

**MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
RED BANK REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
FEBRUARY 23, 2021
4:30 P.M.**

SUNSHINE STATEMENT

Chairman Huber requested the minutes reflect that, in compliance with Public Law 1975, Chapter 231 (Open Public Meetings Act), notice of this meeting has been provided by notifying the Asbury Park Press, the Two River Times and the Star Ledger and by placing a notice on the bulletin board and filing same with the Borough Clerk.

*Meeting held via video/telephone conference due to Governor's Executive Order.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Commissioners Beebe, Huber, Massey, Wouters, Councilwoman Triggiano and Councilwoman Horgan

ALSO PRESENT: Mayor Menna, Borough Administrator Shehady, Borough Clerk Borghi, Attorney Gordon, Consultant DeRoberts and Community Development Director Ebanks.

ABSENT: Commission Reynolds-Lewis (joined at 5:08 pm)

MINUTES & REPORTS

Report of Executive Director & Consultant

Executive Director Shehady said progress had been made regarding the proposals and said Consultant DeRoberts would be reporting on that. He said he had also requested some proposal for conceptual architectural planning which would be discussed under new business.

Consultant DeRoberts said he and Executive Director Shehady had met with the Agency's Architect and the Financial Advisory to put together the Financial Impact Analysis for the Municipal Facilities Project. He said they were looking to receive a preliminary report by mid-March. He said the report could be impacted various options for the municipal facility and said he expected a complete picture by April. He said they should be ready to share a recommendation with the Mayor and Council by sometime in the spring.

Executive Director Shehady said this would probably be his second to last meeting at the Redevelopment Agency's Executive Director. He said he had submitted his resignation to the Mayor and Council liaisons. He said he would assist for the next month or so to help find a successor and assist with the transition. He thanked everyone for their support and for helping to get the agency up and running. He said it had been a challenge but said he thought it was for the good of the Borough and that he was happy to be a part of that.

Commissioner Beebe asked if it was a resignation from the Redevelopment Agency solely or from the town.

Executive Director Shehady said, at this time, it was just from the Agency.

Commissioner Huber said he was speaking for all of the Commissioner in saying that it had been terrific working with Mr. Shehady. He said he was sorry to hear he was leaving but said they appreciated his professionalism. He said it would be wonderful if he could be involved in recruiting a successor for a smooth transition.

Executive Director Shehady said the Commissioners needed to think about how they wanted to proceed in terms of a replacement. He said they made need to have a discussion in Executive Session and discuss the recruitment process with the Mayor and Council.

Councilwoman Horgan said she would like to echo what Commissioner Huber had said. She said Mr. Shehady had been wonderful in leading the agency and said he would be missed.

Mayor Menna said he had been aware that Mr. Shehady was going to make the announcement. He said he understood the reasons he was making the announcement and said he was distressed. He said he wanted to take the opportunity to say that this agency and the progress the town had made due to the hard work of the Commissioners and staff could not have been possible without the constant attention, professionalism and focus of Mr. Shehady. He said he had taken the job at no additional compensation because he wanted the agency and the town to be successful. He said he knew that Mr. Shehady had devoted, and continued to devote, 24 hours a day to Red Bank. He thanked him for his service and looked forward to working with him and seeking his input.

Commissioner Reynolds-Lewis joined the meeting.

Commissioner Beebe said he wanted to vocalize his distress and disappointment and also his appreciation for Mr. Shehady's work.

MINUTES

Regular Meeting minutes of 1/26/2021

Commissioner Beebe offered a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Wouters.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Beebe, Huber, Massey, Reynolds-Lewis, Wouters and Triggiano.

NAYS: None.

ABSTAIN: Horgan

There being six ayes, no nays and one abstention, the motion was declared approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Correspondence: Council Resolution 21-57

Consultant DeRoberts said the Borough Council had adopted a resolution and forwarded to the Agency. He said it should be address by Councilmembers Horgan and Triggiano. He said it was forwarded as guidance.

