

**Bass River Township Planning Board Meeting**  
**June 21, 2023**

The regular meeting of the Bass River Township Planning board was held on June 21, 2023 with eight members present. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Mrs. Cindy Ruffo, acting as Chairperson for this meeting. Flag salute and Sunshine announcements were made.

Planning Board members present were: Mrs. Cope, Mr. Capriglione, Mrs. Ruffo, Mr. Neuweiler, Mr. Steele, Ms. Delois, Ms. Gormley and Mrs. Adams.

Mr. Justin Strausser attended as legal representative. No engineering representative was present.

The minutes of the regular meeting of May 17, 2023 were available for the board and the public.

Mrs. Cope made a motion to approve the minutes from May 17, 2023 and Ms. Delois seconded the motion. Mr. Capriglione and Mr. Neuweiler abstained. The remaining six members were in favor with none opposed, and the motion was passed.

Correspondence List was read by Mrs. Ruffo.

**New Business:** None

**Informal Business:**

Thomas Gormley – Land Use Application for garage at 9 Adams Avenue, Block 54 Lots 29 & 29.A. Existing garage is 7' from property line, and if taken down, the new garage will need to meet ordinance of 40' setback. Mr. Gormley is submitting a variance for setback at 10'. He completed the necessary 200' certified notices, but the newspaper posting was delayed and is due to be printed on June 22. Mr. Strausser stated that this application will be continued to the next Planning Board Meeting on July 19, and Mr. Gormley will not be required to do another 200' list mailing.

9. **Old Business:**

1. Update on Master Plan Reexamination Report status and any related Engineering updates. Mrs. Cope stated that everything is going well toward the next step, which will be a Special Meeting to approve the plan. After approval, it will go back to the Pinelands Commission for their final approval.
2. Mitigation Bank project with Evergreen Environmental LLC originally scheduled for completion in May was delayed to end of June or early July.

**7:09 PM** A motion to open the meeting to the public was made by Mr. Steele and seconded by Mr. Neuweiler. All were in favor and the motion was passed.

Rick Adams, of 20 Lovelands Lane, asked if the Evergreen Mitigation Bank project will be completed by early July. Discussion with the Board brought up additional questions. Can the plantings can be done as late as July, since they were originally scheduled to be planted in May? Is Evergreen getting delay approvals from State and Federal officials, and are their permits still valid? When will damage to the road between Route 9 and the gate be repaired? Secretary Laura Moyer said she will send those questions to Evergreen to be answered.

Mr. Stephen Kraus, of 17 South Maple Avenue, complained that the Planning Board told him after they approved the variance for his pole barn, that “that’s all you need. Just wait 45 days, and you can start building.” He did not know that additional permits for the actual construction would be required. This caused a lengthy delay in start of construction, and he lost his \$7,000 deposit to the original garage contractor. Little Egg Harbor Township Construction Office charged him multiple times for different things that needed to be done. Instead of 45 days, it took nine months and a second contractor to get his pole barn built. He would like to see a checklist on steps for construction permits to be provided at the start of the Bass River Township Zoning Application process, so that people will know there are more steps to go, and they can plan accordingly and not lose valuable time and money. Mrs. Adams apologized on behalf of the Planning Board for Mr. Kraus’ frustration and losses, and Mrs. Cope stated that we will post a notice clarifying the steps for construction permits above the current Construction notice at the customer window.

William Van Orden, of 5881 Route 9, voiced concerns over events happening at the Sherwood properties. He does not approve of clothing optional activities, especially if entry fees are being collected. He submitted pages from facebook chats that he feels are instigating hostile feelings toward neighbors, and he spoke about rumors of buildings and roads going up, demanding to know if Bass River will stop them. Mrs. Ruffo stated that permits will be required for either of those actions, and none have been submitted to date. She also noted that Bass River Township will abide by the rules of ordinances and rights of property owners. Mrs. Cope said that the Township Attorney is creating an ordinance that will clarify rights and limits on events in the township, and that there is already a noise ordinance that starts at 11:00pm.

Nancy Snyder, of 18 Frenchs Lane, asked if anything can be done to stop people from flying signs with obscenities in them on their properties near public roads, where children are reading them. Mrs. Cope said that she has already looked into this, and she has been told that it is protected under Freedom of Speech. Mr. Strausser agreed that this is the property owner’s right.

**7:48 PM** A motion to close the meeting to the public was made by Mr. Capriglione and seconded by Mr. Neuweiler. All were in favor and the motion was passed.

**7:49 PM** Being no other business at this time, a motion was made by Ms. Delois to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Mrs. Adams. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laura Moyer  
Planning Board Secretary