

Welcome to NEXUS Municipal Monitor—a bimonthly newsletter focused on real estate related issues on the local level that matter to you!

Stay informed of pending or recently passed ordinances that may affect the way you do business, and redevelopment projects that could impact the market.

Want to contribute ideas or be more involved? Look for details in the newsletter on Legislative Committee meetings with local officials and how you can make your voice heard. If there's an issue or development project that you think should be covered, please contact Liz Peters at [Lpeters@nexusaor.com](mailto:Lpeters@nexusaor.com).

## **Burlington County**

### **REALTORS® Discuss Inspections, CO Requirements & Other Concerns with Willingboro Township Mayor Nock, Administrator Sharon Rogers & Other Local Officials**

On December 4, members of NEXUS Legislative Committee sat down with Willingboro Township Mayor Martin Nock, Township Administrator Dr. Sharon Rogers, Head of Inspections Dennis Tunstall, Construction Official Steve Buchhofer; Sr. Code Enforcement Officer/Inspector Patti Conrad and other township officials to discuss ongoing concerns with some of the requirements and processes related to inspections and Certificate of Occupancy in Willingboro Township.

Dr. Rogers, who has been working as Township Administrator for a few months, was very receptive to the realtors' concerns and asked that the conversation continue as she's looking to streamline processes and make the Township more business friendly. As example, she asked NEXUS members for help in gathering information on practices in other municipalities regarding inspections and COs with the goal of bringing Willingboro in-line with neighboring towns. To that end, the Legislative Committee will be following up with information as to whether other municipalities in Burlington County require surveys as part of COs like Willingboro and the length of the window other municipalities have for a CO to remain valid.

The Willingboro officials said they are also making some personnel changes that will dedicate staff solely to rental and resale to ensure staff understand processes and save realtors time when coming to the Township for business. In addition, the Township is making upgrades to its website to upload all forms and applications for property-related matters online.

The meeting December 4 was just a start and the Committee will be engaged in ongoing dialogue with Dr. Rogers and her staff. Please continue to share your input and concerns with NEXUS' Liz Peters at [Lpeters@nexusaor.com](mailto:Lpeters@nexusaor.com) so that we can provide ongoing feedback to Willingboro.

**NEXUS Legislative Committee Meets with Burlington City Mayor Conaway:** In October, members of NEXUS' Legislative Committee met with Burlington City Mayor Barry Conaway to learn more about the priorities of his Administration and share their input as local realtors. Much of the discussion centered on getting clarification on recent changes to the city's rental ordinance, the city's recent Opportunity Zone designation and other redevelopment projects happening around Burlington City.

**Rental Registration Ordinance:** Last Spring, Burlington City made changes to its rental registration ordinance, increasing fees and requiring property owners to run federal background check on renters. The city does not require a copy of the background check itself but requires a receipt as proof that the background check was indeed completed. The Mayor explained that the new requirement is intended to serve as a protection for landlords and a deterrent for potentially bad actors. While the realtors expressed their appreciation of efforts to promote health and safety in the city, they expressed concern with the increased fees and potential overreach. They asked the Mayor to consider the Association as a resource. To view the ordinance changes in full, visit [http://www.burlingtonnj.us/departments/city\\_council/docs/04-09-19.pdf](http://www.burlingtonnj.us/departments/city_council/docs/04-09-19.pdf)

**Opportunity Zone:** Burlington City was one of five municipalities, and 75 in New Jersey, to be approved for the federal Opportunity Zone program last year. The designation was established by the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act to promote long-term economic growth and job opportunities in lower-income communities. The program allows investors to defer taxes for investing unrealized capital gains into "opportunity funds" that can be tapped for development or business expansion in the designated zones. Investors also are eligible for substantial tax breaks on those projects under the program.

