

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF
THE TEANECK TOWNSHIP COUNCIL
HELD IN THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING CHAMBERS ON
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2012

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENT

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by the posting, filing and distribution of a Notice of Special Meeting, a copy of which has been sent to The Record and The Jewish Standard; a copy of which has been filed copy in the Township Clerk's Office and by posting it on the Municipal Building Bulletin Board, and the Mayor hereby directs that this statement be included in the minutes.

ROLL CALL

Present: C. Parker (arrived at 7:50 p.m.), DM. Gussen, C. Pruitt, C. Katz (arrived at 7:19 p.m.), C. Schwartz, Mayor Hameeduddin.

Absent: C. Stern.

Also Present: W. Broughton, Township Manager; J.L. Evelina, RMC, Township Clerk; W. Rupp, Esq. – Ferrara, Turitz, Harraka & Goldberg, PC.

MOTION TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION

Having adopted Resolution 284-12, Mayor Hameeduddin made a motion to close the meeting to the public to discuss matters concerning Advisory Board interviews; Offer to Purchase; personnel matters and litigation.

In Favor: C. Parker, DM. Gussen, C. Pruitt, C. Katz, C. Schwartz, Mayor Hameeduddin.

Opposed: None.

Absent: C. Parker (at time of vote), C. Katz (at time of vote), C. Stern.

CLOSED SESSION DISCUSSION

MOTION TO RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Mayor Hameeduddin called the Open Session Meeting of the Teaneck Township Council to order at 8:15 p.m. and asked all present to please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: C. Parker, DM. Gussen, C. Pruitt, C. Katz, C. Schwartz, Mayor Hameeduddin.

Absent: C. Stern.

Also Present: W. Rupp – Ferrara, Turitz, Harraka & Goldberg, PC.; W. Broughton, Township Manager; J.L. Evelina, RMC, Township Clerk; I. Abbasi, Executive Assistant, C. Loschiavo, Senior Clerk.

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PRESENTATIONS

1. Arcari+Iovino Architects – Old Police Headquarters Renovation Project.

Mr. Broughton thanked Council for the opportunity to conduct this presentation regarding the renovation of the old police building, indicating that it has been a work in progress for the past few years. He then turned the presentation over to the architect, Anthony Iovino.

Mr. Iovino proceeded with the presentation stating that he would inform everyone of the present status regarding the project. He explained that the project must be approved by the Township Council prior to going out to bid. He then stated that the documents for the project are over ninety percent complete and that he would present a time line at the end of the presentation. He gave an at-length slide presentation of the progress concerning the project; informed all that he would recap all information for those Council Members who were not serving at the time the project was launched; went on to inform all about "Phase 1" of the project referring to before and after photographs of the Municipal Building as it appears now and how it will appear upon completion; explained how the project came about indicating that an investigation had been completed by Arcari + Iovino which revealed that the former police building was still a quality building which had been sitting empty for many years; explained by utilizing the old building and linking it to the present Municipal Building, any issues that had been discovered could be rectified; explained that the one of the goals was to take the employees out of the basement area of the present Municipal Building; stressed on the importance of having the Violations Bureau as close as possible to the Court, emphasizing that it is crucial for the safety of the Judge; went on to say that another issue which would be resolved would be ADA accessibility, which is severely missing from the present Municipal Building; indicated that the new building would have all amenities meeting ADA accessible regulations, as well as, an elevator providing access to all three floors; informed an extreme problem within the present Municipal Building is storage facilities for records; explained by taking the employees from the basement, that space could then be used for records storage; added the new building would increase meeting space or employees, as well as, the community; gave a detailed description of the floor plans and where each department would be located; explained that intercommunication between departments without going into the public realm would be greatly improved; pointed out that the building is not lead certified but this does not mean that it will not be "green-friendly"; gave a detailed description of the "green" aspects of the building; advised that the re-use of the old police building is an important "green" feature, in and of itself; informed that the new building will include an emergency generator and explained exactly how it will work; discussed the time line, where they are now in the project and what the next steps will be; discussed the bidding process and contract negotiations; and indicated that the construction period would be twelve to fourteen months, weather permitting.

