



Mayor and Common Council Borough of Flemington

December 2, 2013

Council Meeting Room

I. Special Meeting Agenda 4:00 PM

Flag Salute

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Brian Swingle	Council Vice President	Present	
Phil Velella	Council President	Present	
Dorothy Fine	Councilwoman	Present	
John Gorman	Councilman	Present	
Joey Novick	Councilman	ABSENT	
Phil Greiner	Councilman	Present	
Erica Edwards	Mayor	Present	

Planning Board Roll Call:

Todd Cook	Planning Board Chair
Susan Engelhardt	Planning Board Vice Chair
Brian Budney	Planning Board
Mary Melfi	Planning Board
Edna Pedrick	Planning Board
Bill Wachter	Planning Board
Laureen Kenoyer	Planning Board
Marc Hain	Planning Board
Erica Edwards	Mayor
Phil Greiner	Councilman

DISCUSSION: BID REDEVELOPMENT STUDY (BID CONSULTANT TIM DELORM, TERRANOBLE DESIGN)

Mr. Delorm, a landscape architect and urban designer, spoke of partnering with the FBID to formulate their strategic plan.

Mr. Delorm, citing the SAG report that was conducted a few years ago, informed that it was time to put it into action.

Mr. Delorm said the goal is to create a "living document", consisting of input from Borough Council, the Planning Board, business owners, and residents, as well as County Freeholders and the Chamber of Commerce. Plans are to have this document ready by the end of January.

Mr. Delorm explained that the best economic strategy is to make people want to come to the Borough, not just for shopping, dining and entertainment, but also to live.

To do this, Mr. Delorm informed a Vision Plan must be created, which takes a fresh look and review of all studies and current Borough properties. Mr. Delorm said this process has already begun. Concerning properties, Mr. Delorm said it is too early to list or discuss them, but noted there are 6-12 that he feels have potential for redevelopment. Mr. Delorm informed meetings will be conducted with property owners/developers to vet ideas.

Mr. Delorm noted street scape planning is very important, drawing on the history and culture of the town, making it more personal. Mr. Delorm said interpretive signage is a good way to do this.

Strengthening existing business, Mr. Delorm said, is also key to building the town's economy, noting wifi and interactive apps are attractive to shoppers and visitors.

Mr. Delorm said that new businesses that enhance the experience of visiting Main Street are important, stating he will give recommendations on this as the process moves forward.

Mr. Delorm informed the Borough may have to look at its Master Plan and zoning laws to aid in implementing these plans.

Mr. Delorm explained that there are plans for a public workshop in early January.

Mr. Delorm informed that a draft of a preferred plan will be brought to Council and the Planning Board early next year, which will include ideas concerning properties, open space and transportation.

Mr. Delorm noted that the best economic development strategy is to make Flemington a great place to live, work, shop and dine.

Mr. Delorm asked Council and the Planning Board to please get on board and work closely with him and the FBID on this project.

Mary Melfi, Planning Board, asked about the process when conducting a study.

Mr. Delorm said he looks at an area as a whole, and not along property lines, with an eye on determining what the best usage would be.

Ms. Melfi asked about transportation, getting people in and out of town.

Mr. Delorm said this is beyond the scope of his study, with his focus on how to attract people to town – signage, street scape, etc.)

Council President Velella inquired about how communication between Council, the Planning Board and the FBID would be handled. Mr. Velella also asked for a timeframe for this plan.

Mr. Delorm said the best way to communicate is by splitting both Boards in half (avoiding a quorum) for meetings, and holding public workshops.

Mr. Velella suggested using a liaison, noting there probably would be less input from Council in the beginning.

Councilman Greiner noted he had participated in the master plan process in the past, saying it was a good exercise. Mr. Greiner said he hopes parking and signage are part of the general vision, asking that Mr. Delorm please clarify this vision.

Mr. Delorm said there are multiple layers:

- Meet existing and future demand for parking

- Propose types of usage for properties

- Synergize restaurants

- Look at building typologies

- Work with the Borough to create a form based code.