Burlington City's opportunity zone is primarily within the New Yorkshire neighborhood. It is bounded by the Delaware River to the north, Assiscunk Creek to the east, northbound U.S. Route 130 to the south and High Street to the west. Mayor Conaway shared that he's looking to secure investors for the zone. In April, the city hired consultant Triad Associates to help profile the opportunity zone and develop a range of projects that would be viable for investors and appealing to residents. The city is now focusing in on seven sites that could be especially attractive to real estate investors. To view the city's strategic plan to maximize its designation, visit [http://www.burlingtonnj.us/docs/Complete%20Opp%20Zone%20Plan%20Draft,%208-20-19\[1\].pdf](http://www.burlingtonnj.us/docs/Complete%20Opp%20Zone%20Plan%20Draft,%208-20-19[1].pdf)

For more information about Opportunity Zones in New Jersey, including an interactive community asset map showing where they are located, visit <https://nj.gov/governor/njopportunityzones/faqs/>

**Additional Economic Development Projects in Burlington City:** Mayor Conaway also shared an overview of some of the other economic development projects happening in the township including the mixed-use Pearl Pointe project at High Street and Pearl Boulevard that is currently underway that will bring 183 market-rate residential units to the city. He said touted the 1 million-square-foot Amazon fulfillment center at the former U.S. Pipe and Foundry property that began operations in early spring and employs hundreds of people in the city. He also discussed plans for the proposed Burlington Dream project that would bring mixed-use development to the McNeal Mansion Redevelopment Area, as well as the proposed Riverwalk Station that would redevelop the Commerce Square Redevelopment Area with up to 1,100 apartments.

**Burlington Twp Approves Development Plan for Burlington Center Mall**

On November 14, the Burlington Township Planning Board unanimously approved a plan to establish an economic-development zone around the 97-acre site of the vacant Burlington Center Mall on Mount Holly Road. The designation establishes tax breaks for developers and favorable zoning to help expedite redevelopment of the property. Preliminary plans for the site include a mixed-use development with retail, restaurants, 400-500 housing units and several large warehouses. Before any plan moves forward, several public hearings will be held to provide residents the opportunity for input.

**Mount Laurel Designates Developer for Portion of Route 38 Redevelopment Area**

On November 18, the Mount Laurel Township Council passed a resolution designating Delco Development LLC as redeveloper for 67 acres of the redevelopment zone known as the Route 38, Ark Road and Fostertown Road Redevelopment Area. At the meeting, the company presented plans to develop part of the area with commercial units and a mix of residential townhouses, multi-family units, including 120 age-restricted rental units. The development plan now heads to the Planning Board for full review.

**Moorestown Council Approves Affordable Housing Next to Mall**

Moorestown Township Council approved two ordinances on December 2 that enable township to purchase a 3.1-acre site in the office park located next to the Moorestown Mall to develop affordable housing. The parcel, located at the corner of Harper and East Gate drives, will be used to develop 47 affordable housing units as part of the township's affordable housing plan. The township is still finalizing the purchase and sale agreements surrounding the acquisition, as well as a parking easement with the current owner of the site to allow parking for the future development's residents. The township expects to close on the property before the end of the year. Once a developer agreement is established, the project will move through a design and approval phase.

## **Camden County**

**Camden City to Create New Business Improvement District**

Camden City Council recently voted to create a Business Improvement District (BID) in the downtown area, as well as parts of the waterfront, North Camden, Gateway and South Camden to help support services such as street and sidewalk cleaning, graffiti removal, snow clearing, landscaping, marketing and management of public spaces. The effort would be funded through a tax assessment on businesses within its boundaries. No residential properties, schools or churches would be assessed nor would charitable properties with a net value under \$10 million or exempt properties valued under \$1 million.

The BID will have a 13-member board of directors, with one representative from city government; 10 representatives from local businesses and other entities; and two residents to be appointed by the Mayor. For more information about Camden's BID, visit [www.ci.camden.nj.us/camden-bid/](http://www.ci.camden.nj.us/camden-bid/)

**Long-Vacant Store Front in Stratford Twp to Become New Home to Camden County Board of Social Services**

On November 14, the Camden County Freeholder Board approved the purchase of the long-vacant building that used to house a Bradlees discount department store within a strip mall off White Horse Pike near New Road in Stratford Township and turn it into a 110,00-square-foot home for the county's Board of Social Services. The project is expected to be completed within two years and bring 500 county employees—and an estimated 700 daily visitors to the area—which will boost economic development in the area.