Mayor Hameeduddin gave direction as to how this meeting will be run, stating that it will be two parts, specifically, residents would be permitted to ask the architect questions regarding the plan that had been presented and then during Good and Welfare. He also informed that the will be afforded the opportunity to ask questions and make suggestions regarding any ideas they may have regarding the project. Council concurred.

C. Pruitt stated that there are two plans: a draft plan and a current plan; indicated that the plans for the first floor which were displayed on the draft plan were significantly different from the current plan, while the second floor displayed minimal changes; and questioned the architect as to when and why the plans were changed.

Mr. Iovino explained that any changes that had been made were based on conversations with different Department Heads and the Manager; and if the suggestions made sense and were pragmatic, the changes were made to the current plans.

C. Katz inquired as to whether or not the old police building still contained asbestos.

Mr. Iovino confirmed that the asbestos, mold and any other health issues were addressed and the building was now safe to enter without a hazmat suit.

Mayor Hameeduddin questioned Mr. Iovino about the cost.

Mr. Iovino stated that the "in-house" price was approximately three point one million dollars in terms of value however bidding will reflect the actual price.

Mayor Hameeduddin questioned the trending price from last year inquiring as to whether or not the price was still trending at that cost.

Mr. Iovino indicated that the price had gone up since that time due to the economy.

Mayor Hameeduddin questioned the architect about a “not-to-exceed” price, which is a price that would not change for any reason, when going out to bid.

Mr. Iovino stated that a “not-to-exceed” price does not apply to a public bidding process and explained the bidding process.

C. Pruitt questioned who would oversee the project and the quality of the materials being used.

Mr. Iovino indicated that his office, Arcari + Iovino, along with the possibility of hiring a “Clerk of the Works” would be in charge of approving the quality of materials used. He went on to give a detailed explanation of the process in which his company is involved and explained the function of the “Clerk of the Works”, indicating that the necessity of the “Clerk of the Works” depends on the complexity of the work involved, as well as, the expenditure of the client. He explained that the “Clerk of the Works” is usually one individual versus Construction Management, which is typically a company, indicating that the “Clerk of the Works” is substantially lower in price than a Construction Management Company.

Mayor Hameeduddin asked Mr. Iovino which individual would be responsible for the project, stating that they did not want to deal with sub-contractors, but one individual who will be liable should any problems arise.

Mr. Iovino stated that if it is bid out as a single, prime and general contract, there is one point of responsibility, indicating that individual is responsible for overseeing the project.

C. Schwartz reiterated on Mayor Hameeduddin’s comment regarding holding one person accountable, referring to issues which had occurred during the prior construction of the new Police Headquarters.

Marjorie Brownschwager, Teaneck – questioned the size of the rooms for the new building.

Mr. Iovino explained that it would be impossible to show all of the dimensions but indicated that there are drawings available which included the information.

Mayor Hameeduddin inquired as to whether the information could be sketched so that they may be put on the Township website.

Mr. Iovino confirmed that this could be done.

Art Vatsky, Teaneck – suggested saving costs by limiting construction, eliminating the proposed link and utilizing a lift and not an elevator. In response, Mr. Iovino explained that solutions would have to be feasible and ADA compliant.

Howard Rose, Teaneck – referred to Township meetings regarding the new building and questioned the difference in plans regarding draft plans and current plans.

Mr. Iovino stated that any changes that had been made after speaking with the different departments were significant for construction-related purposes and advised that after five meetings with input from the public as well as the departments, the necessary changes were made.

Barbara Toffler, Teaneck – questioned the design in connection with public comments, the space provided for a Deputy Manager, the size of the Manager’s office and conference room and the use of the space on the second floor and basement.

Naomi Cramer – questioned the meeting space available for the public.

Mr. Iovino explained, in detail, where the space would be available for the public to meet.

