

**BOROUGH OF BOUND BROOK
PLANNING BOARD SPECIAL MEETING
DECEMBER 8, 1999**

The meeting of the Planning Board was called to order by chairman Lyle Strain at 7:10 in the Bound Brook High School Auditorium, West Union Avenue, Bound Brook, NJ.

ROLL CALL

The following members were present: T. Ruscetta, F. Ryan, A. Gaglia, L. Strain, P. Pournaras, E. Custy, K. Krauser and J. Thompson. Also present were B. Malone, Recording Secretary; J. Cilo, Jr., PE, Engineer; S. Doyle, PP, Planner; and M. Rodgers, Esq., Board Attorney. Mayor Gilly was in the audience.

COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

This meeting is being held in compliance with the "Open Public Meetings Law." The requirements of the Law have been met. The Special Meeting Notice has been posted in the Municipal Building, filed with the Municipal Clerk and forwarded to the Bound Brook Chronicle, The Courier-News and the Star Ledger.

AGENDA

Mr. Strain advised that Mr. Gilly and Mr. Ryan were in attendance, but were not legally allowed to participate in the proceedings. He then introduced some guests: Mr. Bzik, Somerset County Director of Planning, and Brad Higginbottom, Borough Council president. The agenda consists of the planning board and the public being presented with the redevelopment study. At some point, the planning board will either approve this report or not, and it will be passed on to the borough council.

Mr. Strain started with two brief statements. First, there seems to be some misunderstanding as to why this meeting is being held. The board is not approving any plan that involves changes of any kind to physical structures; we are nowhere near that milestone. We are, at this point, meeting statutory requirements. Second, when a member of the public is ready to address the board, they should come to the microphone, ask any questions they may have (there is a signup sheet being circulated to give everyone this opportunity), and they will have two minutes to ask questions or make statements.

Mr. Strain introduced Bob Bzik, who is a resident of Bound Brook as well as Director of Planning for Somerset County. Mr. Bzik thanked the borough council and the planning board for taking this initial step. He advised that the audience will hear Mrs. Doyle present her preliminary findings in the area of redevelopment study in accordance with state statutes. The borough, Somerset Alliance for the Future, and County Planning Board will assemble top experts to come into Bound Brook and guide the borough in the years ahead. He stressed that the county stands ready to work with the borough.

At this time, Mr. Strain introduced Scarlett Doyle, Planner, of John Cilo, Jr. and Associates, who is very familiar with zoning history and needs. Mrs. Doyle pointed out four displays on the stage, indicating that they will also be projected onto the screen. There is topographical information, an aerial view outlining borders, a map of the flooding area (brown for 100-year storm and salmon for 500-year storm) superimposed over the street and road maps of Bound Brook, and a map of the study area that is contained in the report.

She explained that several months ago the governing body asked the planning board if the study area is suitable for designation as a redevelopment area. The answer to that question must be based upon law. The planning board commissioned a preliminary study to determine if this area is eligible. The entire process, which can be halted at any point, is as follows:

- The governing body adopts a resolution authorizing the planning board to conduct an investigation of whether the area is suitable as a redevelopment area.
- The planning board conducts a study.
- The planning board holds a public meeting.
- The planning board makes a formal recommendation to the governing body.
- The governing body adopts a resolution determining that the study area (all or some portion of it) be designated as a redevelopment area.
- The governing body or the planning board formulates a plan.
- The municipal governing body adopts a plan; they must establish a redevelopment agency to carry out this plan. Implementation may involve a private developer to carry out part or all of the plan. **There is no plan yet.**

A master plan must be done, an ordinance must be adopted, and both have separate public hearings. Preference studies will be conducted and historic inventories will be made. We have valuable neighborhoods that we want to preserve. Traffic studies will be conducted and a financial package must be prepared.

Section 5 of the local redevelopment and housing law is the foundation of this preliminary study. The planning board and governing body must conclude that one of the seven provisions have been met. There is one overriding factor: you have to prove that areas in excess of five contiguous acres whereon buildings or improvements have been altered by the action in such a way that the aggregate assessed value of the study area has been materially depreciated.