Councilwoman Triggiano said the resolution represented what she, the Council majority and the Mayor felt was appropriate to further communicate where they stood as leaders in the town. She said they wanted to summarize how they had come to the point of having a Redevelopment Agency, the history in the town of projects that went south and projects that were in desperate need to be accomplished. She reviewed the five points listed at the end of the resolution. She noted that she had previously served on the Redevelopment Agency and said felt these points followed through with themes she had ensured were included in the Agency's mission statement. She reviewed the reasons for the resolution. She also thanked Executive Director Shehady for his work.

Commissioner Huber asked for questions or comments.

Proposal: Conceptual Architectural Planning for Municipal Operations

Executive Director Shehady said, knowing that the resolution was coming, he and consultant DeRoberts had spoken with the Agency's architects to get some proposals. He said three proposals for different courses of action had been distributed to the Commissioners. He said he and Mr. DeRoberts were suggesting that they review the proposals holistically and complementary to each other. He said they could also be weighed against other proposals that exist.

A discussion followed on how to proceed with the proposals. Consultant DeRoberts said the agency would eventually make a presentation to the Mayor and Council to help them make an informed decision. He said there were actually four proposals with the last one being more stand alone as it related to a municipal center. He said the other three were variations on what they had done already regarding a Senior Center and Community Center. He said they had completed the one evaluation of a combined facility at Count Basie. He said they had three variations now including looking at 1) maintaining the existing Senior Center, 2) scaling down the proposed facility at Count Basie to extract out the Senior Center and 3) to create a combined facility at the existing Shrewsbury Avenue site. He said, regarding the third option, in order to do that, they may have to add a second and third story and would most likely have to delete the option of an indoor basketball court. He said once they had those plans, they could do various financial impact analyses to present to the Mayor and Council as well. He said they were shooting to get as many of the concept plans completed as possible by spring.

Commissioner Huber suggested they put the plan for the Municipal facility off to the side for the moment and review the other three concepts. He asked Mr. Shehady if there was available funding for the projects.

Executive Director said there were available funds but noted that he could not provide an official certification of those funds. He said, if the Commissioners wanted to take formal action to authorize the proposals, it would be contingent upon formal certification of available funds by the CFO.

Commissioner Huber asked if there were questions or comments from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Reynolds-Lewis asked if they were voting to present all three proposals rather than voting on just one.

Executive Director Shehady said the vote would be to authorize a contract to prepare the conceptual plans rather than to recommend a specific plan.

Commissioner Reynolds-Lewis questions the expense for authorizing all three.

Commissioner Massey said she thought they were going to vote on whether they were going to authorize all three or just one or two.

Mr. Shehady said that was up to the Commissioners.

Mayor Menna said that, while he did not have a vote on the issue, he would strongly recommend that they move ahead with one or two. He said the proposal to upgrade the existing facilities and adding additional stories to include a basketball court posed all sorts of questions. He said it would cost a lot of money to investigate that. He said he had similar concerns with scaling down the Count Basie facility. He said he felt they should move on one proposal at a time.

Commissioner Beebe offered his opinion on two of the proposals and asked if, once the assessments were received back, it was the agency's role, in light of the controversy and the resolution received from the Council, to solicit public response before making a recommendation to the Mayor and Council or if it would be done in conjunction with the Mayor and Council. He also asked if the Commissioners could get census tracking information with respect to the Senior Citizen population and where they reside. He asked if the necessary appraisals, if any, regarding 80 Shrewsbury Avenue included in the considerations.

Consultant DeRoberts said he felt the Agency's role was more deliberative, to review and make recommendations to the Mayor and Council. He said it should be the duty and responsibility of the Mayor and Council to solicit public input. He said the Agency's role was to provide them with the tools. He said the Agency was a resource for them and it was not their role to hold public hearings however their work was being done transparently and the public was invited to observe, participate and ask questions. He said they could provide the census and demographic information. He also said that, in terms of the proposals, it wasn't as easy as picking number 1 or number 2 or 3. He said a couple were connected. He said if they chose the option where they were looking at one or both options involving the current Shrewsbury Avenue site then that would impact what there were doing at Count Basie Field.

