

**MINUTES FOR THE MARCH 19, 2012 WORKSHOP MEETING  
HELD AT 7:30 PM  
51 WEST MAIN STREET  
FREEHOLD, NJ 07728**

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**ROLL CALL:**

**Present:** Mayor J. Nolan Higgins, Councilman Michael DiBenedetto, Councilman Kevin Kane, Councilman John Newman, Councilman George Schnurr, Councilwoman Sharon Shutzer and Councilman Jaye Sims.

**Absent:** None

Also present were Borough Attorney Kerry Higgins, Borough Administrator Joseph B. Bellina, Chief Glenn Roberts and Borough Clerk Traci L. DiBenedetto

**2. ROUTINE TRANSACTIONS-SUPPLEMENTAL AGENDA (See Attachment I).**

See the permanent minute book for the minutes and the resolution book for the attachments.

**3. OPEN SPACE PACE PROGRAM. (SEE ATTACHMENT II.)**

Joseph Bellina, Borough Administrator introduced Sam Landy and Brett Taft from the Open Space Pace which is a non-profit organization. Their mission is to make us all aware of preserving open space and what will probably happen if we ever loose the racing industry.

Sam Landy explained that they formed this organization to call awareness to the fact that all of the local farms in Monmouth County and throughout the state of New Jersey are very dependent on horse racing and the standardbred industry is very dependent on Freehold Raceway. We have come up with an idea to try to promote Freehold one day a year because other tracks survive off of one big event a year. We are working on an event for September 29, 2012. It will start out with an equine parade coming through Freehold Borough to the racetrack. The Department of Agriculture will have agricultural displays. There will be petting zoos and retired standardbreds in lead line shows. The day will end with a concert from 5:00 PM to 7:30 PM. Mr. Landy stated they will also be selling tickets for tailgate spaces for people to have tailgate parties at the track which will include preferred seating concert tickets. There will be an ad journal and all of the non-profits can keep half of whatever tickets they sell. The whole objective is to bring 5,000 people to Freehold Raceway again. Mr. Landy stated he has already received a lot of support from the Mayor, Borough Administrator and the County

Freeholders. Freeholder Lillian Burry is going to set up a cocktail party to help raise funds.

Councilman Schnurr stated here in Freehold Borough we know how important Freehold Racetrack is to us. It is important that the surrounding communities realize this as well. Without the horse racing industry these horse farms disappear and are replaced by housing developments and strip malls. Councilman Schnurr commends the effort and is in support of this event.

Councilman Kane stated his family has been involved with horse racing for years and nobody really realizes the impact that this town and surrounding towns would feel if the track and the surrounding farms were not there. Councilman Kane stated he is in full support and thanked Mr. Landy for his efforts.

Councilman DiBenedetto stated this is a great idea and asked going further if this will enhance the purses at Freehold.

Mr. Landy stated he can't be sure of what it will do throughout the year but he is pretty sure if he creates one day that has a million dollars in purses, so many more people would breed and train horses in the state of New Jersey. If we can bring all of these people to the track and show them significant excitement they will keep coming back and that will increase the purses.

Mr. Landy stated that the Rutgers Equine Science Center is very involved and they have arranged their landscape school to come landscape the whole racetrack for that day.

Mayor Higgins wished him well and stated the Borough is in full support.

Councilman Sims asked if they had scheduled a rain date.

Mr. Landy replied there is no scheduled rain date.

**4. HEALTH AND WELLNESS FAIR YOUTH COMMUNITY DAY. (SEE ATTACHMENT III.)**

Councilman Sims introduced Jean Covington of the Macedonia Church in Freehold and explained she approached Councilman Sims about having a Health and Wellness Fair in June.

Ms. Covington asked to have Avenue A blocked off and to have access to the Monmouth County Courthouse parking lot for vendor space and booths. As a registered nurse and a global health consultant and speaker our youth is in dire need of such activities. Ms. Covington wanted to reach out to the youth in this community with this event to be held on Saturday, June 23, 2012 from Noon to 5:00 PM with a rain date of Saturday, June 30, 2012. Ms. Covington stated she is involved in a lot of public health issues, including chemical exposures, HIV,

alcohol/drug abuse prevention – all of the things that our children are susceptible to. Ms. Covington wanted to propose a \$15.00 fee for vendor space so the proceeds could benefit other community events.

Ms. Covington stated she started a Health and Wellness team at their church. She is also a member of the CERT team in Burlington and she is bringing that into the youth department. The youth is very excited about getting involved.