Mrs. Doyle proceeded to show slides and explain as follows:

- ◆ Bound Brook 1990 census information — Bound Brook has increased less than any other of the 21 municipalities in the county. We are pretty well developed, but from 1980 to 1990 we lost 2.3% of our population. Of the town's 1025 acres, the study area encompasses 200 acres.

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- ◆ Bound Brook aerial composite prepared by Jeff Thompson, which shows that we are highly structured. Of 2,710 line items for taxing, 57 are vacant lots, 2291 are residential, one is industrial, 232 are commercial, 30 are apartments, two are utilities and 97 are tax exempt.
- ◆ The study area, approximately 200 contiguous acres.
- ◆ Land use districts — eight different types are affected: B1 office/commercial, R3 single family, B2, office, industrial, R4 (one and two family), R5 (1-2-3-4 family), and R6 (garden apartments).
- ◆ Flood photographs.

Mrs. Doyle explained some of the soil types in the borough, which all have to be mapped, tested and evaluated. There are also many wetland areas along the streams which will have to be mapped.

The last flood, caused by Hurricane Floyd, cost over \$250 million in property damage in this state, making it the costliest disaster in New Jersey history. \$151 million of that damage was in central Jersey. There have been several major floods documented in Bound Brook, including Floyd in September 1999 and floods in October 1996, July 1975, August 1973, Doria in 1971, May 1968, 1938, 1916, 1903, 1897, 1896, and 1882. This information was provided by FEMA, who keep track of anyone who has two claims and make them part of a Repetitive Loss Study. Congress has not decided what to do with this list. The most recent flood attracted national and even international news. Information obtained by Senator Toricelli's office from FEMA indicated the following flood levels:

Church Street	4-7 ft.	Columbus Place	8-9 ft.
Drake Street	8-9 ft.	East High Street	3-8 ft.
East Main Street	8-9 ft.	East Second Street	6-8 ft.
East Street	7-8 ft.	East Union Avenue	10 ft.
Fairview Avenue	7-9 ft.	Hamilton Street	10 ft.
John Street	7-9 ft.	Linden Avenue	7-9 ft.
Maiden Lane	5-8 ft.	Main Street	5-9 ft.
Mountain Avenue	5-9 ft.	North Street	3-7 ft.
Pine Street	5 ft.	Talmage Avenue	7-9 ft.
Van Keuren Avenue	4-9 ft.	Vosseller Avenue	3-9 ft.
West Main Street	5-9 ft.	West Second Street	9 ft.

Some other information provided by FEMA during the second week on November indicated 695 residential units had called for assistance. Representatives came out and determined whether or not a building was habitable, which is defined as **safe, secure and sanitary**. There were 655 buildings determined not to be habitable unless \$10,000 was spent to get them safe, secure and sanitary. This cost does not include personal belongings or "cosmetic" repairs. The total cost of damage for these 655 homes was \$6,500,000. There were 29 other units significantly impacted requiring repairs up to 49%

of the value of the structure. Cost of this damage was \$2,131,000. Eleven structures were condemned, destroyed beyond the cost benefit for repairs, at a cost of \$1,650,000. These figures just include residential properties. There were 145 businesses affected, with a minimum of \$50,000,000 in lost revenues. The borough also suffered damage of approximately one million dollars including trees, pavement, lighting, meters, sidewalks, etc.

The total number of applicants, both residential and commercial, was 1,610. Eight hundred sixty-eight people received housing assistance of over \$2,350,000. There were 406 residents who had to secure individual family grants; they received \$1,850,000. FEMA did come to the aid of some individuals. Until this time, Doria had been the flood of record. A control point was identified, and the high water mark from Floyd was 41 feet, 5 feet higher than Doria. Within the flood area were two Superfund sites that are under the watchful eye of the EPA.

