

BRIDGEWATER TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, February 8, 2011
—MINUTES—

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

Vice-Chairwoman Joanne Kane called the regular meeting of the Bridgewater Township Planning Board to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Courtroom, 100 Commons Way, Bridgewater, New Jersey.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT ANNOUNCEMENT:

Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act N.J.S.A. 10:4-6. On January 13, 2011, proper notice was sent to the Courier Newspaper and the Star-Ledger and filed with the Clerk at the Township of Bridgewater and posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building.

Please be aware of the Planning Board policy for public hearings: no new applications will be heard after 10:00 pm and no new testimony will be taken after 10:15 pm. Hearing assistance is available upon request.

SALUTE TO FLAG:

There was salute to colors.

ROLL CALL:

Mr. Rodzinak – present	Vice-Chairwoman Joanne Kane - present
Ms. Barbara Kane – present	N. Janine Dickey – present
Councilwoman Rose – present	Mayor Flannery – absent
Chairman Fross – absent	Former Councilman Albano, Alt. #1 - absent
Glenn Petillo, Alt. #2 - present	

Others present: Board Attorney Thomas Collins, Board Planner Scarlett Doyle, PP, Board Engineer Thomas Forsythe, PE, Land Use Administrator Marie L. Broughman

APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES:

January 24, 2011 Regular Meeting Minutes – Motion by Mr. Rodzinak, second by Mrs. Dickey, the foregoing minutes were approved as presented on the following roll call vote:

AFFIRMATIVE:	Mr. Rodzinak, Vice-Chairwoman Kane, Mrs. Barbara Kane, Councilwoman Rose, Mrs. Dickey, Mr. Petillo
ABSENT:	Chairman Fross, Mayor Flannery, Mr. Albano

MEMORIALIZATION OF RESOLUTIONS:

None pending

RESOLUTION TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Planning Board of the Township of Bridgewater, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, that the Board hereby authorizes a closed or executive session pursuant to Section 7 and 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act to discuss matters of attorney client privileged communication. The matters to be discussed are to remain confidential until the confidentiality of the matters is no longer required.

It was the consensus of the Board to enter into closed session to discuss attorney-client privileged communication. The Board entered into closed session at approximately 7:04 pm.

The Board returned to open session at approximately 7:50 pm with all Board members present as before.

REEXAMINATION REPORT OF THE MASTER PLAN

Scarlett Doyle, PP, summarized the Reexamination Report of the Master Plan dated 2/8/11. She made several recommendations for minor additions and corrections to the document.

Vice-Chairwoman Kane opened the meeting to the public for questions and comments.

Lloyd Tubman, Attorney for the Chughtai application, questioned what prompted a new reexamination report. She emphasized that the report was asked to look at houses of worship. She stated that the report truly targeted at a house of worship. Ms. Tubman stated that the Chughtai application is a fully conforming conditional use.

Paul Tighe stated that you can't park on the residential streets due to the narrowness of the streets. He stated that approximately 150-cars can be held in the parking lot. At the Red Wood Inn site, there were approximately 40-weddings held per year which ended at 11 pm with no traffic problems, due to the late hour of departure.

Arshad Jalil stated that he has been a resident of Bridgewater for 16-years and that 500 to 600 people can fit at this site. He stated that the rules are being changed after the application has been submitted.

Balaram Gupta stated that he has been a resident for 14-years and the Redwood Inn can accommodate 150-people. The residential roads are difficult in the winter and he wants the neighborhood to remain the same.

Neil Mahoney stated that the Muslim community is growing and questioned what would happen if more than 500-people come to the mosque. He is fearful if the mosque grows larger.

Sarah Wallace stated that she wants to practice her religion at the new mosque. She wants the mosque in the proposed location.

Ms. Mohemedi listed many of the activities of a mosque and she wants the mosque in a residential neighborhood, not on main streets.

Kelly Avenoso requested that churches be situated on main roads as the residential roads are narrow. She uses her neighborhood to run and uses it as a gym.

Scott Rapport stated that the roads are narrow and have soft shoulders.

Nancy Gorrell stated that the mosque should be allowed; however, the proposed location is hazardous on the roads. She raised concerns about the narrow roads, soft shoulders, and the traffic impact. She stated that she wants the mosque located somewhere else in Bridgewater.

Sandra Merino stated that where will her children pray and go to school if there is no mosque in Bridgewater.

Philip Rinaldi stated that the Master Plan Reexamination Report is correct. Intensity of use will not work in a quiet neighborhood. He stated that the mosque would be out of character with the neighborhood.

