

EVENT HOUSE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of January 9, 2014 at 2:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Mahaney at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 9, 2014 in the Cape May City Hall Auditorium. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Present: Mary McKenney, Resident, Rental Property Owner
John VanDeVaerst, Resident, Planning Board, Green Team
Bruce MacLeod, City Manager
Ed Mahaney, Mayor
Bill Murray, Deputy Mayor
Tony Monzo, City Attorney
Robert Sheehan, Police Captain
John Queenan, Code Enforcement

Absent: Bonnie Pontin, Resident, Inn Keeper Owner, HPC
Mary Rothwell, Zoning Officer

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENT: "Open Public Meetings Law"

DISCUSSION: Discussion on changes to the Ordinance that Tony Monzo drafted based upon input from the committee and residents. As well as further discussion on additional materials Mary McKenney distributed to the committee.

Tony Monzo – Mr. Monzo reviewed a few changes to the draft ordinance based on comments and suggestions from the last meeting.

Bill Murray – Mr. Murray commented on the remote parking aspect and clarified how it is beneficial. Mr. Murray questioned if there could be a transition period for people who have indeed already signed a contract. He was in support of a "phase in" period.

Mary McKenney – Ms. McKenney discussed the timing of mercantile license and the implementation for properties that already have events in place. She asked if specific residential properties or lots could be added to the ordinance. Mary McKenney expressed concern with people who already have signed contracts in place for the 2014 season. She requested that something be put in place to have events that are currently under contract to be permitted to go forward. Mary was in support of January 1, 2014 as being the cutoff date for the signing of the contracts for 2014 and the cutoff date for the event being held by December 31, 2014.

Mayor Mahaney – Mayor Mahaney mentioned that he noticed that events and shifting from occurring in the spring to now occurring in the fall. He stated that adding specific residential properties here and there in the residential zone defeats the purpose of the residential zone and he does not support this suggestion. The Mayor suggested possibly adding a clause to the Ordinance to consider contracts which in fact have already been signed, and for that to be considered by Council at the time the Ordinance is presented. The Mayor suggested weddings that already have a signed contract/lease in place for an event being held before December 31, 2014 would be permitted to go forward. He also thought tent permit language should be added to coincide with the events going

forward in the “phase in” period. The recommendation will be made to City Council to consider at the February 4th Work Session, committee members are welcome to attend that Work Session.

John VanDeVaarst – Mr. VanDeVaarst spoke about the C3 Zone and felt that adding specific houses would not be beneficial. He stated that he realizes that every time a change is made there will always be some adversary but we have to start somewhere. Mr. VanDeVaarst was in support of adding a clause to the Ordinance to consider contracts already signed for events in the upcoming 2014 season.

Bruce MacLeod – Mr. MacLeod commented on the tent ordinance and the city’s enforcement of same. Mr. MacLeod also agreed that the language should not be opened up to specific residential properties. Mr. MacLeod supported the phased in events language for events upcoming in 2014 and agreed tent permit language be added to reflect that.

John Queenan – Mr. Queenan had a few questions regarding fire inspections and occupancy limits.

PUBLIC PORTION: Those wishing to publicly comment shall come forward, give their name and address, and speak into the microphone.

Megan Russo - 124 S. White Castle Drive, Little Egg Harbor, NJ – Ms. Russo was scheduled to be married in September 2012 but due to losing their home in Storm Sandy they had to change plans. They decided to have a small wedding and to rent a house in Cape May to have a backyard wedding. They were following all of the city’s guidelines in planning the wedding. They’ve made deposits and scheduled all services locally, invitations have gone out and guests have already booked rooms and airfare. The agreement was signed over a year ago and the new law will impact their wedding. 1409 New Jersey Avenue is the location of the scheduled event (Mary McKenney is the landlord/property owner). The wedding is scheduled for May 3, 2014.

Wayne Keiser – 1027 New Jersey Avenue and 1029 New Jersey Avenue – Property is zoned R2 and is adjacent to C3 zone. Has a current signed contract for a mid September wedding. Concerned that acceptable uses will be eliminated. He has for many years donated his home for retreats with different ministries. It’s not just a financial concern but the opportunity to make his properties available for beneficial use as well.

Mike Brogan – 1318 New Jersey Avenue – located in C3 zone. His issue is once you get above 30 people it triggers an event. His house sleeps 30 people so he is concerned that he would trigger an event every week. His property has 11 bedrooms and 12 baths. Mr. Monzo reviewed the definition of event house and Mr. Brogan’s house does not meet those terms. His property was approved for condo but it is still a single family, he never converted it.

Art Chiarini – Speaking for an owner of two properties on the 1400 block New Jersey Avenue. They were expecting a certain amount of rental income on these properties which was factored in when they purchased the properties. Rental income is needed to maintain these properties. He doesn’t see why events for the 2014 year couldn’t be allowed since there are current signed contracts for weddings. He expressed that he would be devastated if he had a wedding planned. He stated that it brings a lot of revenue in and he doesn’t believe we should have these people go to Atlantic City because we told them no.

Motion made to adjourn.