C. Pruitt questioned whether or not the space provided for storage purposes may be used for meeting purposes.

Mr. Iovino indicated this could be done; explained that certain areas for storage are secured so individuals who should not have access to these areas, do not have access to these areas; stated that storage needs at this point are substantial however, if there is less storage room required in the future, the space can be made into a meeting space.

Addie Wynan, Teaneck – questioned why the Township is still storing hard copies of records instead of on a computer system.

Mr. Broughton addressed the question by indicating that the State requires that the Township must maintain hard copies of many records on a permanent basis.

Charles Powers, Teaneck – questioned the original proposal; referenced the results of his recent OPRA Request in connection with the project; questioned where we are with regard to the project; spoke on meetings which had taken place in 2011 wherein the residents voiced their opinions regarding the project; and commended Councilmember Katz on his input during said meetings. He raised issues regarding the public's suggestions; what is being presented now and the original proposal; and questioned the fee.

Mr. Iovino clarified the question regarding the amount of the project; indicated that he was willing to cooperate with any decisions made by the Council; and stated that they were instructed to bring in an engineer and that the engineer works directly under the architect.

Alex Rashin, Teaneck – believes that there is much unconstructively used space with too many corridors, small spaces and lobbies; questioned going paperless; feels the construction does not provide for space to be effectively used; questioned the location of the proposed elevator indicating, that in his opinion, it should be located on the opposite side of the building; stated that the architectural work should not be overseen by the architectural company itself; feels the architectural company chosen is not qualified for this large project.

C. Parker indicated to all present that it was not fair to ask questions concerning the performance of the architect, as they were hired by the Council and any questions regarding performance should be addressed to Council.

DM. Gussen stated that he understands that questions will be raised concerning the plans for the building; went on to explain that the building is not being built from the ground up, it is a renovated building which has walls and different structures already in place therefore, the best use of the building will consist of working around the already existing structure; stated that once the building is in place, different areas may be repurposed according to need.

Mickey (unintelligible), Teaneck – questioned the Building Department and the Health Department having the same amount of space indicating that the Building Department seems to conduct much more business than the Health Department.

Mr. Iovino explained that the Health Department, the Registrar's Office, and the Social Services Coordinator will be located in the same area in the new building.

C. Katz asked the architect if it would in fact be more costly to start the project from the ground up.

Mr. Iovino indicated that there would be a tremendous savings in renovating a building that is already in existence.

Tom Abbott, Teaneck - questioned the ADA requirements and the possible need for two elevators should the link be eliminated; inquired whether or not there is available information regarding concepts for the present Municipal Building.

Mr. Iovino gave a detailed explanation of the plans for the Municipal Building during phase two and how the offices will be expanded; went on to explain how the Court Room needs to be expanded for such a large town.

Shondra Young, Teaneck – questioned the cost of phases one and two of the project inquiring whether or not the cost will be less by using the already existing building versus starting from the ground up.

Mr. Iovino indicated that there was no question that there would be a large cost savings by using the old building.

C. Pruitt stated that the current plans displayed a significant change from the draft plans regarding the ground floor; questioned the retaining wall and asked if it would be possible to put a doorway in the area in an effort to produce more space or the possibility of increasing meeting space.

Mr. Iovino indicated that anything is possible; the original label on that particular area is marked for storage but that does not mean it would necessarily have to be used for the purpose of storage, down the road it could in fact be used as a meeting space.

C. Katz reiterated on C. Pruitt's comment and agreed that adding a doorway in the event the area is not used for storage was an excellent idea.

Mr. Iovino explained his plans and stated that changes could be made as they are needed.

C. Pruitt explained that placing a door in the aforementioned area would create better public relations.

PUBLIC HEARING AND ADOPTION OF ORDINANCES

NONE.

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR GOOD AND WELFARE OR PUBLIC INPUT ON ANY MATTERS ON THIS AGENDA

Mayor Hameeduddin inquired whether any member of the Council had any comments prior to opening the meeting to any comments from the public.

No one came forward.

