

BOROUGH OF OAKLAND
Special Borough Council Meeting
MEETING MINUTES

Municipal Court/Council Chambers
10 Lawlor Drive
Oakland, N.J. 07436

July 6, 2022 – 6:00 p.m.

The Special Meeting of the Borough of Oakland Mayor and Borough Council opened on the above date at 6:00 p.m. in the Oakland Council Chambers, 10 Lawlor Drive, Oakland, N.J. 07436.

Mayor Linda H. Schwager presiding.

ROLL CALL: **Present:** **Mayor Linda H. Schwager, Councilmembers Kulmala, McCann, Saliani, Slasinski, Talamini.**
 Absent: **Councilman Pignatelli, Borough Attorney Brian Chewcaskie.**

Also Present: **Borough Administrator Richard Kunze, Borough Clerk Michael Carelli.**

SALUTE TO THE FLAG AND MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mayor Schwager announced that proper notice of this meeting was made as to time, date, place, and agenda.

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION ON DECLARING AREA IN NEED OF REHABILITATION:

Mayor Schwager announced that the purpose of this meeting is to discuss declaring an area in need of rehabilitation. Borough Planner Steve Lydon provided background on the law which enables this program as well as the role of the Borough and Business Owners in the process. Discussion ensued on the study area and the incentive that this program would provide to property owners. Mr. Lydon advised that Burgis Associates has found that the Central Business District has three (3) out of the six (6) necessary criteria set forth present in the Central Business District, which is needed to enable the law in a municipality. Mr. Lydon concluded that there are conditions present in the study area that could empower Oakland to declare the study area as an area in need of rehabilitation. Councilman Talamini asked if this program is open to dwelling owners. Mr. Lydon advised that dwelling property owners could take advantage of this program. Councilman Saliani asked if abatements are transferrable with the sale. Mr. Lydon advised that abatements are transferable. Mayor Schwager asked why the study area stops at Oak Street. Mr. Lydon responded that the program must have buyer trust, therefore, the initial study area is fairly small in hopes to receive positive feedback. Councilman Slasinski asked what would happen if a single business owner within a strip mall backs out of the program. Mr. Lydon advised that the property owner, not business owner, is responsible for the added improvements. Councilman Saliani asked if other nearby towns have had successes with implementing this program. Mr. Lydon advised that the Township of Maplewood and others have seen improvements as a result of this program. Mayor Schwager asked if landscaping improvements are eligible. Mr. Kunze advised that only improvements that trigger an added assessment are eligible. Councilman Kulmala added that the

Borough is also working on revitalizing Bush Plaza, and the Oakland Planning Board is developing architectural guidelines for the Downtown. Councilman Kulmala asked how long the ordinance is good for. Mr. Lydon advised that the ordinance sunsets after 10 years. Discussion ensued on the process moving forward.

OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT:

Councilman Kulmala set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Saliani, to open for public comment.

Jim Given of 4 Woodcrest asked about how adding sewers in the Downtown effects this program. Mr. Given suggested that business owners may not buy-in to the program until sewers are installed. Mayor Schwager responded that the Borough is working hard on bringing sewers to the Downtown. Councilman Kulmala added that the Borough is putting the necessary framework in place.

Councilman Saliani set forth the motion, seconded by Councilman Kulmala, to close public comment.

ADJOURNMENT:

On motion of Councilman Saliani, seconded by Councilman Talamini, the meeting be adjourned.

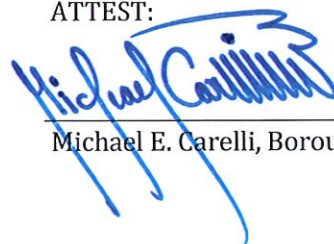
ALL IN FAVOR.

Adjourned: 6:47 p.m.

APPROVED BY:


Linda H. Schwager, Mayor

ATTEST:


Michael E. Carelli, Borough Clerk