

**TOWNSHIP OF RIVER VALE  
PLANNING BOARD  
Monday, December 15, 2008  
SPECIAL COAH MEETING  
MINUTES**

A Regular Meeting of the River Vale Planning Board was called to order at 8:00 p.m. The following statement was read: "This is a Regular Meeting of the Planning Board of the Township of River Vale. I am informed by the Clerk that adequate public notice has been provided by mailing notice to the Pascack Valley News/Post Review and The Record, by posting notice on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building, and by filing a copy of the notice to all persons who requested the same and prepaid the cost fixed by the Board".

**The Planning Board saluted the flag.**

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**ROLL CALL:**

**Members Present:**

Kenneth H. Koons	Chairman
Mayor Joseph Blundo	Class I (8:20pm)
Peter Wayne	Class II
Dwight de Stefan	Class III (Councilman)
George Shalhoub	
Mark Ericksen	
Scott Lippert	Alt. #2

**Also Present:**

Dennis Deutsch, Esq., Board Attorney  
Christopher Statile, PE Board Engineer  
Lauren Rohrer, Land Use Administrator

**Absent:** Bruce Carillo Vice-Chairman  
Ron Tucci  
Chris Wahmann Secretary  
Jim Tolomeo Alt. #1

Chairman Koons thanked everyone for attending the special meeting and for their service in 2008 and wished everyone a Happy Holiday Season and a Happy and Healthy New Year. He also mentioned that he appreciates the Members of

the Planning Board for their attendance and diligence. The Chairman then turned over to the Mayor.

**PUBLIC HEARING/DISCUSSION:**

1. **River Vale Housing Element and Fair Share Plan - COAH** - Mayor Blundo introduced the discussion for the Township's plan to meet its outstanding affordable housing obligation of 55 units, stating the Township Council amended its original plan. They went back and reduced the impact of the COAH facilities on what is known as the Kirk property. The administration reviewed the ideas and proposed to the Council an alternative plan which would reduce the density on the Kirk property to just 31 senior units and allocate 14 of the 24 remaining units on the property acquired as part of the Bergen Hills negotiations, a 1.67 acre site. The property is already zoned for multi-housing. The cons are there is already a lot of development on Poplar Road. The positive is it is much like the Kirk property which the Township owns and controls and could be total COAH. The Mayor continued. There are other COAH units being built on I6B, already approved, but they are already part of the plan. There are more units--10 on the Mesker property. Once certified, they will release the funds as soon as they get the past resolution for I6A, the property along John street, and that will free up funds to acquire the Kirk property. This plan will satisfy them on both fronts. Failure to get a plan approved from COAH would forfeit the Green Acres Funding. If there are any specific questions, they could be addressed by him, Mr. Hakim or Mr. Kauker, also present that evening.

Mr. Shalhoub asked if there were any sites in the commercial zone or downtown area that could be used. Mayor Blundo responded possibly across from the Jewish home, but the Zoning Board canceled it. There are many that do not want apartments over stores. When he made the proposal to Council he did not propose those, noting we could get two or three here and there. If we build 10 units, we get two to three units. If it is not Township controlled property, the density is not there. Mr. Lippert asked for clarification on the math.

Michael Kauker, Professional Planner, of Kauker and Kauker, Township Planner, came forward and was sworn in. The way the plan is proposed there would be seven surplus extra units. This is assuming the growth does occur and assumes a certain amount has already occurred. One of the

advantages of moving the 24 units onto the Mesker property, is that we can build in accordance with the growth share. It is based on an objective of units built over the next 10 years. If less it would have to be adjusted, if greater, it would generate a greater number of units.

Mayor Blundo asked if in the future we receive feedback from the neighbors, before shovel hits the ground, could it be changed based upon Councilman Bromberg's suggestion. Mr. Kauker said it could be amended upon returning to the Planning Board and submitting a revised plan. The regulations allow a municipality to amend its plan. Mr. Kauker discussed inclusionary zoning, which would have more of an impact, where it would be 100% low and moderate income. The Mayor discussed Roberge School alternatives if there should be overcrowding.

Chairman Koons, with respect to comments about Roberge School, commented if you look at the development that is currently on the table, you have about 25 major units going up in the North end, which will generate five more affordable units. These will generate at least two to four children. The impact on Woodside School has been ignored.