Mayor Higgins stated this sounds like a great program.

Mr. Bellina asked Ms. Covington to give her name to Chief Roberts regarding the closing of the street.

Mayor Higgins stated the parking lot of the county courthouse is out of our control but we will try to help with that.

Councilman DiBenedetto stated the residents on Avenue A should be notified.

## **5. COMPLETE STREETS POLICY. (SEE ATTACHMENT IV.)**

Councilman Newman explained when we make any improvements to our streets we think about the street as something that all people use; not just cars but also pedestrians and bicyclists. The complete streets are to make sure that when we do improvements that we are thinking about the total picture for everyone that use the street. The State of New Jersey and Monmouth County have a complete streets policy along with many towns. It opens up funding from the State DOT. One caveat to this is the cost would be excessively disproportioned to the need or probable future use over the long term then it would not be applicable to what we need. The last caveat here is that if it has some sort of significant adverse environmental impacts which outweigh the positive effects of the infrastructure. Mr. Bellina and Councilman Newman met with the DOT and there is funding available. There is a new director for the DOT who is making money available for the complete streets policy.

Councilman Schnurr asked Councilman Newman if it was his intention to have this resolution on the agenda for the next council meeting.

Councilman Newman replied yes.

Councilman Sims asked if the study that we had done last year is still current.

Councilman Newman stated that is a guideline for the future. It is not something that is etched in stone. The combination of the study and the complete streets policy enhances our ability to make these sorts of changes.

Councilman Sims asked if the funding from the State DOT would include their roads or all of the streets in the Borough.

Mr. Bellina replied that it would be for all streets within the Borough.

Mayor Higgins stated that if the governing body wishes to proceed it would be on the April 2<sup>nd</sup> agenda.

**6. LAND USE COMMITTEE – DOWNTOWN INVENTORY.**

Councilman Schnurr stated the land use committee is made up of three members of council: Councilman Sims, Councilman Newman and himself. Councilman Schnurr gave Mayor Higgins a lot credit for establishing this committee because they are making a lot of headway. One of the issues that had been discussed is the Downtown Inventory and strategies to enhance the economic development in the downtown district. The committee is asking the governing body to direct the Freehold Center Partnership to conduct a complete inventory of all of its properties downtown. This would include the number of floors, the square footage, the number of rooms, any recent renovations, ADA compliant entrances or bathrooms, the owner/agent, rent levels and lease end dates. The idea behind this is that once you have a downtown inventory of buildings you are then able to go and market these. The Freehold Center Partnership was formed on that basis. We would like to have the partnership work with the tax assessor or the construction department and come back to the land use committee within 60 days or so. We would also like the partnership to give their ideas and opportunities that they are pursuing in the short term as well as the long term as far as business recruitment. We are trying to increase business development and economic development in our downtown. The land use committee is asking the governing body to direct the partnership to begin this inventory assessment.

Councilman Sims explained it is vital and important for the council to pass on this measure in order to promote economic development downtown.

Councilman Newman stated the Freehold Center Partnership is doing a great job and this isn't a "knock" at what they are doing. The council wants to work together with the partnership to better the downtown area.

Councilman Kane stated this is a great idea.

Councilman DiBenedetto stated he would go further with the survey and try to create a separate parking lot for employees.

Mr. Bellina stated we can have a meeting with the partnership and present this request to them. We are in a position to help them through our various departments. The tax assessor's office, code enforcement and fire official have a wealth of information on the properties in town.

Council was in agreement that this would be a great idea.

Councilman DiBenedetto asked if this would interfere with the realtor association as far as marketing.

Ms. Higgins explained we are just looking to create a database and putting out there what we have to offer.

Councilman DiBenedetto stated this could give some insight to the parking situation as well.

**7. EXECUTIVE SESSION**  
**a. Public Safety Issues**

Councilwoman Shutzer offered the following Resolution and moved its adoption and was seconded by Councilman DiBenedetto:

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PUBLIC SAFETY ISSUES.**

On roll call, Council Members DiBenedetto, Kane, Newman, Schnurr, Shutzer and Sims voted its adoption, opposed none, absent none, abstain none. Mayor Higgins declared the Resolution adopted.

**8. ADJOURNMENT.**

There being no further business to discuss, Councilman DiBenedetto moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 PM, seconded by Councilman Kane, with All in Favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Traci L. DiBenedetto, RMC  
BOROUGH OF FREEHOLD