Mayor Hameeduddin declared that any members of the public wishing to be heard at this time shall come forward and state their names for the record. Comments shall be limited to five minutes per person.

Art Vatsky, Teaneck – does not understand why the Township does not go paperless to create additional storage; feels that prior to the construction commencing, there should be a municipal IT study; stated that he is not happy with the basement windows having to be framed with four by four wood planks; feels this building should be repaired prior to building the new building; went on to say that he is dissatisfied with not having a truck garage for DPW workers.

Michael Rogevin, Teaneck – spoke on behalf of the Sustainable Jersey Commission, thanking Council for their support; commended Council on their decision to reuse the old police building for the project; stated that the Commission had submitted proposals regarding the project that Council has not yet reviewed; would like the building to meet leed guidelines; spoke on the importance of building “green” at this time.

Howard Rose, Teaneck – was happy the meeting was being recorded; disappointed in the lack of communication; feels Council should be open to many suggestions; discussed that he had made suggestions at prior meetings suggesting a three million dollar plan, a five hundred thousand dollar plan, a two million dollar plan and a one million dollar plan; stated that Council must take many things into consideration prior to moving forward with the project, such as the effect the increase in taxes would have on residents; feels there should have been more ideas with less expense.

Mr. Schuster, Teaneck – discussed the importance of utilizing the best use of resources financially; discussed the tremendous amount of foreclosures within the Township; feels the project should be held in abeyance until there is some recovery in the economy.

Roselee Greenberg, Teaneck – spoke on Sustainable Jersey; inquired whether anyone was familiar with Agenda 21 indicating that it was a sinister-type plan; gave a brief description of this Agenda stating that you may find the information on the United Nation's website; stated care should be taken prior to adopting Sustainable Jersey.

Chuck Powers, Teaneck – stated that it is a fundamental mistake not to have a leed certified building; Council should be considering alternative plans; discussed his dissatisfaction with the process by which the project came to be; discussed residents not being able to afford an increase in taxes with regard to the construction; indicated that Council is not in the position to make a sound decision with regard to the project.

Barbara Toffler, Teaneck – stated that it is important to make the residents feel as though they matter prior to moving forward with the project; is happy that there is going to be a generator installed with the project, hopefully it will be natural gas; feels the present Municipal Building should be ready for shelter purposes in the case of an emergency; indicated that instead of a Deputy Manager's office, a kitchen should be installed in the new building; feels the safety of the Judge and the safety of the Council is imperative; stated that it is outrageous to continue a four-day workweek should the Council move forward with the project.

Alex Rashin, Teaneck – discussed that the recession is not over; gave a description as to how the new building could be more beneficial and cost effective; feels the Municipal Building should be repaired prior to the construction of a new building; feels more space would be provided if the Township went paperless.

Naomi Cramer, Teaneck – stated that Council should take into consideration some of the ideas provided by Howard Rose, as he has a great deal of communication with the residents; the idea of making the building a green, or leed certified building is a great idea; had a question regarding the corridor; feels making the Deputy Manager's office a kitchen would benefit all Township employees.

Larry Bauer, Teaneck – suggested having plans posted on the Township website for all to view; concerned about future flooding in the new building, stating that the issued should be addressed prior to experiencing a situation such as Hurricane Sandy; discussed the importance of making this a leed-certified structure.

There being no further persons wishing to speak at this time (or the time limit of one hour having expired), Mayor Hameeduddin declared that the public comment portion of the meeting was now closed.

Mayor Hameeduddin inquired whether any member of the Council or the Manager wished to respond to the public comments or whether a member of the Council wished to remove any item from the Consent Agenda and have a separate discussion thereon.

Mayor Hameeduddin informed all present that there is no truth to the rumor that a new judge would be sworn in any time soon, Judge Young will be with the Township for the foreseeable future; spoke on following up on leed certification regarding the new building; will also look into any available grants to make the facility more energy efficient; indicated that all members of Council are cost-conscious individuals; gave a brief synopsis as to the difference in price from two years ago versus this year in that the storm caused a shortage in materials as well as labor; briefly touched on the schematics of the new building stating that it is virtually impossible to please everyone; discussed not considering a natural gas generator in the unlikely event there was an earthquake stating that a natural gas generator could be disastrous, therefore, diesel would be the way to go.