Council Vice President Swingle asked if residential housing stock is being looked at.

Mr. Delorm informed he is not looking at all housing, but noted it is clear that more diverse, mid-market and higher end living spaces are needed.

Todd Cook, Planning Board, informed it is very important for Mr. Delorm to understand what the Borough already has in the works concerning properties and studies, suggesting Mr. Delorm be the conduit to bring this all together. Mr. Cook also asked how Mr. Delorm had devised his list of properties to consider.

Mr. Delorm said he did a "windshield study", which yielded over 20 possible properties, with 6-7 that were very obvious. Mr. Delorm then did a walking tour of those, with an eye to determining which has the greatest potential for redevelopment in the short, medium and long terms. Mr. Delorm added that short term value is the highest priority.

Ms. Melfi asked how wide an area Mr. Delorm was researching.

Mr. Delorm informed he is only looking within one mile of the Union Hotel.

Mr. Swingle asked if Mr. Delorm would be making suggestions for zoning and land use changes.

Mr. Delorm said he would.

Ms. Melfi asked if historic value would be taken into consideration when looking at building typologies.

Mr. Delorm said, absolutely, yes.

Mr. Swingle reminded caution should be used when putting information out to the public, as it is important to identify the process first.

Mr. Cook said he feels it is important for Mr. Delorm to share his findings with Council and the Planning Board, so that they can assist him.

Mr. Delorm said this is a double edged sword – asking that he be allowed to take an unbiased look first and then confer with the Boards.

Mr. Cook said he feels Mr. Delorm should know what the Borough's prioritized view is, adding he is not looking to constrain him.

Ms. Melfi asked if Mr. Delorm would make a move to influence a developer, whose plan is already approved, if he felt there was better usage for the property.

Mr. Delorm said he would make suggestions to the developer as well as the Borough Boards.

Ms. Melfi said there may be some developers who have a different vision for their property but take the easy route, to avoid going before the Board.

Mr. Velella said he sees value in this, but needs assurance that, if a developer says no to suggestions, he will not be pressured.

Mr. Delorm informed the developer has vested rights and would receive no pressure.

Public Comments -- (up to approximately 3 minutes each for a maximum of approximately 30 minutes)

Lois Stewart, 26 Spring Street - said she is pleased that historic preservation of current buildings is planned, but asked about new development.

Mr. Delorm said this is why the governing body needs to establish a form based code.

Ms. Stewart asked if current owners could be asked to upgrade their properties if they don't fit in with the town.

Mr. Delorm said this is not possible within the scope and resources of this project, noting he could only speak with them concerning design of the building façade.

Richard Higgins, 21 Bloomfield Avenue – asked about plans to look at mass transportation.

Mr. Delorm said this is tough, as NJ Transit controls the routes. Mr. Delorm said he recommends restarting the trolley service, which would bring people to the downtown.

Hunterdon County Freeholder Matt Holt – said he is happy to hear the transportation process being discussed. Mr. Holt said proven new ridership would need to be established in order for any changes to occur concerning mass transit. Mr. Holt also informed proximity to mass transit drives business and property values through the roof.

Elaine Gorman, 34 New York Avenue – asked how a form based code is created.

Mr. Delorm said there are available templates that can be tailored to the community.

Mr. Velella said this is a Planning Board issue.

Robert Shore, FBID Board – stated that communication between Council, the Planning Board and business community is essential, suggesting a Planning Board member be added to the FBID Board next year.

Chris Englehart, 180 Main Street – asked where the HPC fits into this process.

Mr. Delorm said they would be invited to workshops and be privy to planning.

Adjournment

Motion To: **Adjourn Council at 8:10 PM**

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Gorman, Councilman
SECONDER:	Swingle, Council Vice President
AYES:	Velella, Fine, Greiner
ABSENT:	Novick

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____ July 15, 2013

Robin M Hughes
Acting Deputy Clerk
Borough of Flemington