Mrs. Doyle pointed out that in the original map provided by the council there were five properties that were not affected by the flood (above 41' elevation). They include the cemetery, the library, and three properties on Hamilton Street. They were deleted from the map because they do not meet the guidelines. The tax assessor attested to the fact that the aggregate assessed value of the affected area has been materially depreciated.

Mr. Brad Higginbottom, council president, was introduced and made a few statements. He noted the tax situation for the next couple of years, on the surface, looks bleak. He encouraged residents to see Mr. Toth for a tax reduction for damaged property. This will, of course, erode Bound Brook's tax base. The budget will be introduced early and application will be made for discretionary aid. The ratables have to be built up again. We will be okay for a couple of years with help from the state. FEMA is encouraging everyone to get flood insurance. Applications to the Bound Brook Relief Fund will be accepted until Friday at borough hall. The money in the fund will be divided starting next week after all applications are in.

Mrs. Doyle next spoke about the levee. The dates she received from state and federal government indicate after 25 years it will be started in March 2000. The first leg of the project is along the easterly section. Hopefully, by the end of 2003 they hope to have it done to Route 22 (with adequate funding). She noted it can be exasperating dealing with state and federal government. At that point, surveying and mapping calculations have to be conducted, and it will be between 2006 and 2010 before the maps are changed and we are officially not flood prone.

Our purpose in holding this meeting is to answer the question that the governing body posed. We don't know what neighborhoods will be preserved. There will be a lot of meetings where residents can come to the podium and have their say. The difficulty is, when will the next flood be and how bad will it be? She believes the borough needs a

final plan as to what we can do to upgrade and stabilize this part of Bound Brook. Mr. Strain opened the meeting for questions from the public.

Linda Prudden identified herself as a 20-year resident of Bound Brook and explained hers is the last house on her block. She had eight feet of water in the first floor of her home. She wondered why residents of Bound Brook couldn't do what Middlesex residents did — be bought out if they want to be bought out.

George Plesa, a former mayor of Bound Brook (1980-83), explained that what the people want is some comfort now. He is very familiar with the Army Corps of Engineers and feels that the blighted areas have not been caused by this one flood. He noted that some people don't want to give up their homes and some do. He wondered how we can establish a tax base by making parking lots out of this area. He is also concerned about taxes going up.

Eugene Perone is looking to relocate and would like to sell his house. He wondered, if the area is declared a redevelopment area, if he will have to wait 5-10 years to move. He asked if the borough is prepared to buy his property now. Mr. Strain said no one can answer that question tonight. Mrs. Doyle said there are tax abatement possibilities and he has the opportunity to sell his property. Even if the redevelopment plan is put into effect, his house may not be affected at all. At this point we truly have not an inkling as to how this is going to be designed. When asked how long, Mrs. Doyle said within about six months we will have held preference meetings on different topics. There will be several meetings, and that is the time to give that type of opinion.

Steve Chubrick of West Main Street has been a resident since 1958. He was lucky not to get any water in his home, but he is concerned that filling in dirt for a soccer field is not a good idea in a flood plain.

Dave Hummel, Van Keuren Avenue, has been a resident for almost 18 years. The house he lives in was built by his wife's grandfather 70 years ago. His dilemma is that they have been hit with two floods in the past three years. Some people are not in a position to rebuild. His family is staring at 2x4 walls, and they have received no money from FEMA or their insurance company. Of the \$62-70,000 damage, about half will be covered by insurance. They are trying to rebuild before winter sets in. The Red Cross did not consider them "in need." They want answers now about what will happen over the next ten years.

Timothy Locklear has been on West Main Street for 20 years. He knew the area was flood prone and bought the property anyway. He would urge the planning board to accept the proposal, and he feels it can only make the area better.

Bill Mild, 238 West main Street, wondered if the board should be finding a developer to get a plan first. Mrs. Doyle explained that the law forces us to do things in a prescribed

fashion. If you deviate from that you lose the status of compliance. When asked about eminent domain, Mrs. Doyle explained that after the plan is done the borough will have condemnation powers and tax abatement opportunities.

