

**CITY OF NORTHFIELD WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 23, 2016**

At 6:06pm this meeting was called to order by Municipal Clerk Mary Canesi. This meeting was properly advertised in the Press of Atlantic City in accordance with Public Law 75, Chapter 231.

FLAG SALUTE

The flag salute was led by Mayor Chau.

ROLL CALL

Present: Dewees, Lischin, Perri, Piergiovanni, Travagline

Absent: Murray, O'Neill

Mayor Chau and Solicitor Kris Facenda were also in attendance.

Council President Travagline welcomed everyone to meeting and introduced Dr. Levitt, Chairman of the Planning Board.

Dr. Levitt announced that Vice-Chairman Clem Scharff was unable to make the meeting. The information presented by Dr. Levitt was from the Planning Board sub-committee and it had not been voted on by the Board. The Planning Board was asked to take a look at the sign ordinance; there were a few things that needed to be updated to be reflective of current technologies. There were a number of these housekeeping edits, such as the addition of references to LED in sections where the word neon appeared throughout the document. Dr. Levitt proceeded to review changes, including those that related to sign placement in relation to sight triangles. They did look at the political sign section, Dr. Levitt felt our guidelines were reasonable but court decisions have routinely ruled in favor of free speech. He would defer this back to the Council. Dr. Levitt noted the need to strike a balance between the needs of businesses and their neighbors. The recommendations included expansion of lines of text, use of colors, etc.

Mayor Chau asked what language changes had been made to account for current and future technologies.

Dr. Levitt referred to the housekeeping edits section, which listed these recommendations.

Mayor Chau asked questions about permitted sizes of signs.

Dr. Levitt explained differences were based on zone.

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Dr. Levitt asked for Council's input, and indicated that he would discuss them with the Planning Board at their next meeting on March 3, 2016.

Solicitor Facenda asked specific questions about areas in which neon language was not updated.

Dr. Levitt stated that he would check, it may have been an omission.

Councilman Perri asked about "A" frame signs and sandwich board signs.

Dr. Levitt showed Councilman Perri where the information was outlined; it was in a document that was emailed to the Council.

Councilman Perri asked about non-conforming businesses; some have been here for a hundred years. He thought they should be factored in.

Dr. Levitt stated it depended on where it was; may not want sandwich boards on Shore Road.

Councilman Perri said to be fair and equal it should be the same.

Councilman Perri asked about neon or LED on a preexisting non-conforming sign.

Dr. Levitt stated they would need a variance.

Councilman Perri felt some businesses were not included.

Councilman Lischin asked how size limits were determined.

Dr. Levitt explained, and also explained the difference between a non-conforming sign and a pre-existing sign. Applicants may need a use variance if the use is not permitted in the zone.

Dr. Levitt stated that he would get the recommendations back to the Council after the March meeting of the Planning Board.

Council President Travagline asked Engineer Kwapinski to review Oxford Circle.

Engineer Kwapinski distributed a map to the Council; he referred to certain sections and reviewed recommendations.

Discussion ensued between Council President Travagline, Councilman Piergiovanni and Councilman Dewees. They made several recommendations.

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Councilman Dewees asked Municipal Clerk Canesi if residents were going to be advised, and, would it benefit the Council if we did.

Clerk Canesi replied yes, residents are typically more amenable to these types of changes if they are informed and feel involved.

Engineer Kwapinski asked if the map could be put on the website.

Clerk Canesi stated yes, but it should probably be sent specifically to the residents of the affected neighborhood.

AGENDA REVIEW

Council President Travagline reviewed the regular meeting agenda, made assignments and noted that Resolution 75-2016 will be voted on separately.

PUBLIC SESSION

Council President Travagline opened the meeting to public.

Ben Mazzeo, owner BF Mazzeo Fruit and Produce – stated he found out a few weeks ago that there was going to be a no parking zone on his street. His business had been there more than 56 years. He has always worked with the neighbors. Local, State and County agencies come once a year to inspect his business. He gave 8 feet of his property to the City to make Chestnut Avenue wider; in the area where the City wants to make it no parking. He also gave frontage to the State to make room for buses. He knows there is a problem with the unloading of the trucks; they're not there all day long, maybe a half hour. Mr. Mazzeo felt there was enough room to get through. He wants to build a parking lot behind them to take the trucks off the road so they can unload there. Noted that his taxes go up every year, up to \$44,000.00 now, he has to be able to make a living.

Council President Travagline thanked Mr. Mazzeo for the business in the town. The town wants to make the area safer for the residents. The City and the Planning Board want Mazzeo's to succeed. Council President Travagline pointed out that the traffic in the area does bottleneck.

Mr. Mazzeo disagreed.

Council President Travagline asked Mr. Mazzeo to suggest an alternative that will alleviate the bottleneck.

Mr. Mazzeo stated that it's not fair if patrons to his business are ticketed for parking.

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At 7:02pm Councilman O'Neill entered the meeting.

Mr. Mazzeo stated that the trucks will be eliminated as soon as they get the parking lot.

Council President Travagline asserted that the no parking zone was the recommendation of the Police Department.

Mayor Chau added that based on complaints, he, as the Mayor, was directed to look into it and had the Police Department do so. The solution, based on the complaints, at the recommendation of the Police Department was to make the zone no parking.

Council President Travagline suggested having the Police Department take another look.

Mayor Chau asked where the trucks are coming from and where they will be coming from.

Mr. Mazzeo stated that all trucks come from Route 9, there are signs indicating to the trucks where they have to come from, and they enforce it.

Council President Travagline disagreed; if a tractor trailer comes down the street and there is a car parked there, you can't get through.

Ben Mazzeo, Jr. stated that the neighbor who complained previously told the Mazzeo's that Council President Travagline came to his property and took pictures. The entire Mazzeo family lives in Northfield; they all pay taxes and have been here for many many years. Mr. Mazzeo noted that the person complaining had been here for 8 years.

Council President Travagline stated that he never took any pictures.

Council President Travagline offered to go tomorrow and look again; he suggested that any reasonable compromise would be considered.

Mayor Chau noted that the Mazzeo's have spent a lot of money to accommodate the traffic, and he appreciated it.

Council President Travagline reiterated that no decision had been made and he would like to also get the Mazzeo's point of view.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak Council President Travagline closed the public session.

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At 7:13pm, on motions properly made and seconded, this meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Canesi, RMC, Municipal Clerk