Commissioner Huber said he understood and said they were also concerned about the elapsed time. He said it seems that, if they pursued one at a time and then decided that wasn't the right answer, they could be elongating the time line. He also discussed budgetary concerns.

Councilwoman Triggiano said she agreed that they should not piecemeal it out and they wanted to make a full comparison. She said once the agency makes a recommendation to the Council that would be the appropriate time to seek public input. She said they needed to present the options so the public could have a full educated perspective on the true possibility of what their public facilities can be. She reviewed the proposals and noted she had she had heard from the public they would like to see the existing center expanded but still be a senior-centric space with expanded programming. She said they would also like to see a scaled back athletic facility. She asked if the Commissioner's would be receiving back a proposal they could show the public that would be a combination of proposals "A" and "C."

Consultant DeRoberts said they would be authorizing concept plans rather than definitive plans. He said her input was helpful to help shape it. He said they could go with the concept to do a hybrid of the combined facility at 80 Shrewsbury Avenue but leaving Count Basie intact and make it more of an indoor athletic facility. He said, as Commissioner Huber had noted, they could decide to look at one option at a time but that could delay the process.

Commissioner Massey asked, if they went forward with DMR's three proposals, would they be proposing what was feasible and appropriate for each site.

Mr. DeRoberts said that was correct and reminded the Commissioners that, preceding the concept plans, DMR had done a needs assessment.

Councilwoman Horgan said they did not want to delay the process and felt they should do everything at once. She said that had been a complaint from the public.

Commissioner Huber said he felt they should put the fourth proposal regarding the Municipal Center aside and asked if the other Commissioners agreed.

Commissioner Wouters said he agreed and that he also agreed with Councilwoman Horgan. He said, given the concerns regarding the Senior Center facility and in order to put some of the questions to rest, they had to do the three proposals so they would know if the center was usable for each of the intended purposes.

Commissioner Huber called for a motion to authorize all for proposals.

Commissioner Wouters made a motion to authorize the four proposals.

Commissioner Beebe said he would like to separate out the proposal for the municipal building.

Consultant DeRoberts asked if the matter should be voted on as a simple motion or if a resolution was needed.

Attorney Gordon reviewed the proposed motion which would be to move forward with the three proposals received from DMR and excluding the proposal for the Municipal building which would be discussed separately.

Commissioner Wouters said he would amend his motion to authorize the three proposals, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds-Lewis.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Beebe, Huber, Massey, Reynolds-Lewis, Wouters, Horgan and Triggiano.

NAYS: None.

There being seven ayes and no nays, the motion was declared approved.

Executive Director Shehady said the motion was fine to get the work going but asked that a formal resolution to ratify be prepared for the next meeting.

Attorney Gordon said he believed that a resolution to ratify would be appropriate but said the decision had been made.

Commissioner Huber suggested the return to the discussion on the Municipal Building and asked Commissioner Beebe to comment.

Commissioner Beebe said he had previously raised a concern that a project as large as the Municipal Building might warrant consideration once the areas in need of redevelopment had been completed. He said he was surprised to see the proposal for the site since they have not committed to it. He noted that they had not rejected it but he had wanted to have a conversation about other opportunities in the Borough where they could jump start positive development.

Executive Director Shehady said Commissioner Beebe was right and said it was not intended to shove it through. He said, given where things were with the threshold conformance analysis and what was happening with properties and available locations within the Borough, it was a matter of getting information at this point. He acknowledged that there were other possibilities but said the location that this focused on seemed to be, from a logistical and operational point of view, the most viable one right now. He said they did not want to delay things and wanted to see if things would fit or if it was not a viable option.

Consultant DeRoberts added that the Municipal Operations Center was the most complex of the three facilities and said the property under consideration had come on the market two months ago. He said they had wanted to move to see if the Borough could fit into the location and if it was something they were going to need to accelerate the time line on. He said looking at other sites would take more time. He said this would give them enough information for a starting point. He said they had also discussed putting together a cost analysis for all three projects so the Council could consider them in their entirety or separate them out. He said, the longer they wait on a municipal center site cost analysis, the more difficult it would be to make a decision on the other two facilities.

