

SOUTH ORANGE VILLAGE
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PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 21, 2021 - 8:30 AM
Virtual Webex Meeting

Call Meeting to Order

Chairman Bob Zuckerman
Trustee Summer Jones
Trustee Bobby Brown
Anthony Greci, Construction Official
Greer Patras, Zoning Official
Julie Doran, Deputy Administrator
Melissa Hodge, Acting SOVCA Executive Director
Joycelyn White, Recording Secretary

Also In Attendance

William Kerzenberger
Graham Petto
Justin Cutroneo

Approval of Minutes

July 20, 2021

All members present approved the July 20, 2021 meeting minutes.

Reports

Code Enforcement Report- Tony Greci

Mr. Greci stated the Building Department/Code Enforcement are running status quo and the new development projects are moving forward with no issues.

In response to Trustee Zuckerman regarding inspections of new projects (Vose & Taylor) , Mr. Greci explained the inspections take place on an almost daily basis. The project managers have the number for the inspector to call directly to schedule inspection. In response to the volume of new development projects, the BOT passed a resolution to hire inspectors as needed if their regular staff aren't



able to.

Trustee Jones asked for an update on the abandoned properties in the village. Mr. Greci reported that several properties were added to the approved Ordinance, a few others have been sold. Discussion ensued regarding negotiations with banks for unpaid fees, overgrown grass and garbage.

Mr. Greci is pleased with the revenue from the new projects and permit fees.

In response to Trustee Jones, Ms. Doran stated the applicant has submitted a compliance report. The Zoning Official has created a compliance enforcement plan. Mrs. Patras was not able to attend to detail the plan this meeting but Mrs. Doran will continue to work with her. Mrs. Doran has been tracking complaints with the 'Report a Concern' on the Village Website and hasn't received any since school started.

Deputy Administrator Report - Julie Doran

Ms. Doran stated that permit fees are being waived for storm-related damage. A special module was created on Govpilot; applicants will fill out a form that will allow the fees to be waived. Eight applications have been received so far. Ms. Doran will be posting on the Village Website to help residents.

The SOPD has requested to close down Taylor Place permanently during the next phase of construction. Ms. Doran will be meeting with the police dept., the parking authority, and South Orange Downtown and the development team to discuss the plans. The Deputy Administrator will update the committee with the details of the meeting. In response to Trustee Jones, Ms. Doran stated that the traffic plan hasn't been finalized. It will accommodate the library construction. Discussion ensued about street closure and how it will affect surrounding businesses.

Ms. Doran detailed the changes and updated on the Village Website. There is a new page that updates residents on new construction and developments. The page will detail the timeline and benefits of the projects happening in the village. Trustee Zuckerman asked Ms. Doran if she could go into detail about each project at the next meeting.

South Orange Downtown Report- Melissa Hodge



Director Hodge updated the committee on how the businesses are operating post Tropical Ida. A few businesses received more damage than others. The Ti Kwon Do school had to temporarily move to Maplewood while they repair the damage. Cafe Word couldn't have customers in the store and Reservoir's basement flooded, but have been reopened. Ms. Hodge visited the businesses and was pleasantly surprised that most businesses were open and packed with customers. South Orange Downtown worked with the businesses on a one on one basis to help with their immediate needs. SOPAC was hit by the storm but will be having shows soon on the upper level. Communication is the goal in helping drive shoppers to the downtown and to keep everyone updated. In response to Trustee Jones, Ms. Hodge stated she would have to find out while SOPAC is repairing the damage, if they put a plan in place to prevent this type of damage again.

Ms. Hodge announced The Latin Dance Party will be Friday, September 24, 2021; 7pm-9pm at Spiotta Park. The movie in the Park: *Into the Heights* will be shown at New Waterlands Park, Saturday, September 25, 2021. Director Hodge stated that there were plans to expand the Farmers Market this year but they weren't able to add more vendors. The plan is to expand the market for next year 2022. Summer Saturdays will continue through the end of October. The undercover Music fest been postponed due to the spike in COVID cases.

Ms. Hodge announced the new brand of SOVCA, to South Orange Downtown. The new brand has been well received by the community.

Beautification Update- A survey was done regarding Spiotta Park including the mural and toys. Which will receive an update. The artist that created the mural will come and offer to repair it at no cost. The turtle in the park might need to be replaced. At the next beautification meeting, the committee will discuss the best course of action.

Valley Street Mural- The project is behind schedule due to a few challenges with the owners of the property. The first delay was with the contents of the mural itself. Since that has been worked out, now the contracts are under review between the property owners and the artist.