Pete Petersen, Good Times Tavern on Hamilton Street, noted that obviously everyone here is upset. He told the planning board that they will be making decisions that will seriously impact the lives of the people gathered here, and he wondered how long the process will take. Mrs. Doyle said the resolution will go immediately to the governing body before their next meeting. Mrs. Pournaras asked if the board could take segments within this area to reconstruct the study. Mrs. Doyle acknowledged the board could trim this map, but they must do so in accordance with some criteria. She would be fearful that the criteria may not be sound. She stressed that just because it is a redevelopment area it does not mean that all the important aspects of this community will not be maintained.

Mrs. Pournaras asked how long it will be before developers make proposals. Mrs. Doyle felt it would take about six months to get all the input from the residents. She will try to fast track this and hopes to have a plan with a blueprint within 12 months. Mrs. Pournaras noted this will have an impact on real estate values and asked Mrs. Doyle if she had any thoughts on how the area should be redeveloped. Mrs. Doyle said it would be inappropriate to have any plans before the board receives the necessary input. Mrs. Pournaras said the people in the community need to participate. Right now, she pointed out, it looks pretty bleak, and we need to plan this so that commerce continues to flourish. She would like to make sure that the Downtown Management Association has a big input on how Main Street is restructured.

Oscar Lleba, 433 East Main Street, read from a Courier News article regarding the severity of the flood and what could be done to prevent a recurrence.

Haydee Torregroza, a Linden Avenue resident, said that in 1996 she had 6 feet of water and in 1999 it was 10.5 feet, according to documentation from her insurance agency. She is concerned about the children who are affected by this and asked how much longer then can be expected to wait. She would love to walk away if she could, but she is forced to rebuild. She urged the board to think of the children.

Andy Rehm wondered if the board could explain the declining population. Mrs. Doyle noted it was just census data. Mr. Rehm acknowledged that FEMA has spent a lot of money and wondered if the dike project will make Bound Brook flood-proof. He pointed out that New Orleans is located 13 feet below sea level. He said the project will be finished, even if it takes ten more years. At that time the town will be flood proof and the property values will go up. Anyone who sells now will get less than they will when the project is finished.

Mrs. Doyle explained that the redevelopment project can commence prior to the levee maps being adjusted. After the levee is done, there is an issue with FEMA. The Bound Brook project is a small segment of a larger project including Watchung. FEMA has a dilemma; they don't want to deal with changing Bound Brook maps until the larger project is finished. Mr. Rehm said the town needs tax ratables, and he thinks one of the reasons the population has declined is the school system. He said you can't just remove single residence homes; you have to build up and provide more than what you have.

Mrs. Doyle said that what we have now is a depreciating area. There will be a financial analysis done, and the bottom line will be that **Bound Brook will be better off than before the flood or it won't happen.** Mr. Rehm asked if all the buildings will be elevated. Mrs. Doyle reminded him that the board has no plan. She does feel this community has an opportunity to become first rate. When Mr. Rehm suggested that we go from the Green Brook all the way to the Middle Brook and convert it into "Bourbon Street North," Mrs. Doyle suggested that his comment would be appropriate for the planning phase.

Rosanne Short, of Cherry Avenue, suggested that Bound Brook has a master plan that must address the flooding. She wondered what has happened to this master plan. Mrs. Doyle replied that it has existed since 1988. The historic area has always had inadequate parking and traffic problems. The lower levels of buildings used to be store fronts, then dozens of applications asked for them to be used as residential because they couldn't rent the store fronts. It was changed to an R5 zone; now we are hearing that they can't rent them as residences. We have one-way traffic in some areas with narrow streets. This has been a difficult area, and the master plan does reflect that.

Ms. Short also mentioned that the school system will be raising taxes and she wondered how long the state will pay the town for lost ratables. Mrs. Doyle explained they are called discretionary funds, but the county and school taxes are not part of our discussion, just the municipal portion and possibly schools. One or two years would be the longest. Ms. Short said that the downtown area is desolate and wondered if we could do anything with the land near Route 22. Mrs. Doyle said that is not part of the study area. Ms. Short suggested that residents need to write state representatives for help; the town seems to be at a standstill. She doesn't feel there is any sense in rebuilding if there will be a flood with the next rainfall. People just can't leave their homes. She feels we have too many absentee landlords now, and people will start buying these properties and renting them to just anybody.