Commissioner Huber called for a motion to move forward with the concept drawing for the municipal facility with DMR.

Commissioner Reynolds-Lewis made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Wouters.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Beebe, Huber, Massey, Reynolds-Lewis, Wouters, Horgan and Triggiano.

NAYS: None.

Commissioner Beebe said he was voting yes but wanted to make clear that it was not a commitment to this site but was a useful tool to assess the spacial and other needs. He said, when they received the results back, he felt they would have more work to do regarding other options that would advance redevelopment needs.

Developer Request

Commissioner Huber said the Agency had received a request from a developer to meet with them to discuss what he described as an exciting project for Red Bank. He said the developer was Denholtz who had done a lot in town. He suggested a small team vet the idea to see if it was within the Agency's scope. He said he understood this was the approach that was used in other municipalities.

Attorney Gordon suggested that they form a subcommittee of the agency to perform the function described but said it could not be a majority of the agency that would form a quorum.

Commissioner Huber asked for volunteers to join him on the committee. Commissioner Wouters and Commissioner Reynolds-Lewis volunteered. Commissioner Huber said the sub-committee would consist of himself and Commissioners Wouters and Reynolds-Lewis.

Executive Director Shehady said the request had come in informally. He said he had reached out to the developer for a more formal written presentation. He said that would be shared with all of the Commissioners when it came it.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Gary Morris—186 River Street—asked what the designation was for the Senior Center property and why was it designated that way. He also asked what kind of data they had that would require a three story structure on Shrewsbury Avenue. He said the third question he had was why they would want to know where the seniors lived.

Commissioner Beebe said he would respond regarding the question about wanting to know where the seniors lived. He said he wanted to know where the density of seniors was with respect to accessibility. He acknowledged that it may not be material.

Mr. Morris said he did not think that it was. He said he was a senior and he was taking a vested interest in the property. He said he wanted it to be viable for everyone in the town. He said he also wanted to know where they had come up with data that made them think they needed a three story building with an indoor basketball court.

Consultant DeRoberts said that had simply been a comment that, if they looked at a combined facility and since they could not expand the footprint, they make have to go up which could require two or three stories. He said he had stated that such a facility would not be able to accommodate an indoor basketball court.

Mr. Morris again asked why it would need to go up three stories. He said it was a functioning, viable property. He said they could easily go in and fix the existing property. He asked when the public would get a say in the process.

Mr. DeRoberts said, the scenario they were looking at would expand the use of the facility beyond just a Senior Center to be a Community Center.

Mr. Morris asked if they would then take away the use of the property used by the YMCA at a corner on Bergen.

Mr. DeRoberts said he never stated they would be taking away the YMCA and said he didn't know where he came up with that.

Mayor Menna said nothing had been carved in stone. He said the comments were well taken and said he had expressed some reflections on one of the proposals earlier in the meeting. He said the Commissioners would consider all of the comments and said he felt a lot of people would share his concern about the ability of this particular site to be developed as anything other than a Senior Center or a very basic center for the community. He said they were just looking at everything but no decision had been made.

Mr. Morris said there had been an issue then they had opened the YMCA on Bridge Avenue with traffic concerns. He said there were similar concerns on Shrewsbury Avenue and questioned why they were addressing it now when it could have been addressed 10 or 15 years ago. He said it was a viable waterfront property that no one seemed to care about except the seniors.

Marjorie Cavalier—1 Bridge Avenue—said, in regard to the 80 Shrewsbury Avenue site and its river exposure. She stressed the importance of the exposure to nature to contributing to one's well-being including physical, emotional and mental. She said she did not think she would be the same feeling looking out only Monmouth Street or Pearl Street that she would looking out onto the river. She said she had been in the Trinity Church location and said it was not the same. She said she agreed with Mr. Beebe that the public should be involved in the process. She said the American Planning Association focused on the quality of life of the residents of a community over rateables or possible profit.

Commissioner Huber thanked her for her comments and said that agreed that the public should be involved. He said the question was at which stage that should be. He said the agency was still gathering data.

