

OXFORD TOWNSHIP MEETING
November 3, 2021

The meeting of the Township Committee of Oxford Township was held on October 6, 2021 in the Oxford Township Municipal Building, 11 Green Street, Oxford, NJ.

Notice of time, date, location and agenda of this meeting, to the extent then known was provided at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the commencement of this meeting in the following manner pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 231 of the law of 1975 “the Open Public Meetings Act”:

- Emailing to the Express Times / Warren County NJ Zoned Edition
- Posting on the Township web-site and Facebook page

In attendance was Gerald Norton, and Georgette Miller, Township Committee, Matthew Hall, Township Administrator, Richard Wenner, Township Attorney, and Susan Turner, Deputy Municipal Clerk.

Mayor Norton opened the meeting at 7:00 PM

Meeting Minutes:

Georgette Miller moved to accept the October 20, 2021 regular meeting minutes. Seconded by Mayor Norton. Ayes: 2, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Absent: 1. Motion passed

Public Comment on Agenda items: - No comments

Old Business:

- Habitability Hearing – 83 Mine Hill Road– Georgette Miller moved to open the hearing. Seconded by Mayor Norton. Ayes: 2, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 1. Motion passed. Property owner Jim Hunter was present. Rich Wenner reminded Mr. Hunter he was still under oath. Mr. Hunter stated he must obtain confirmation from JCP& that they will disconnect electric services before he can obtain a demolition permit. He presented a letter from DCA stating this and an email from JCP&L dated today confirming the disconnect. He will now apply for the permit. Mayor Norton moved to carry the hearing to December 1, 2021. Seconded by Georgette Miller and passed on roll call vote. Ayes: 2, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 1. Mayor Norton stated Mr. Hunter can submit the demolition permit prior to the December 1, 2021 meeting in lieu of attending the meeting.
- Habitability Hearing – 6 Hill Street Block 34, Lot 37 - Mayor Norton moved to open the Habitability Hearing for Block 34, Lot 37, 6 Hill Street. Seconded by Georgette Miller. Ayes: 2, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Absent: 1. Motion passed. Mr. Bill Charles, contractor, was present in Mr. Bista’s stead. Rich Wenner reminded him he is still under oath. Mr. Charles stated they are waiting on permits. The chimney will be removed and replaced. The chimney footing will need a permit which the mason will apply for. Demolition has started in the basement. The electrical work has started. DCA wants an upgrade on the boiler/plumbing permit which they are waiting on. Rich Wenner stated they are making progress and making an effort to comply. Mayor Norton moved to carry the habitability hearing to December 01, 2021. Seconded by Georgette Miller. Ayes: 2, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Absent: 1. Motion passed.

Old Business continued after New Business

Ordinances: 2nd Reading/ Public Hearing

- Ordinance 2021-17 Vacate Alley Green St to Axford Ave

ORDINANCE NO. 2021-17

ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF OXFORD, COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW

JERSEY, TO VACATE AN ALLEY RUNNING FROM 48 GREEN STREET TO 29 AXFORD AVE NOT NEEDED FOR A PUBLIC PURPOSE

WHEREAS there is a “paper street” which runs from 48 Green Street to 29 Axford Avenue within the Township which the Township has been requested to vacate by the property owners residing at the respective addresses above; and

WHEREAS the Municipal Engineer of the Township of Oxford has reviewed the proposed vacation and finds that same is consistent with the public interest, and that it is in the best interest of the municipality; and

WHEREAS, it appears that the interests of the public will be served by this vacation, since the vacation will lead to the improvement of the property in the surrounding areas without any detriment to the interests of the public.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED, by the Mayor and Committee of the Township of Oxford, County of Warren and State of New Jersey, as follows:

Section 1:

The following described lands are hereby vacated and all the public rights, interests and title arising from the dedication or shown on any map filed or otherwise or any reference to same in any deed or instrument, recorded or otherwise, are hereby vacated, relinquished and extinguished. Those lands constituting of the following are hereby vacated and described as follows:

See Exhibit A, attached hereto.

Section 2:

Severability. The various parts, sections and clauses of this Ordinance are hereby declared to be severable. If any part, sentence, paragraph, section or clause is adjudged unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Ordinance shall not be affected thereby.

Section 3:

Repealer. **Any ordinance or parts thereof in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed as to their inconsistencies only.**

Section 4:

Effective Date. This Ordinance shall take effect upon final passage and publication as provided by law.

Georgette Miller moved to accept Ordinance 2021-17. Seconded by Mayor Norton and passed unanimously on roll call vote. Ayes: 2, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Absent: 1.

Mayor Norton asked Rich Wenner to compose a letter to residents advising them of the action.