Seton Hall Welcome Back- South Orange Downtown launched a welcome back event for the students of Seton Hall and it was well received. Ms. Hodge detailed the social media roll out and 'welcome back' banners for the event.

Lastly, Ms. Hodge reported three use permits have been submitted. The former Metro PCS will be a jewelry shop and at 154 Valley Street (formerly Pro Pets) will



now be a coffee shop and wellness spa. Parking has been addressed temporarily but Ms. Hodge expressed that she would like to discuss a parking ordinance for the long term. Discussion ensued regarding vacant business properties. South Orange Downtown will be hosting a downtown sidewalk sale on Friday, September 24 through Sunday, September 26, 2021; 11am-6pm.

New Business

Redevelopment Update

In the absence of Mrs. Patras, Trustee Zuckerman asked Ms. Doran to update the committee on a few redevelopment projects.

Village Hall Update-Village President Collum posted an update to the public on the progress on her Facebook page. The project is slated to be completed by spring/summer 2022. Discussion ensued regarding how to speed up the process of completion. Ms. Doran suggested discussing this with Mrs. Patras on Thursday, to come up with a plan to help them move the project along, if incentives or penalties weren't built into the redevelopment agreement. It will be harder to navigate these issues. Due to the community's interest/comments in when the project will be completed, Trustee Brown suggested pivoting that to the developer and show them the community business opportunity they are missing out on. Discussion ensued.

Meridia(4th & Valley)- Ms. Doran reported the project is moving along and on schedule. The only issues are the construction hours. Work is being done after allowed hours or on the weekend but it has been handled. The project is to be completed in 18 months.

Vose & Taylor- Previously discussed in the Code Enforcement report, Trustee Zuckerman asked if any details had been discussed regarding the \$1/year co-op market. Ms. Doran stated that she was aware of the co-op but did not have any further details at the time.

Ms. Doran stated that it is in the Village's court to define what we would want out of these community spaces and these asks will be contractual. Village President Collum, Mr. Leohner and Mr. Otis are working together to create a list.

Wells Fargo Update- Mrs. Doran reported the RDA will move forward to the next phase. The Village has responded to the developer's latest document and is awaiting a response. The issue is to address where the utilities will be and will meet



with PSE&G to address this. The committee is looking forward to seeing this at an upcoming BOT meeting.

6-8 South Orange Avenue (Bank of America/Hot Bagels Abroad)- The Planning Board has received their application. Trustee Zuckerman stated that this project will be reconfiguring the existing building to add apartments. Mr. Cutroneo added that it is a building addition at the back of the existing building. Discussion ensued regarding how the building would be added.

270 Irvington Avenue.- Will be discussed at the October 4, 2021 Planning Board Meeting. Ms. Doran stated the plans have been added to the Village designated website page.

Valley Storage- The Redevelopment Plan and Redevelopment Agreement, and Financial Agreement have been completed. At the next BOT meeting the Board will be presented with the concept plan. There will be a Planning Board Special Meeting to address this project.

Old Business

Cannabis Tasks Force

Trustee Zuckerman reported that great progress had been made. Mrs. Patras and her colleague Mark have been very helpful. On September 29, 2021, there will be a meeting where the taskforce will finish their final recommendation. The next step is to plan a public Townhall via Webex or Zoom. The meeting will be scheduled for mid-October. Trustee Zukerman anticipates after the Townhall meeting, the taskforce will meet again to make any changes based on what comes out of the meeting. Lastly, an ordinance will be introduced to the BOT.

Master Plan

Mr. Kerzenberger stated the content of the Master Plan is finalized but due to the Planning Boards busy schedule, Topology was able to speak to Mr. Colton-Max and Mr. Sullivan; they were able to create a realistic adoption schedule that provides the public with opportunities to participate. Some of the final edits were graphic intensive. Mr. Kerzenberger shared a brief overview of any outstanding changes, such as:



- Feedback from Seton Hall regarding the vision of their campus
- Seton Village area aspirations to accommodate SHU students and an attractive streetscape. They are interested in the mobility aspect.
- New content regarding supporting local artists and providing more opportunities.

Flood resiliency

Discussion ensued regarding integrating the community into the SHU campus space.

NPP Application-Irvington Avenue

Will be discussed at the next meeting.

Accessory Dwelling Units

Will be discussed at the next meeting.

Next Meeting Date

October 19, 202; 8:30am

Adjournment