## **Ocean County**

### **Hearing on Proposed 102-Room Hotel in Beach Haven Postponed to January**

The Beach Haven Land Use Board will consider a proposal to build a three-story, 102-room hotel at the old site of Morrison's Restaurant on the bay in Beach Haven on January 6, one month later than originally planned. The developer, Christopher Vernon, is also the developer and owner of the Bonnet Island Estate, the Mallard Island Yacht Club, The Boatyard and the Mainland Holiday Inn complex, all in Stafford Township, and Hotel LBI in Ship Bottom.

REALTORS® and/or residents with questions or concerns about the project are encouraged to submit their input in advance of the meeting by sending an email to [jfife@beachhaven-nj.gov](mailto:jfife@beachhaven-nj.gov). Forms for submitting questions can be found on the borough's website, [www.beachhaven-nj.gov](http://www.beachhaven-nj.gov). Click on Signed Questionnaire for Morrison's. Submitted questions will be sent to the developer so he can address them during the January presentation.

Specifically, the MUA granted preliminary approvals for sewer and water lines to the Grawtown Acres Major Subdivision, Jackson Trails, and the Concourse at Jackson. The MUA also approved a new pumping station to facilitate the construction of Pine Rock Walk. Grawtown Estates is seeking to build approximately 490 new homes; Pine Rock Walk is a 46-home development; Denton Pines will build 29 new homes; and Jackson Trails is seeking to build 367 new homes.

### **Streetscape Measures Required in New Beach Haven Ordinance**

Beach Haven Borough Council is considering an ordinance that would require new construction or substantial renovation projects within the Beach Haven business district be subject to streetscape improvements. Requirements include brick paver material installed along the frontage area, at least one recycled plastic lumber bench seat, at least one commercial self-watering garden planter planted seasonally and improved street lighting.

The business district runs from north side of Pearl Street to the municipal boundary at 12th Street. Substantial improvements are defined as 50 percent of the value of the structure as determined by the borough assessor.

### **Ocean County to Start Replacement of the Main Street Bridge in Waretown**

In early December, Ocean County will begin work on the replacement of Main Street Bridge in Waretown, closing Main Street at Pennsylvania Avenue, and on the other side of the bridge at Birdsall Street. The project is expected to take at least three months.

### **Trestle Connects Berkeley and Lacey over Cedar Creek on Barnegat Branch Trail**

The installation of a 150-foot long prefabricated weathered steel span that connects to the existing 2.75-mile Barnegat Branch trail from the Cedar Creek to Hickory Lane in Berkeley is now complete. The 150-foot long trestle is the longest clear span of any of Ocean County's bridges.

This phase of trail construction also includes the creation of a 10-foot wide stone dust trail on the Lacey side, creating a formal parking lot at Hebrew Park and installing interpretive signage, benches, a railroad hand car display and picnic tables.

Ocean County has completed seven phases of the Barnegat Branch Trail, which includes almost eight contiguous miles from Burr Street in Barnegat Township to Lacey Road in Lacey Township. More than three miles from Dudley Park at the Cedar Creek in Lacey Township to Hickory Lane in Berkeley Township have been completed. When completed the linear park will span about 16 miles.

**Lakewood Planning Board Approves Housing Development at Eagle Ridge Golf Course**

In late November, the Lakewood Planning Board voted unanimously to develop most of Eagle Ridge Golf Course into large scale mixed-use development called The Parke at Lakewood. The approved general development plan locks in the zoning that allows for a mix of retail, community centers and 278 duplex residential buildings, totaling 1,100 units, on the site. The vote comes amidst two ongoing lawsuits brought by residents at The Fairways at Lake Ridge, an age restricted neighborhood that borders the golf course, concerned about the scope and size of the project. How the legal challenge will impact the process is yet to be seen. However, before the project can move forward, the Planning Board will have to approve additional site plans and subdivisions for each of the project's five phases.

**Election Results in Burlington, Camden and Ocean Counties:**

The following are links to the complete election results for state, county and local offices in New Jersey from November 5, 2019:

Burlington County: <https://www.co.burlington.nj.us/DocumentCenter/View/3942/General-Election>

Camden County: <https://www.camdencounty.com/wp-content/elections/general2019/results/2019-General-Election-Canvasser.pdf>

Ocean County: <http://www.oceancountyclerk.com/frmElectionServices>