

Merchantville, NJ

November 27, 2006

A regular meeting of Borough Council was held at 7:30 PM, Monday, November 27, 2006. Mayor Patrick J. Brennan presided. Pledge of Allegiance and Silent Prayer were observed. Announcement was made that the meeting had been advertised in accordance with the regulations prescribed by the "Open Public Meetings Act".

ROLL CALL:

Council Present: Finnegan, Fields, Alloway, North, Pagano and Zeiders

Borough Clerk Thomas and Solicitor Higgins were present.

PUBLIC:

COMMUNITY CENTER HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN: Margaret Westfield, described the Merchantville Senior Community Center as both wonderful and different, and stated it is eligible for [restoration] funds through the New Jersey Historic Trust. Mrs. Westfield provided Council with a presentation of her potential services which would include assisting the Borough with obtaining funds to refurbish the structure. **Mayor Brennan** agreed that the building is a great asset to the community but is slowly deteriorating; Borough Council has been good stewards but the building has never had a full evaluation or assessment of need. Mayor Brennan continued he is unsure if any capital funds are available and this must be determined prior to any commitments. Mr. North would like an opportunity to review the materials Mrs. Westfield has presented to Council before making any decisions. **Maureen McCloone**, Merchantville Historical Society, believes it is time for the society to come out of the closet and be seen. Mrs. McCloone stated the organization is receiving more donations of all kinds and they could use more room to both showcase and store everything.

Gail Ford, 135 North Centre Street, inquired to the Municipal Housing Liaison position. Did Mr. Higgins previously state that Merchantville had a requirement of zero? **Mayor Brennan** corrected Ms. Ford, stating that Merchantville's requirement is currently seven; prior to Round III it was zero. Denise Brouse is currently performing certain COAH filing duties. Ms. Ford wondered if the job be could assigned to someone already on staff in a part time manner? Mayor Brennan responded that Council can appoint anyone they please. With regards to the announcement that the Concerned Citizens of Merchantville plan to file a lawsuit with regards to the Town Centre East Project, please settle outside of court in order to save the taxpayers money. Mayor Brennan informed Ms. Ford that Council does not have the statutory right to settle on behalf of the Planning Board.

Marvin Gaskill, 102 East Chestnut Avenue, requested the letters that Borough Council received be read into the official record as AST's were. **Mr. Finnegan** stated he received 24 letters, in blanket form, signed by different individuals. Who invited AST to respond to these letters? **Mr. North** stated that there was a comment made at a previous Council meeting that claimed AST defaulted on a contract. He then contacted AST and stated that Council would like AST to attend an upcoming Council meeting and

respond to the accusations. Mr. Stutz responded to Mr. North's request and attended the September 25 Council meeting, reading a response in letter form to Council. Mr. Gaskill then asked Council procure the proper financial statements from AST. Mr. North corrected Mr. Gaskill stating that Council did obtain proper financial information from AST before making a decision on its redeveloper (when Request for Qualifications was originally requested). **Mayor Brennan** questioned Mr. Gaskill to the progress of his Local Finance Board complaint; Mr. Gaskill responded that the Mayor should check his mail for notification of the Finance Board's decision to launch an investigation based on Mr. Gaskill's previous complaint. Mr. Gaskill stated that Council made an insincere effort to cut the defeated school budget in April. He had spoken to the School Superintendent and they had expected all three retiring positions to be eliminated. Mayor Brennan would like to ask Mr. Swanson if he recalls this conversation ever taking place prior to commenting on accusations. Mayor Brennan reminded Mr. Gaskill that he wanted to cut the police force by one-third its number during budget time in order to save tax monies; Mr. Gaskill claimed that he was informed by Chief Ward that a fully staffed police force consisted of nine officers. Mr. Gaskill claimed that PNC Bank brings in 3,000 people to its Merchantville site and Borough Council was chasing them away. He then concluded that Council should make an effort not to increase local expenses through the Municipal Housing Liaison position. Spending money on preserving the Community Center is going to cost the town money. Mr. Gaskill read a letter into the record in response to AST's letter of September 25 and again asked for Council to receive updated financial reports from AST in addition to progress reports. **Mr. North** stated that progress reports don't exist prior to any "shovel in the ground" construction. **Mr. Zeiders** responded that performing due diligence points towards obtaining the proper financial documentation. Mr. North responded that bonding cannot be obtained without financial where-with-all.

Gail Ford, again inquired to the status of AST's 2005 financial statements. **Mayor Brennan** stated that Mr. Stutz was to provide Council with financial information to certify to Council AST's ability to build project as submitted. To date, Council has not received any documentation; the purpose of their submission is to determine if AST has the financial ability to build the project. **Mr. Higgins** stated that he has been informed by Mr. Tedesco that AST will be providing financial information consistent with the executed redeveloper's agreement.

Mark Brunton, 28 South Cove Road, informed Council that the light between his residence and Alloway funeral home is burned out. Witnessed landscapers pickup truck dump leaves from its bed onto chestnut Street recently. Is this legal? **Mr. North** stated that it was not and Mr. Brunton should call the police immediately if he witnesses this again.

Samuel Slattery, 218 Springfield Avenue, voiced his displeasure that residents are raking their leaves into the street prior to their scheduled pickup date. This is a clear violation of newly enacted laws of the Department of Environmental Protection. Mr. Slattery would like the borough to utilize its Code Enforcement and Community Affairs Officers and enforce current ordinances. **Mayor Brennan** stated

that people have been cited for violating this particular section of the code. Mr. Slattery continued that speeding is a problem within the borough and suggested installing a 4-way stop sign at the corner of Springfield and Volan Streets.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: On the motion of Mr. Finnegan and second of Mr. Zeiders, Council unanimously approved the 9/25/06 regular and private session minutes.