Ms. Cavalier reviewed her experience on advisory committees in Middletown in the 1980s.

Councilwoman Triggiano that was why it had been communicated in the resolution that they understood the value of riverfront property and that it transcended economic value. She added that, in regarding to her concerns about the temporary Senior Center, the site was temporary and there was no plan to make that the permanent Senior Center.

Stephen Hecht—135 Branch Avenue—said allusions were made with respect to the fourth recommendation for the municipal building and moving it to another site. He asked what the alternative site was.

Consultant DeRoberts said there had been several sites identified in the Borough according to the Threshold Conformance Analysis that had been prepared that could qualify as an area in need to redevelopment.

Mr. Hecht said it was his understanding that there was a particular site that had been alluded to with respect to moving the municipal building.

Mr. DeRoberts apologized and said he thought he had been talking about the alternative sites. He said the agency had been looking at a facility on Broad Street that was where the Wells Fargo Bank was.

Mr. Hecht asked what timeline the agency expected for getting the information and recommendations to the Council for the various proposals.

Commissioner Huber said there were a lot of steps and reviewed the process.

Cindy Burnham—71 Wallace Street—said she was frustrated with the process. She said she felt it was what Mr. DeRoberts and Mr. Shehady wanted. She said she did not think the majority of people living in the Borough wanted a new Borough Hall. She said they wanted the Senior Center fixed and said they had never had a Community Center. She said it was extremely frustrating. She said the residents were the ones that would have to pay for it. She read a letter from the NJDEP regarding Count Basie Park that she felt said a new Community Center could be built at that site. She said she also wanted to talk about Council resolution 21-57 which she felt legitimized what the RDA had been doing for two years that it wasn't supposed to be doing. She read from the resolution and said the items listed were from the Master Plan. She suggested the Borough list the Senior Center building and land on the ROSI. She referred to properties in other towns that had been listed that way. She said it would open the Borough up to receiving grants for the property. She spoke about the accessibility of the existing Center. She also asked if there was a mortgage or liens on the Senior Center property.

Attorney Gordon reminded Ms. Burnham that this was the Redevelopment Agency and said he question would be better directed to the Governing Body. He said the Agency had not performed a judgement, background or title search on the property in question because that was not their function.

Ms. Burnham said, based on the discussions, she felt someone would know if there was a mortgage on the building. She said, if they wanted to move Borough Hall, she had no objection but she said she felt the Senior Center should stay where it was. She urged the repair of the site and said the buildings were not being maintained.

Commissioner Beebe said the current speaker had exceeded the five minute limit.

Alan Hill—64 Mechanic Street—said he was glad Councilwoman Triggiano had raised Resolution 21-57 because it had an incredible stuff in it much of which was true two years ago. He said the new stuff was concealing the lack of action by the Borough and the lack of progress. He said the resolution committed the Redevelopment Agency with collecting data and analysis. He said he would like to know what the criteria was for collecting data and what their method was for analysis. He said the only two words he had heard from the Commissioners regarding data was anecdotal and empirical. He said those things did not count as data. He also asked if anyone on the Agency was aware of Robert's Rules of Order. He said he understood that public meeting should follow that but said he saw no evidence of it.

Commissioner Huber said he was not sure if he could answer the questions about what constituted data but said they were gathering all of the data that they could. He said the plan had always been to engage the public but said they were trying to do that at the right point in time. He asked the Attorney to address the comments about Robert's Rules of Order.

Attorney Gordon said the Agency was generally bound by Robert's Rules of Order and had abided by them. He said they functioned as an Agency that was guided by the Open Public Meetings Act and the Local Government Ethics Law. He said there was no specific Robert's Rules of Order requirement in the establishment of the Agency, however, they were functioning as a public entity were meeting all of the requirements. He said issues were publicly debated where there was a motion, a second, a discussion and a vote. He said that happened every time. He said he took the speaker's comment to not be directed at the Agency but at the Borough in its entirety. He said he could only state that this Agency functioned properly.