Ordinances: 1st Reading/ Public Hearing

- Ordinance 2021-18 Oxford Textile Mill Redevelopment

ORDINANCE NO. 2021-18

ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF OXFORD, COUNTY OF WARREN, STATE OF NEW JERSEY ADOPTING THE AMENDED REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR OXFORD TEXTILE MILL REDEVELOPMENT AREA

WHEREAS, on January 19, 2005, the Oxford Township Committee adopted resolution 2005-11 designating the former Oxford Textile Mill properties as an area in need of redevelopment (the ‘Redevelopment Area’); and

WHEREAS, a Redevelopment Plan entitled “Redevelopment Plan for Oxford Textile Mill Redevelopment Area” was adopted in 2006 and subsequently amended in 2007 (the “Plan”); and

WHEREAS, the Plan was focused on providing residential development opportunities in the Redevelopment Area with the purpose of supporting and growing commercial/business area along Wall Street; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee desires to leave those residential development opportunities intact while at the same time creating the opportunity for non-residential development which would benefit the community and which reflects a growing trend in the State of New Jersey of encouraging ground-mounted solar photovoltaic development and also the development of certain classes (as those classes are defined in the relevant State Legislation) of cannabis businesses (together, the “New Uses”); and

WHEREAS, the Township’s Planner, Jim Kyle, P.P./A.I.C.P., of Kyle + McManus, Associates was directed to prepare amendments to the Plan to permit the New Uses in the Redevelopment Area (the “Amended Plan”); and

WHEREAS, a true and correct copy of the Amended Plan is attached hereto; and

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-7 requires the adoption of the Amended Plan via ordinance upon second reading by the governing body and a public hearing thereon; and

WHEREAS, prior to second reading and public hearing, the proposed Amended Plan must first be referred to the Land Use Board for a review and recommendation of the Amended Plan’s consistency with the Township’s Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Amended Plan was referred to the Land Use Board upon first reading of this Ordinance and the Land Use Board conducted its review on November 23, 2021 and recommended the adoption of the Amended Plan by the governing body as being consistent with the Township’s Master Plan and overall development objectives.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED AND ENACTED BY THE OXFORD TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE that the Amended Redevelopment Plan for Oxford Mill Textile Redevelopment Area dated November 3, 2021, which is attached hereto and incorporated herein, is hereby adopted.

Effective Date. This Ordinance shall take effect upon final passage and publication as provided by law.

Mayor Norton moved to accept Ordinance 2021-18. Seconded by Georgette Miller and passed unanimously on roll call vote. Ayes: 2, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Absent: 1.

Mayor Norton moved to refer Ordinance 2021-18 to the Oxford Township Land Use Board. Seconded by Georgette Miller and passed unanimously on roll call vote. Ayes: 2, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Absent: 1.

Resolutions:

- Resolution 2021-53 In Rem Foreclosure 45 Bush Street

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-63

AUTHORIZING IN REM FORECLOSURE PROCEEDING

WHEREAS, the Township of Oxford holds a Tax Certificate more specifically set forth in the annexed Tax Foreclosure List, which pertains to a property within Oxford Township; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee of Oxford Township has determined that said Tax Certificate shall be foreclosed by summary proceedings in rem.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of Oxford Township, Warren County, New Jersey, as follows:

That the Tax Certificate, as shown on the annexed Tax Foreclosure List, now held by the Township of Oxford be foreclosed by summary process In Rem as described in N.J.S.A. 54:5-104.29, et. seq., as amended, and pursuant to the Rules of Civil Practice of the Superior Court of New Jersey.

Block	Lot	Assessed to	Sale Date	TSC #	Book	Page	Date recorded	Amount to redeem as of October 5, 2021
23	1	45 Bush Street LLC						

Mayor Norton moved to accept Resolution 2021-63. Seconded by Georgette Miller and passed unanimously on roll call vote. Ayes: 2, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Absent: 1.

- Resolution 2021-64 Qualified Purchasing Agent

RESOLUTION 2021-64

ESTABLISHING BID THRESHOLD AND APPOINTING A QUALIFIED PURCHASING AGENT PURSUANT TO N.J.S.A. 40A:11- 3 (a) AND N.J.A.C. 5:34-5 ET SEQ AS THE TOWNSHIP OF OXFORD QUALIFIED PURCHASING AGENT

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-3 (a) (30) permits the bid threshold up to \$44,000 if a Qualified Purchasing Agent is appointed as well as granted the authorization to negotiate and award such contracts below the bid threshold; and

WHEREAS, N.J.A.C. 5:34-5 et seq establishes the criteria for qualifying a Qualified Purchasing Agent; and

WHEREAS, Rose Witt possesses the designation of Qualified Purchasing Agent as issued by the Director of the Division of Local Government Services in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:34-5 et seq; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the governing body of the Township of Oxford in the County of Warren, in the State of New Jersey hereby increases its bid threshold to \$44,000.00; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the governing body hereby appoints Rose Witt as the Qualified Purchasing Agent to exercise the duties of the purchasing agent pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:11-2(30), with the specific relevance to the authority, responsibility, and accountability of the purchasing activity of the contracting unit; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in accordance with N.J.A.C. 5:34-5.2 the local unit Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to forward a certified copy of this resolution and a copy of Rose Witt's certification to the Director of the Division of Local Government Services

Mayor Norton moved to accept Resolution 2021-64. Seconded by Georgette Miller and passed unanimously on roll call vote. Ayes: 2, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Absent: 1.

