



The Avalon Home and Land Owners Association

JUNE 2008 – NEIL HENSEL, CHAIR, AVALON PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD

He outlined a number of projects that the Board has been involved in recently.

Master Plan. Under the Municipal Land Use Law the Borough is required to review the plan every six years. This was last done in 2002. Since then there has been a major review of the Borough Ordinances. The purpose of the Master Plan is to set the stage for the goals and objectives for the Borough. Since 2002 ordinances have resulted in reduced lot coverage, and have required provisions for landscaping and storm water management. A Floor Area Ratio (FAR) was instituted to get away from the box-like duplexes that were being built on Ocean Drive. The downtown area was going into decline, businesses were leaving and property values were decreasing; the zoning ordinances were changes to prevent this from happening. All the goals that were set six years ago have been met.

Telecommunications There were long and protracted discussions on cell phone reception in the Borough. It was proposed that the transmitters be placed on public facilities, e.g. the water towers. As a result the number of blind areas has been greatly reduced, and cell phones can be used several miles out to sea.

Transportation. Parking is a major problem. Recommendations have been made to help alleviate the situation, however, no resolutions have been put into effect. The two-hour parking in the Business District is working at the moment, but what will happen when all the stores are occupied is up in the air.

A trolley system has been instituted in the summer months, however, the future of the system is in doubt because of lack of support.

Stormwater Management Plans. A concern was water running off into neighboring properties. Ordinances have been changed to require drain spouts, which must go to ground. Twenty five percent of the run-off must be collected. The Borough rules are more strict than the State rules, which only cover lots of more than one acre.

There is a need to dredge the Inland Waterway since boats will go out into the ocean to pass New Jersey. The condition of Ocean Drive, a county road, is a disgrace. The bridges need repair.

The Master Plan was done six months earlier than scheduled because of issues at the State level. The topic of school amalgamation is included in the Plan since a County-run system would cost more, and the Master Plan is really the only document read by State officials.

Ordinances Borough Council was advised on ordinances that needed tweaking. These included:

- Maintenance of a visual environment in the Borough by minimizing humongous houses.
- Promoting economically viable inter-local agreements with barrier island communities.
- Developing an ongoing technological program regarding public safety.
- Developing an Environmental Resource Inventory.
- Improve and promote recycling programs.
- Develop a promotional plan for the business districts.



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- Encourage expansion of cultural development through the Avalon Free Public Library. The library has had a tremendous cultural impact with art and music; the circulation of materials is equivalent to that of a town of 40,000 people.

Building on a plan for affordable housing. Because of federal and state regulations the Borough must have a plan. Such a plan has been developed, however, it may or may not pass muster. Federal law asks for shared plans with other communities, Trenton is trying to circumvent this. The Borough is trying to prevent the implementation of a “builder’s remedy” situation which would usurp local ordinances. Ordinances will be developed when the State regulations have been set.

- Planning for the development of local infrastructure.

The objectives are to track goals and then get specific:

- School amalgamation – can something be worked out between Avalon, Stone Harbor, Sea Isle City and Ocean City (where a High School is located).

- Dune protection. The ordinances were recently revised. Revisions to an ordinance can not occur when there is an application specific to that ordinance is before the Board.

- Law suit against the NJ DEP over beach and waterfront access. The County Freeholders have decided to support this action.

- Outdoor dining

- Curtailing the use of Borough streets for parking boats, trailers and construction vehicles. The original resolution was vetoed by the Mayor. The topic may be revisited since the parking of oversize vehicles is a big problem.

- Implement a Long Range Library Plan to build upon the success story.

- Upgrade the cell phone towers for emergency services now that the cable company has blocked the use of the cable system for emergency notification.

- Update the Borough web site

- Having the Borough “Think Green” and look for alternative energy sources.

Overuse of the water supply, as controlled by NJ DEP, has resulted in water use restrictions. Planning Board is asking Borough Council to look into other water sources.

We have to pay attention to what goes on in Trenton.

In answer to questions it was stated that even though a property appears dilapidated little can be done to control what happens on private property. The Borough ordinances say that a building must be in reasonable shape.

School consolidation must be driven by the taxpayers. To have a single Supervisor for Stone Harbor, Avalon, Sea Isle City and Ocean City would be a big step forward, but the suggestion must come from the Board of Education.

Town Center Plan – Avalon is in the midst of the Plan Endorsement Process. A document has been submitted to the State, but it has not been read. The State periodically changes the rules. The Borough will go through the process as necessary. AHLOA is represented on the committee reviewing the situation. It is important to note that the plan dictates what Avalon does.



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