

**STILLWATER TOWNSHIP**  
**ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT**  
**February 2, 2016**

A joint meeting of the Stillwater Township Committee, Zoning Board of Adjustment, and Planning Board was held on Tuesday, February 2, 2016, at 6:00 p.m. at the Municipal Building in Middleville, New Jersey. A roll call was taken:

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mr. Lippencott, Mr. Stachura, Mrs. Draghi, Mr. Wykoff, and Mr. Powell

Mayor Fisher stated that tonight's joint meeting is a discussion between the Boards and the Township Committee in regards to considering a Land Use Board. Chairman Powell asked what triggered the discussion of a Land Use Board. Mayor Fisher stated that the lack of activity and saving money is what triggered the initial discussion. Chairman Powell stated that the Zoning Board is very cognizant of their financial responsibility and they make sure that they do not have their Board Professionals attend meetings, when they are not needed. He stated that additional meetings may be needed, if the activity were to increase, and he does not see a large savings. He asked if there were any complaints or issues in regards to decisions or actions taken by the Zoning Board. Mayor Fisher stated that there were no complaints, it was more of a financial consideration, as there is a lack of activity. Ms. Fisher was present and she spoke about the steady decline of activity on both Boards. She stated that the Township can save money on a Secretary's salary and there have been some Board Member resignations. She stated that the existing Board Members on both Boards can be incorporated into a Land Use Board and that it is an optimum time to make the change. She stated that the Township can always go back to two Board's if necessary. Mrs. Draghi stated that the Zoning Board is made up of qualified Board Members with no political influence. She stated that just because there has been a decline in activity in the past does not mean that it may not pick up in the future. She stated that the Zoning Board Members are dedicated and she also commented on the lack of a communication between the Township Committee and the Boards on this subject. Committeeman Morrison questioned the functions of the Planning Board and the Zoning Board and he asked how the Planning Board feels about the issue. Ms. Fisher stated the Planning Board did discuss the matter at their last meeting and the lack of activity was brought up. She also addressed the Land Use Board Members who would need to step down for a "D" variance. Committeeman Scott stated that personally he feels that it is good to have more community involved in decision making; however, he commented on the lack of activity. The Membership of a Land Use Board was discussed.

Planning Board Chairman Emmons arrived at 6:22 p.m. The following Planning Board Members are present: Mr. Emmons, Ms. Fisher, Committeewoman Chamings, and Committeeman Scott. With only four Planning Board Members, there is not a quorum.

It was asked if a budgetary analysis was done for the cost savings for combining the Boards and if so what is the dollar figure. Committeewoman Chamings stated that she has not been provided with any figures. Mayor Fisher stated that the savings would come from the Secretary's Salary and the Board Attorney and Board Engineer's fees. Chairman Powell stated again that they do not have the Board Professionals attend meetings if they are not needed. He stated that an analysis should be done to determine what the actual cost savings would be to combine the Boards. He stated then the facts could be discussed and debated. Ms. Fisher touched on the fixed expenses of the Boards. She stated that recently there was a discussion on raising application fees and escrows and she stated her concern that applications will become too expensive for Township Residents. Chairman Emmons commented on the required attendance of the Board Professionals at the Planning Board meetings.

He stated that Planning Board activity has declined; however, he stated some money may be saved, but there is no set formula as to what would be saved. The Board reviewed the vacancies on the Boards. Committeewoman Chammings stated that she knows of some residents who are interested in serving. She stated that she is not in favor of a Land Use Board, because she feels that the two separate Boards are what is best for the Township. Committeeman Gross commented on the quality of the Board Members on the Zoning Board of Adjustment. He stated that he is not in favor of a Land Use Board. Committeeman Scott stated that the whole purpose of tonight's discussion is have an open dialogue. It was noted that the an Ordinance would need to be introduced to abolish the Zoning Board of Adjustment and there was no action anticipated this evening.

At 6: 38 p.m. the meeting was opened to the public. With there being no public comment, the hearing was closed to the public.

In a motion made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Alfia Schemm, Board Secretary

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Eric Powell, Chairman