Laurie Gero—36 Worthley Street—said, when she had moved to Red Bank, she had seen a community that worked together. She said she had seen a not totally "corporatized" Borough that she had felt was a good place for her to land. She said, in her opinion, the question about where seniors lived was such a general question. She said they needed to think about what types of seniors had accessibility to move from place to place. She expressed concern about people being priced out of the area. She said it seemed the Center had been a great resource to many seniors and said that was the type of community that they should fight for. She said instead doing studies about money, they should do studies regarding quality of life and accessibility including race and class.

Commissioner Huber thanked her for her comments.

Councilwoman Triggiano said she wanted to make it clear that transportation was provided to the Center.

Executive Director Shehady confirmed that, in a town of two square miles, transportation was offered to the Senior Center and to other locations.

Councilwoman Triggiano said it was a service that was used and was needed. She said she wanted to ensure that that was a service that was in place and that it would continue. She said there had been no in

person programming for the seniors due to the pandemic. She said it did not have to do with the current facility. She said, in regarding the studies, she said she heard the speaker. She said all of this was for quality of life. She said the architects were taking that in consideration when drafting their proposals. She said once the plans were received, they would be given to the public for intelligent conversation. She said the facilities were important and they wanted to get them right the first time. She said she also wanted to state that she agreed with the comment that interaction with nature was paramount. She said that was something that the elected officials had heard loud and clear which was why it had been put into a resolution for the Redevelopment Agency. She said she looked forward to seeing a proposal for an improved upon building for the Senior Center that would take advantage of the waterfront view.

Diane Archilla—118 Bank Street—thanked Councilwoman Triggiano for the reassurance. She said she was happy to speak directly to the Redevelopment Agency. She noted the community's desire for the center to remain in its current location. She said she appreciated the gathering of data. She called for a survey regarding the Senior Center and commended Tiffany Harris for organizing support.

Councilwoman Triggiano said she wanted to reiterate her mutual respect for Ms. Harris and her efforts. She said what had been stated tonight, at the Council level and in the resolution was that they wanted to follow the appropriate process.

Tiffany Harris—1 Cedar Crossing—said she had been told at the last meeting that all data and plans would be in place by 3/15. She offered her opinion on the proposals and said she believed the Senior Center should be for seniors only. She said they wanted to existing building repaired and reviewed services. She reviewed other facilities in Red Bank that had basketball courts.

Consultant DeRoberts clarified the discussion from the last meeting and this meeting. He said they should get the Fiscal Analysis by mid-March but would not have the entire plan.

Councilwoman Triggiano said she understood Ms. Harris's concerns about a basketball court in an area where seniors were trying to find solace. She said she looked forward to having discussions about appropriate uses further down the road. She said she also wanted to address the comments that had been made regarding the timeline. She said speakers had stated that this was something that had been in the Agency's hands for two years. She said she strongly felt the need to clarify that and reviewed the events that had led up to the matter being referred to the Agency in early 2020. She noted that there had been a pandemic but said that the Agency had continued to do preliminary work. She said she again wanted to state that it was false to claim that it had been in the Agency's hands for two year and that there had been no action.

Commissioner Huber said, before moving to the next speaker, he wanted to point out that this was the second meeting that they had had extensive comments about the Senior Center. He asked if, instead of continuing the dialogue, was there a better way to deal with the issue.

Executive Director Shehady said he would ask Attorney Gordon to confirm but said he did not feel there was an alternative. He said people would keep repeating themselves. He said he didn't know if that was helpful and said he felt the message had been received. He said the message being put out by the agency was that there was a process and they were going to follow that process. He said, under the Public Meetings Law, they were required to provide for public comment. He said they had to continue until it was concluded unless the Agency had set a specific end time for the meeting. He said he wanted to say, in regarding to the repetition of comments, that the message had been received. He said the Agency's Commissioners and the majority of the Council were in agreement that they would follow the process.

Frank Corrado—73 Linden Place—said he appreciated the work of the Agency was doing. He said he thought it was important work and was glad they were following a process and not giving into what were valid but emotional pleas. He was he was extremely excited to hear about the progress being made on this. He said he had spoken with friends who were on the other side of the conversation and said they agreed with what the Agency was discussing which was to improve and expand the Senior Center to make it better for the seniors. He said he was surprised by some of the callers still expressing concerns about the property being sold which had been address. He felt like now they had to find something else to call in about. He asked the members of the public who were calling in to consider the opportunities for improvement and an expanded use for the rest of the community.

