

**SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
JOINT MEETING OF COUNCIL WITH THE
WOODBURY HEIGHTS PLANNING BOARD
BOROUGH OF WOODBURY HEIGHTS
500 ELM AVENUE, WOODBURY HEIGHTS, NJ 08097
JUNE 06, 2016 7:00 P.M.**

Mayor Conley called the meeting to order with the following note: Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by fax and email to the South Jersey Times and Courier Post on May 19, 2016 and posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building conforming to the directives of the "Open Public Meetings Act".

Mayor Conley led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: The call of roll showed the following to be present: Councilman Harold "Hap" Pye, Councilwoman Cara Witasick, and Councilman Robert Yerka. Absent were Councilman Eshia "Jake" Jacob and Councilman William Packer. Councilman Richard Gambale was present at 7:12 p.m. Also in attendance were Borough Solicitor Brian Lozuke, Stephen Cosaboon of Sickels & Associates and Tiffany CuvIELLO, Borough Planner.

REDEVELOPMENT AND VACANT PROPERTIES PRESENTATION Borough Planner Tiffany CuvIELLO stated that the special meeting this evening is to discuss some options available for vacant and abandoned properties. One of the tools is redevelopment and planning. If the Borough is found to be in an area in need of rehabilitation, a rehabilitation designation is available. Another tool is for an area or specific property in need of redevelopment. The area in need of rehabilitation option allows the Borough to provide incentives to offset some costs. Once an area is designated as in need of rehabilitation, it allows tax abatements for up to five (5) years on improvements; allows Borough to use tax sale tools and helps with commercial property incentives. One of the criteria to designate a rehabilitation plan, which the Borough meets, is to demonstrate that more than fifty percent (50%) of the residential properties are over fifty (50) years old. The Borough has 1084 residential units of which 81.7% are over 50 years old. The Borough can go forward by adopting a resolution this evening to designate the Borough as a Rehabilitation Area. Subsequent meetings will be needed to choose the appropriate tools. Councilman Yerka asked, pertaining to the tax abatement tool, does this mean that the Borough will now reward vacant and abandoned property owners? Ms. CuvIELLO replied "no", and explained that it's an incentive tool for property improvement and various parameters can be set by ordinance.

PUBLIC PORTION: A motion to open the public portion of the meeting was made by Councilwoman Witasick and seconded by Councilman Yerka. All of Council agreed. Motion carried.

Frank Hipple, Elm Avenue: Mr. Hipple stated that if you call the banks, they will go out and clean up the properties. Planning Board Chairman Harry Elton, Jr. explained that there are third party banks involved making this process extremely difficult. Mayor Conley explained that designating the Borough as a rehabilitation area will help this process. Discussion ensued.

Ed Brown, Glenwood Court, stated that 1102 and 1104 Glenwood Court have not been maintained in two years. Mayor Conley again stated the designation of a rehabilitation area will assist with this problem. Discussion ensued regarding the process.

Barbara Waddell, Temple Avenue, asked if the homes must be rehabbed or if they can be sold "as is". Tiffany CuvIELLO replied that it depends on the individual property.

Rose Yerka, Stratford Avenue asked if this program is encouraged by the County? Mayor Conley explained that the Borough participates in a shared service with the County for vacant/abandoned property registration. Mrs. Yerka next asked about the redevelopment process. Tiffany CuvIELLO explained that the first step is the rehab designation and the second step is to adopt by ordinance a redevelopment plan.

PUBLIC PORTION (CONTINUED)

Upon hearing no additional questions or comments, a motion to close the public portion was made by Councilman Yerka and seconded by Councilman Gambale. All of Council agreed. Motion carried.

SOLICITOR'S REPORT:

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION 58-2016

RESOLUTION REFERRING A PROPOSED REHABILITATION AREA DESIGNATION FOR THE BOROUGH OF WOODBURY HEIGHTS TO THE BOROUGH OF WOODBURY HEIGHTS COMBINED PLANNING/ZONING BOARD

Solicitor Lozuke read Resolution 58-2016 by title only. A motion to approve this resolution was made by Councilman Pye and seconded by Councilman Gambale. A roll call vote in favor was unanimous. Resolution 58-2016 was approved.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn was made by Councilman Pye and seconded by Councilman Yerka. All of Council agreed. Motion carried. The motion adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Pizzi, Clerk/Administrator