Mr. Kauker stated the single family home definitely generates more school children. Chairman Koons asked why we cannot take the senior units lost on the Cedar Lane site and put them on the Mesker site. We have 14 less there, and why not have it be exclusively seniors on the Mesker site. Mayor Blundo commented he did not know what the impacted neighbors would want, but they can readdress this if they get the plan in. If they could put all the COAH units in seniors, they would, and there would be no impact on the schools. They could take the family units and put them on the Mesker property. Mr. Kauker said they maximized the number of senior units to lessen the impact. In answer to Chairman Koons' question, we did not lose any seniors on Cedar Lane. Chairman Koons expressed concern about not having control over who goes into these units. Mr. Kauker explained there is an affirmative marketing plan which controls who occupies these units, and he believed it is done by a lottery system.

Mayor Blundo continued. There is a plan before the Board tonight, and we have to build these units, or be subject to a builder's remedy suit. We looked at everything, he responded to the Chairman. We are doing

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every thing we could do to keep the children to a minimum. We did this with putting as many seniors as possible and minimal rentals. It is as reduced as it can be. The alternative is to do this with private properties in the various places he named. In each one of those scenarios, they are all privately owned. And for each unit we generate, we need to generate four more. If you start talking about impact to the schools, this plan reduces it as much as possible. With private parcels, multiply this by four. If this Township makes a decision to not seek certification and be subject to a builders remedy law suit, someone could sue us, such as the golf course, which is in receivership, based on the fact they feel River Vale is not sufficient. Multiply 55 units by four, and we have over 200 units with greater impact to the schools. Mr. de Stefan commented we cannot not afford to not seek certification.

The Township is capped out in the second round. We are maxed out in the prior round obligation. If we have an overage, we can build less. Mayor Blundo said we will always continue to challenge COAH. There is a challenge of Round Two.

The matter was opened to the public. The following persons came forward and were sworn in:

Lorraine Stanley, 410 Cedar Lane, was sworn in and came forward. She is surprised about the change and spoke about the great amount of traffic on Cedar Lane. She felt it is a shame that the State can damage a neighborhood because we did not take care of our obligation to COAH. Cedar Lane cannot handle 24 homes with families. There is 300' you cannot build on because of a brook. Where will all these people park, and a fire truck cannot get down the street with cars parked there. Mayor Blundo responded, stating we took everything into consideration. The 24 families would not and cannot be acted upon tonight. It came up as an idea by Councilman Bromberg two days ago. He understood she would prefer seniors if anything had to be built. He believes they did take the neighbors into consideration. They reduced it from 55 units to 31. Originally the plan was for 81 parking spaces. It is a tight spot, Ms. Stanley said, and this should be taken into consideration.

Chris Lantelme, 55 Brook Avenue, River Vale, was sworn in and commented he did understand the COAH requirement and that it should be built on Cedar Lane. He is a little bit

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shocked and disappointed about what he called the potential bait and switch. He knows it is less traffic, but to go from 30 senior units to 24 family units is a huge difference. Mayor Blundo addressed the comments, and represented that if a majority of the people in the area prefer the senior units, he will not sign off on the switch. Councilman Bromberg was present and was surprised it was not done by the end of the hearing. He wants to complete it before January. We will continue to listen, with no bait and switch. If there is enough support, we will give a month notice to come out. The only reason it was brought up is because the Councilman asked him to. Councilman de Stefan concurred and also made the commitment.

Ray Schreyer, 578 Brook Avenue, was sworn in and commented safety is a big concern. He understands but haste makes waste. The Town has to think this through, and he appreciates their effort, knowing we have to comply with COAH.

There were no further questions, comments or discussions.

Chairman Koons moved that the hearing be closed to the public with second by Mr. Shalhoub. The motion carried.

**RESOLUTIONS:**

**1. River Vale Housing Element and Fair Share Plan - COAH** - Mr. Deutsch asked if all Board Members received the Resolution, and all were in receipt. Chairman Koons called for any further discussion. There were none. The Chairman moved that the Resolution adopting the Housing Element and Fair Share Plan for the Township of River Vale be approved. The motion was seconded by Mr. De Stefan. On roll call vote, all members voted yes.

**NEXT MEETING:** January 20, 2009

**ADJOURNMENT:** On motion made, seconded and carried, the special meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:50 p.m.

**Respectfully submitted,**

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**Mary R. Verducci, Paralegal  
Recording Secretary**