Nancy Blackwood—34 Chestnut Street—thanked the members of the Agency and said they seemed to have a very transparent process. She said she liked the idea of the three proposals and also like the concept of having the Mayor and Council make the presentations to the public. She said she recognized that Government did not work quickly and said that could be a challenge. She said she would like them to consider the Complete Streets policy and other recommendations by the Environmental Commission. She said the town had received a grant for Shrewsbury Avenue updates and said it would be great if that was taken into consideration. She said she would like to see the Senior Center rebuilt and be LEAD certified or fossil fuel free as well as embracing nature. She said she wanted to give kudos to Center Director Jackie Reynolds for all of her work. She also thanked the members of the Agency for all of the work that they were doing.

Celestine Woods—56 Leighton Avenue—said she was passionate about this issue. She said she felt it was a moot point and that the writing was on the wall that the Senior Center would be in that location.

She said she felt quality of life issues were not being considered. She said residential structures were going up and the schools were busting and taxes were going up. She thanked everyone involved in the process. She called for a vote on the issue.

Eric Harris—136 Bodman Place—said the Borough was two square miles and a senior could be seen in any direction. He asked them to poll seniors regarding their wants and needs. He asked the Commissioners to think about the community as a whole.

Commissioner Beebe said he felt he had struck a nerve asking for a census regarding the senior community. He said he had not understood that transportation was provided for the seniors. He said the Redevelopment Agency had a different role and did not have access to the same information.

Councilwoman Triggiano said Mr. Harris had been heard. She said she wanted residents to understand that, when they called in, they were being heard. She said there had been a lot of toxic misinformation. She said those that were serving were doing it because they cared.

Dan Riordan—53 Elm Place—said he heard discussions of the plans for the Senior Center and Borough Hall. He asked if there were plans for the Department of Public Works. He said he would like to see some movement on the Master Plan. He said it was his understanding that this group had been charged with something related to the Master Plan and said it was way overdue.

Executive Director Shehady said the Redevelopment Agency had not been charged with the Master Plan. He said Municipal Land Use Law governed Master Plans and designated the Planning Board as that agency. He said the Department of Public Works recommendation had already been presented to the public. He said it had been discussed in late 2019 and into 2020. He said that was part of the Financial Planning and Analysis that Consultant DeRoberts and the advisor were working on. He said they had received conceptual drawings in late 2019 or early 2020.

Angela Mirandi—8 West Lake Road—said she was disappointed that they did not have the financials available this month and were now saying it was going to be available in March with formal presentation to the Council in the spring. She said she had heard the three options and said she thought it was a year ago this month that the Redevelopment Agency had done a proposal to the Council about merging a Community Center with the Senior Center and including Parks & Rec. She felt that they had not progressed as much as they should in a year's time. She expressed the frustration of the resident and the seniors. She asked about the Agency's Advisory Board and asked who the members were and their associations. She said she understood that everything went through the Advisory Board before it went through the Council.

Commissioner Huber said the Agency did have an Advisory Board that they could tap into when needed but said it was not another step in the process where everything would go through them. He asked Attorney Gordon if it would be appropriate to share the names.

Attorney Gordon said the Agency was organized and authorized under Local Redevelopment and Housing Law. He said every action they took was constrained by that law. He said there were some other entities and statutes that may be relevant one of which was the Open Public Meetings Act. He said he did not believe announcing the specifics of who was on an Advisory Board was appropriate at this point. He said, if it was a matter of public record as to who that Advisory Board may be, that should go through the Borough rather than this Agency.

Ms. Mirandi asked if he was saying she should pose the question to the Council.

Attorney Gordon said she should make her request through the Open Public Records Act.

Mayor Menna told Ms. Mirandi that the Borough Clerk had the information and would be happy to give it to her.