New Business:

- Best Practices – Matthew Hall stated the Best Practices Survey was submitted and explained Best Practices for the audience. He stated Oxford's score is good and that scores fluctuate because of changes to the state questions. Oxford has improved its score in the last few years.
- DPW Plow discussion. – Mayor Norton stated DPW Supervisor Lou Accetturo is requesting a new plow blade for snow plowing with a cost around \$3,000.00. Mayor Norton moved to approve the purchase of a plow blade. Seconded by Georgette Miller. Ayes: 2, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 1. Motion passed.

Old Business: continued

- Mayor Norton asked Matt Hall for an update on the Code Enforcement Shared Services with Washington Township Police Department. Matt stated he will contact the Police Chief about the program and ask that Officer Pantuso be sent out to look at properties. Mayor Norton wants the program in place by the beginning of 2022.

- Mayor Norton asked Matt Hall to have the Animal control officer visit a property that has set up a shelter in their yard for feeding and protection of feral cats.
- Georgette Miller asked Rich Wenner if there were copyright infringement issues if a resident donated a Grinch costume to be worn at the Christmas Festival. He stated a cease and desist order could be issued for perceived infringement.

Township Committee Reports and Correspondence

- Mayor Norton attended the School Board meeting.

Township Administrator: Matt Hall asked Mike Finelli for an estimate of costs Oxford will incur for work done in conjunction with the NJDOT Route 31 bridge project for budget purposes. NJDOT will reimburse the Township after the project is completed.

Township Engineer Report: Mike Finelli’s report was read by Mayor Norton – The milling in Spring Meadows should start by the end of the week. The final plan is expected tomorrow. The NJDOT 2022 grant awards were released. Oxford had applied for \$205,000 for Kent Street but was awarded \$140,000. Matt Hall stated another application can be submitted next year for the second phase of the project to cover the remaining \$65,000.

Township Attorney’s Report: Rich Wenner stated he has an item for Executive Session.

Motion To Pay Bills:

Georgette Miller moved to pay all bills presented to and approved by the Committee. Seconded by Mayor Norton. Ayes: 2, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 1.

Reports: Washington Township Police Department reported the court date for 119 Belvidere Avenue has been continued to December 14, 2021. The property owner has registered some of the vehicles. Mayor Norton advised that the ordinance prohibiting overnight commercial vehicle parking in the Kepps Street Municipal parking lot was adopted. He asked that the police ticket vehicles still parking overnight.

Public Comment: Peggy Niece, Warren County Arts, said she plans to have artists create works inspired by Oxford and show them later this year. She would like the Mayor and Committee members to award the favorites. Mayor Norton and Georgette Miller said they would be happy to participate. Shannon DeGeorge – Scranton Parkway – Cars are parking on her property and in front of her driveway. Mayor Norton stated there is an ordinance prohibiting parking on the eastern side of Scranton Parkway. Signs will be posted. Discussion also included snowplowing on Scranton Parkway. Ms. DeGeorge also asked if there were any regulations regarding a neighbor’s security cameras placed to monitor other resident’s properties. Rich Wenner stated there are no ordinances regarding security cameras.

Meeting Recap: Rich Wenner will send a letter to property owners along the Axford Avenue/Green Street alley. Matt Hall will follow up with the Police Department regarding a code enforcement officer.

Executive Session:

EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meeting Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, permits the exclusion of the public from a meeting in certain circumstances, and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exist. The public shall be excluded from the discussion of any action upon the hereinafter-specific subject matter.

The general nature of the subject matters to be discussed are personnel and contractual.

Mayor Norton moved to enter Executive Session at 7:53 PM. Seconded by Georgette Miller. Ayes: 2, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 1. Motion passed.

Georgette Miller moved to close Executive Session and reconvene public session at 8:23 PM. Seconded by Mayor Norton. Ayes: 2, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 1. Motion passed

No action was taken during Executive Session.

Mayor Norton moved to authorize the salary raises to \$14.00 per hour for the employees discussed in Executive Session. Seconded by Georgette Miller. Ayes: 2, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 1. Motion passed.

Georgette Miller moved to accept the Oxford Textile Solar Farm, LLC Escrow Agreement. Seconded by Mayor Norton. Ayes: 2, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 1. Motion passed.

Mayor Norton moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 PM. Seconded by Georgette Miller. Ayes: 2, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0, Absent: 1. Motion passed.

Susan Turner, Deputy Clerk