Terry Abdelkatr stated that she has been a resident for 20-years in Bridgewater and she will work with the community to make the mosque possible.

Stacey Devries stated that she has been a resident of Bridgewater for 13-years. She addressed concerns with the safety on Mine Road and Crim Road. There is limited site distance and narrow roads. There are many joggers and mountain bikers and hikers on these residential roads.

Frank Nikfar stated that he is an 18-year resident and is concerned with safety on the residential roads. He wants to keep it residential.

Syad Iddiq stated that he is a physician by profession. He said it all started after the 1/24/11 meeting: discrimination effecting religious freedom. The rules are being changed in the middle of the game.

Mr. Attansio stated that he is a 10-year resident. The residential roads in this area are unsafe with hazardous intersections. This is an inappropriate site for the mosque.

Ankit Kapoor stated that this is the wrong location due to traffic concerns.

Babar Farooqi stated that there is less traffic than everyone claims. He wants freedom of religion.

Raheel Siddiq stated that she wants the mosque for peace and harmony.

Harprett Sandhu stated that she is an 8-year resident. She wants safety, serenity and a peaceful neighborhood.

Mark Kolb stated that he has been a resident of Bridgewater since 1965. He has spent 21-years as a runner on Mountain Top Road and is concerned with safety and traffic. He requested that the mosque be placed on a main roadway.

John Fallon stated that he is a 25-year resident. He stated that the mosque is the size of a school.

Kathleen Kocola stated that the mosque is okay, but not the school or the daycare.

Omar Mohammdi requested to let the process take its course.

Wealing Hsu is a 21-year resident. He is not against the house of worship, but concerned with the size of the enterprise and traffic.

Ahmad Shata requested to give the chance for the mosque. Let the experts have an opportunity to testify.

Tara Friedman likes the quiet neighborhood with kids playing on the front lawn.

Darus Kapadia requested the Board do what is best for the greatest of the community. This is the wrong place for a house of worship.

Shazi Sattar stated that she has a day care center on a main road and there are no problems. She requested that the Board process the application for the mosque.

Arthur Kapoor requested the Board to make the right decision: no mosque.

Robert Golden has been a resident since 1971. He stated that his is a strange place to put such a high intensity use.

Yasser Addelkeder has been a 20-year resident. He stated that it is not as big as an enterprise. Wants the community to bring children to learn and pray.

Ralph Messina stated that they can worship as they see fit; however, this is a land use issue.

Laurinda Polk addressed concerns with the quality of life, safety, traffic and intensity of land use.

Nancy Gorrell stated that all houses of worship want growth.

Brian Bobowicz requested that the Board do what it's supposed to do: Adopt the Master Plan Reexamination Report.

Razi Ahmed stated that changing the rules now is a prejudice and biased act.

Shomial Malik stated that he is a Muslim and he requested to let the process move forward for the application.

Subhash Bhujle stated that this is not a religious issue. It's about the intensity of use.

Alexander Ho stated that he would help the Muslim's locate another place for the mosque.

Attorney Collins stated that the Master Plan Reexamination Report is not a new law nor is it an ordinance. Only Planning Board's adopt a Reexamination of the Master Plan. Only the Township Council may adopt an ordinance. If the Township adopts an ordinance, the applicant has the right to go to the Zoning Board of Adjustment with a request for d-variance for relief from that condition.

RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING BOARD OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER
APPROVING THE FEBRUARY 8, 2011
REEXAMINATION OF THE MASTER PLAN
TOWNSHIP OF BRIDGEWATER
SOMERSET COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

DECIDED: FEBRUARY 8, 2011
ADOPTED: FEBRUARY 8, 2011

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Planning Board of the Township of Bridgewater, County of Somerset, State of New Jersey, that the Board hereby approves the attached Reexamination of the Master Plan, Township of Bridgewater, Somerset County, New Jersey attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

Motion by Mr. Rodzinak, second by Mr. Petillo, the Master Plan Reexamination Report was adopted as amended on the following roll call vote:

AFFIRMATIVE: Mr. Rodzinak, Mrs. Barbara Kane, Councilwoman Rose, Mrs. Dickey,
Mr. Petillo, Vice-Chairwoman Kane

ABSENT: Mayor Flannery, Chairman Fross, Mr. Albano

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

There were no members of the public wishing to address the Board on any matter not listed on the agenda.

BOARD BUSINESS:

There was no additional Board business.

ADJOURNMENT:

It was the consensus of the Board to adjourn the meeting at approximately 10:15pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Marie L. Broughman,
Land Use Administrator

ADOPTED: 2/28/11