

# **Borough of Metuchen Planning Board Meeting Minutes August 17, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30PM by the Chairman, Mr. Erickson, who read the statement in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

## **ROLL CALL**

Alan Grossman	Robert Renaud, Board Attorney
Jason Delia, Councilmember	Robert Mannix, Board Engineer
Linda Koskoski	Christopher Cosenza, Board Planner
Jonathan Lifton	Sharon Hollis, Board Secretary
William Love, Mayor's Designee	
Lynn Nowak	
James Griffin	
Shannan Foat-Gelber, Alt. 2	

## **ABSENT:**

Ellen Clarkson, Vice Chairperson  
Mayor Busch  
Lauren Cohn, Alt. 1

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Ordinance 2023-26**- Ordinance amending Chapter 110 (Land Development) concerning the definition of height of structure for any development within the Borough of Metuchen.

- Referral from Borough Council to review
- Resolution

Mr. Cosenza stated that there has been much confusion regarding the current definition of height in the zoning ordinance. The current definition essentially requires height to be measured throughout the structure and measured to the point directly above. For a flat property, that is easy, but it can be quite difficult on properties having significant grade change. He indicated it was an issue for the Zoning Board when it was dealing with the height – and the degree of the height variance needed – for an application at 434 New Durham Road. What is proposed is to amend the definition by making it consistent with the definition of height in the building code, which is based on establishing an average grade plane and measuring that to the highest point of the roof

structure. Being that this is a minor definitional change, he does not see it being inconsistent with the Master Plan, in fact, this would help streamline permitting, by making it easier for the zoning official as well as developers, and design professionals to determine height consistently for zoning and building permits.

Mr. Lifton made a motion to approve the recommendation and Mr. Delia seconded the motion.

**Vote on Motion**

Mr. Delia	Yes
Mr. Grossman	Yes
Ms. Koskoski	Yes
Mr. Love	Yes
Ms. Nowak	Yes
Mr. Lifton	Yes
Ms. Gelber	Yes
Mr. Erickson	Yes

**Ordinance 2023-27** – Ordinance amending Chapter 56 (Amusement Devices) and certain sections of Chapter 110 (Land Development) concerning the regulation of amusement games, devices or machines, other similar amusement activities, brew pubs, breweries, wineries, and flexible spaces in certain business districts within the Borough of Metuchen.

- Referral from Borough Council to review
- Resolution

Mr. Cosenza stated that over the past few years, he has noted a shift in the types of businesses that were coming to Metuchen, mainly in that they were specialty types of businesses and it was not clear whether or not they would fall under the broad categories of retail, personal services, and eating and drinking establishments. With regards to arcades, he noted that several types of businesses were criminalized so to speak, relegated to conditional uses in the Light Industrial zone several decades ago. However, as technology has changed, and so has the nature of amusement activities and the concerns regarding them. We are seeking to bring in arcades as a permitted use in the downtown area, as well as specialty type of eating and drinking establishments, including brew pubs, breweries, wineries, and flex spaces so as to continue to be proactive in bringing businesses downtown and continue to support the business environment. He reviewed the Master Plan and did not see that the proposed changes would be inconsistent with the Master Plan, in fact, these changes would help foster economic development to continue to support the evolution downtown area, as noted in the Master Plan.

Mr. Delia motioned to approve the recommendation and Mr. Lifton seconded the motion.

**Vote on Motion**

Mr. Delia	Yes
Mr. Grossman	Yes
Ms. Koskoski	Yes
Mr. Love	Yes
Ms. Nowak	Yes
Mr. Lifton	Yes
Ms. Gelber	Yes
Mr. Erickson	Yes

**PUBLIC PORTION**

There was none.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Erickson motions to adjourn. All ayes.

/jr