Ms. Mirandi also asked about the Senior Center designation in the Threshold Conformance Analysis. She asked if it was designated as an area in need of redevelopment or an area in need of rehabilitation. She said, if the Planning Board did not agree with that designation, would it take the power away from the Redevelopment Agency to be focusing on that property.

Executive Director Shehady said the Threshold Conformance Analysis did not designate any properties.

Attorney Gordon said he agreed with Mr. Shehady and said the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law specified a particular process for designating an area in need of redevelopment. He said part of the process involved a hearing at the Planning Board level to make a determination if a property qualified. He said, after that hearing, the Planning Board would make a recommendation to the Governing Body who would designate whether or not it was an area in need of redevelopment and/or an area in need of rehabilitation.

Ms. Mirandi asked if the Redevelopment Agency had made a proposal to the Planning Board and what was put in front of them.

Mr. Shehady said copies of the Threshold Conformance Analysis could be obtained through the Clerk's Office. He said no designations had been made by this agency or the Planning Board.

Ms. Mirandi said she was asking what was on the report because it was hard for some of them to understand it.

Mary Beth Maida—84 Branch Avenue—said she wanted to point out that there were three elected officials on the Redevelopment Agency meeting tonight. She said they should know about the mortgages, liens and various loans that might be against the Senior Center. She said, if they could provide that information, it would be helpful. She said she believed the reason the meetings were going on so long was because, while they said they were being heard, they did not feel they were being listened to. She said the Agency did not need to do a census of the senior citizens because they were calling out to them every day. She said they wanted the Senior Center to be repaired and back in business at 80 Shrewsbury Avenue. She said they did not want it included in the resolution presented earlier. She said that, for the past 23 months, Councilman Ballard and Councilman Zipprich had asked when the Senior Center was going to be fixed. She said they had been told that it was being dealt with. She said she understood that municipal buildings were to be maintained and repaired by the DPW and that the Senior Center was a DPW building. She said over the two years the building had floated over to the Redevelopment Agency. She said she had heard someone say that had happened in 2020. She said it was now 2021 and they hadn't done anything. She said the way to shorten meeting was to simply fix the Senior Center. She claimed the reason that they weren't doing it was because they had done things that they weren't supposed to do and were covering themselves to make sure it was legal. She said the public had been told that what they were discussing was not going to be discussed because they wouldn't do that to the Senior Center. She asked if it was the Redevelopment Agency and the Administrator that had mislead Council members or did the Councilmembers mislead the public. She asked who was responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the municipal buildings. She said she understood it was the DPW. She said she believed that the fact that the Redevelopment Agency was discussing it meant they had no intention of fixing it.

Commissioner Huber thanked Ms. Maida for her comments. He said it sounded like she was assuming that there was some plan going on to mislead public which he said was certainly not their plan. He said he did not think it was a question of the Agency misleading the Council or the Council misleading the public. He said he could appreciate that she might see it that way but said he could assure her that the Commissioners did not see it that way.

Ms. Maida said she had asked a question about the loans against the Senior Center. She said she would also like to hear from the Council people about the sense of dishonesty that she felt. She said she wanted to know when it moved from DPW to the Redevelopment Agency and why.

Mayor Menna said he felt her speech was rhetorical and part of a political agenda. He said he would respond to the question regarding mortgages or loans. He said if there were any bonds that were still outstanding from when the Senior Center was built and/or improved, those would be the only bonds on that property. He stressed that that would be only if there were any. He said he did not know but said she could inquire of the Clerk or CFO for that information. He said there were no liens on it.

No one else appearing, Commissioner Beebe made a motion to close the Public Comment, seconded by Commissioner Wouters.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Beebe, Huber, Massey, Reynolds-Lewis, Wouters, Triggiano and Horgan

NAYS: None

There being seven ayes and no nays, the motion was declared approved.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – None required.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Beebe made a motion to adjourns, seconded by Commissioner Wouters.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Beebe, Huber, Massey, Reynolds-Lewis, Wouters, Triggiano and Horgan

NAYS: None

There being seven ayes and no nays, the motion was declared approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Pamela Borghi