COUNCIL REPORTS:

MR. FINNEGAN stated that the Public Works department is currently picking up leaves in area 4 and with the Christmas Parade upcoming Maple Avenue is being cleared as well.

MR. ZEIDERS delivered the Fire Department report. They responded to 23 calls during the month of October. The Buildings and Grounds report was given.

MR. PAGANO delivered the MEMS report. They answered 25 of 27 total calls for the month of October. The annual tree lighting is Friday evening; Saturday is the holiday parade.

MRS. FIELDS reported for the Planning Board and the Code Enforcement Department. The Public Events Committee is very busy with numerous holiday activities.

MR. ALLOWAY reported that John Fry and Susan Walker held a meeting with John Daley [Community Development Block Grant] to determine amount of funds available.

MR. NORTH delivered a report to each Council member and the Mayor from the State of New Jersey on 606 West Maple Avenue. OEM held a meeting last week that was lightly attended; delivered the Police and Court reports.

Mayor Brennan thanked Kris Sodano, Daniel Beckett, P.J. Brennan and Joan Brennan for their efforts in hanging Christmas lights throughout the downtown area and at the Gazebo.

OLD BUSINESS:

RESOLUTION – APPOINT MUNICIPAL HOUSING LIAISON: On the motion of Mr. North, second of Mr. Alloway and a unanimous roll call vote, Council approved the following resolution:

R06-91

RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF MERCHANTVILLE, COUNTY OF CAMDEN AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY APPOINTING A MUNICIPAL HOUSING LIAISON

WHEREAS, the Borough Council of Borough of Merchantville petitioned the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) for substantive certification of its Housing Element and Fair Share Plan on; and

WHEREAS, Borough of Merchantville's Fair Share Plan promotes an affordable housing program pursuant to the Fair Housing Act (N.J.S.A. 52:27D-301, et. seq.) and COAH's Third Round Substantive Rules (N.J.A.C. 5:94-1, et. seq.); and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 5:94-7 and N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.1 et. seq., Borough of Merchantville is required to appoint a Municipal Housing Liaison for the administration of Borough of Merchantville's affordable housing program to enforce the requirements of N.J.A.C. 5:94-7 and N.J.A.C. 5:80-26.1 et. seq.; and

WHEREAS, Borough of Merchantville has amended Chapter 50 entitled Officers and Employees to provide for the appointment of a Municipal Housing Liaison to administer Borough of Merchantville's affordable housing program.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Governing Body of Borough of Merchantville in the County of Camden, and the State of New Jersey that Denise Brouse is hereby appointed by the Governing Body of Borough of Merchantville as the Municipal Housing Liaison for the administration of the affordable housing program, pursuant to and in accordance with Chapter 50, Article III, of the Code of the Borough of Merchantville.

DISCUSSION – CARPETING COMMUNITY CENTER BEDROOM: Mr. Zeiders stated he believes that \$450 is a reasonable price for the purchase and installation of the carpeting at the Community Center. On the motion of Mr. Zeiders and second of Mr. Pagano, Council unanimously approved Raymond Miner perform carpeting work at the Community Center bedroom.

NEW BUSINESS:

CAPITAL PURCHASE[S] – BOROUGH HALL STEPS & BRICKWORK; PAGERS FOR FIRE

DEPARTMENT: On the motion of Mr. Zeiders and second of Mr. Alloway, Council unanimously approved Andrew Spell perform concrete step and brickwork at Borough Hall, funding the work from the Capital Budget. On the motion of Mr. Zeiders and second of Mr. North, Council unanimously approved a capital purchase of pagers from Jan Communications for the Fire Department.

PAYMENT OF PETTY CASH BILLS: On the motion of Mr. Alloway, second of Mrs. Fields and a unanimous roll call vote, Council approved the following bills for payment:

R06-101

RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF MERCHANTVILLE, COUNTY OF CAMDEN AND STATE OF NEW JERSEY AUTHORIZING PAYMENT OF VOUCHERS REPLENISHING THE BOROUGH CLERK HEALTH CO-PAY PETTY CASH FUND AND THE POLICE HEALTH CO-PAY PETTY CASH FUND

WHEREAS, the Department of Accounts and Auditing has examined the following Petty Cash vouchers amounting to \$635.21 and finds same to be correct:

CHECKS DELIVERED TO BOROUGH OF MERCHANTVILLE CURRENT FUND:

Police Health Petty Cash Fund (#06-232 – 06-245)	265.00
Borough Petty Cash Fund (06-118 – 06-133)	195.21
Clerk's Health Petty Cash Fund (06-106 – 06-113)	175.00
TOTAL:	<u>\$635.21</u>

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that these Petty Cash vouchers be approved for payment.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

New Jersey Department of Transportation Grant: Mayor Brennan announced that the Borough had been awarded a \$69,000 in accordance with 2007 Department of Transportation Aid for improvements to West Chestnut Avenue.

MERCHANTVILLE TOWN CENTRE EAST PROJECT UPDATE: Mayor Brennan stated that he is expecting financial information in accordance with the redeveloper's agreement from AST via Mr. Tedesco prior to the next Council meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: When Council reconvened, on the motion of Mr. Alloway and second of Mr. Finnegan the meeting was adjourned at 9:03 PM.

OREN R. THOMAS IV
BOROUGH CLERK