C. Katz discussed requesting the Township Manager incorporate obtaining a CO for fire inspections with the inspections obtained through the Building Department in an effort to eliminate the need for residents to go to Fire Headquarters.

Mr. Broughton indicated that he is looking into having the plan implemented.

C. Katz questioned Mr. Iovino about the possibility of utilizing the downstairs area, which is presently planned for storage, as a meeting place instead; Mr. Iovino stated that would not be a problem and Council concurred with the idea; C. Katz questioned Mr. Iovino's residence and Mr. Iovino indicated that he is in fact a resident of Teaneck; C. Katz felt this was an essential piece of information indicating that the Architect, being a resident of the Township, has a vested interest in the project; reiterated on DM. Gussen's comments stating that the plan for using an already-existing foundation and utilizing the space to the best of one's ability is the way to move forward; went on to say that the hours of operation should not be a factor in whether or not to move forward with the project; as a community, there are several factors which should be taken into account such as ADA accessibility, much needed additional meeting space, safety of court employees, better working environment for employees; indicated that the presently abandoned building which is located at the two most prominent points of the Township is an embarrassment; feels moving forward with the project is a wise decision.

C. Pruitt indicated that he is in favor of moving forward with the new building; discussed the fact that Council has a difficult responsibility with regard to the project and helping to make Teaneck of the future as good, if not better than Teaneck of the past.

C. Parker thanked all who came out for the meeting in order to express their feelings regarding the new building; concurred with C. Katz's comment regarding the vacant building being an embarrassment; stated that the new building is not only for the employees, but it will in fact afford the employees the opportunity to better service the public; indicated that this is a very difficult decision for Council in that it is an expensive project; stated that Council is charged with making decisions which will move the Township into the future; went on to say that she takes all comments seriously and welcomes any additional input from residents.

C. Schwartz stated that the chair lift suggestion would not be feasible indicating that the project for the new building should include an elevator; also stated that the idea of the building being used as a shelter is not a good idea; went on to say that it is imperative to move the employees out of the basement; is in favor of moving forward with the project.

C. Pruitt spoke on Teaneck being the only Township to have a Recreation Center such as the Rodda Center, stating that when that project was originally proposed, there was more than likely negative responses; went on to say that there are important, sometimes unpopular, decisions which must be made by Council that will benefit the Township in the future.

C. Parker expressed that it is also important to renovate the present Municipal Building indicating that in order to do that, employees must be moved and feels they should not have to be moved to a trailer; stated that it is just as important to make the necessary changes on this building as it is to move forward with the new building, as it will improve service to the residents.

DM. Gussen discussed the tax rate and the misconception residents have regarding the factual numbers; spoke at length regarding the increases tax payers will experience if the project is approved; listed the benefits the new building will provide to the Township and its residents; feels this is a good use of the resources and believes the project should move forward, as it is a necessary project.

CONSENT AGENDA

All matters listed below are considered to be routine in nature by Council and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items. If any discussion is desired by Council, that particular item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and will be considered separately.

RAFFLES

All subject to approval and conditions applicable with the Legalized Games of Chance Control Commission and pursuant to State Statute.

NONE.

MINUTES

NONE.

RESOLUTIONS

NONE.

BILL LIST

NONE.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

NONE.

OLD BUSINESS

NONE.

MISCELLANEOUS

NONE.

NEW BUSINESS

NONE.

COMMUNICATIONS

NONE.

COMMITTEE REPORTS - COUNCIL LIAISONS

NONE.

COUNCIL-LISTED ITEMS

NONE.

TOWNSHIP MANAGER'S REPORT

NONE.

TOWNSHIP ATTORNEY'S REPORT

NONE.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made, seconded and unanimously carried, the Open Session Special Meeting was adjourned at 10:28 p.m.