill stated that he prepared a resolution for tonight's meeting and read the proposed modifications of the conditions as follows:

Modification of Condition No. 19. Condition No. 19 is modified to read as follows:

Outside Agency Approvals and Permits. The Applicant is permitted to proceed with limited site work, which includes minor grading/earthwork, grubbing, tree and stump removal and the installation of a construction trailer (upon the Applicant's receipt of the required permit for the trailer from Readington Township), as it awaits permits and/or approvals from the NJDEP, NJDOT and Hunterdon County Planning Board. All work done prior to the receipt of the aforementioned Outside Agency Approvals shall be "at-risk" to the Applicant and in the event that the aforementioned approvals are not obtained, the Applicant will restore the Property, as practicable, to its current state, and shall post a site restoration bond in accordance with the Township's ordinance.

Modification of Condition No. 15. Condition No. 15 is modified to read as follows:

Developer's Agreement. A Developer's Agreement is not required. The Applicant and Township Attorney have agreed to enter into a letter in lieu of a Developer's Agreement. The execution of such letter will satisfy this condition. The letter in lieu of the Developer's Agreement must be executed by both parties prior to the start of limited site work.

Mr. Izzo moved, and Mr. Hendrickson seconded a motion to adopt the resolution for Apartments at Three Bridges Holdings. The roll call vote follows:

Member	Motion	2 nd	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Not Eligible	Recused
Barton			X					
Becker			X					
Hendrickson		X	X					
Izzo	X		X					
John			X					
Mueller								X
Panico								X
Rhoades			X					
Villa			X					
Hindle						X		
Somonski								X

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Becker moved, and Mr. Izzo seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherri Russo
Planning Board Secretary