Nadine Warner, owner of the Bound Brook Hotel, said that at 9 a.m. there was 12 feet of water in her building. She wondered how the board can consider redevelopment if we continue to flood. She referred to Mr. Higginbottom's statement that people should get flood insurance because FEMA might not be here for the residents during the next flood. Mr. Higginbottom explained that even if FEMA is here for us, people who depend on

FEMA instead of flood insurance will get far less. He feels the town should put more pressure on the powers that be to deal with flood issues.

Jeffrey Lehrer, Esq., is representing a Talmage Avenue resident. He has reviewed the proposal and does not agree with Mrs. Doyle's definitions of "affect" and "alter." He acknowledges the flood had an influence on the area but he does not feel it was altered, or physically changed. Property values will be affected and brokers may be hesitant to show properties. He also feels property owners may be hesitant to renovate. He thinks a better alternative would be to promote the levee project and rezone the area. He wondered what the tax impact would be when the levee is installed, and he feels the proceeds will go to redevelopers. There are tax incentives also, and he feels there are more creative ways to go than this redevelopment plan. He feels we have to look carefully at the words of the statute.

Mrs. Doyle said Mr. Lehrer's comments were the most severe made this evening; it eliminates the obvious options that are available to this community. She went through 655 units that could be habitable -- all these homes that were condemned and could not be lived in -- and wondered if Mr. Lehrer was suggesting that we wait years, or perhaps decades, before we find funding. There is a possibility of redevelopment prior to the year 2010, and she feels giving false hope is misleading and improper. She strongly disagrees, and maintains that these structures have been altered.

Mr. Lehrer agreed that there is no question that these people have been affected, but he still questions if the area has been altered by this storm. Mrs. Doyle feels the structures are an integral part of the area.

A property owner from 224-226-228 East Main Street introduced himself and told the board he had begged and borrowed over \$150,000 to rebuild his business. He wanted to know who can say "this building is okay and this building is not okay." He wondered when the board will decide which pieces of property are going and which are staying.

Mrs. Doyle repeated she wants nothing less than for everyone to have a comfortable future. We will know when the plan is done, and he will be part of that process. We don't want anyone in this town to be hurt; if you live in an area to be preserved, it should be enhanced. If the area is not going to be preserved, you are an integral part of the project. You will be better off when this is done, and we will have a vital, active Bound Brook.

Maryann Baloy of Linden Avenue has a fairly new home, about ten years old, and had a foot of water into her second floor or a total of 11 feet. She feels to everyone in this town it is a pipe dream. She doesn't know whether to sell, rent, or hope not to be hit when it rains next week. She feels after waiting 25 years this phase should not take long.

A Romney Road resident asked about contaminants in the flood water. Mrs. Doyle directed him to a web site (www.epa.gov) where information is available on the superfund sites and you can see the potential contaminants. He suggested that a barrier wall will cost a lot of money. Considering the amount of money that has to be poured in every time it floods, it would behoove us to put it up as soon as possible. He feels that would save money in the long run.

Rev. Wright, Hope Chapel, East Main Street, expressed his concern in the wake of such massive destruction. He noted the study area represents the highest degree of all levels of diversity in Bound Brook. As a community with a reputation for very little diversity, he feels if this area disappears we need to think about the people who will be displaced; Bound Brook will go back to where it was before it grew in class and racial diversity. He suggested the board also look at low cost housing in the redevelopment process.

Mrs. Doyle had noted, as she went through the zoning, there were many people of a great diversity. There are families, regardless of their ethnic diversity, and that is part of the planning process.

Another Bound Brook resident suggested that we ask Bridgewater if they would like to take over another square mile, and they could just extend what they are doing. Another resident (East Second Street) expressed his disappointment that we are talking about ten years; he had hoped it was going to be a lot sooner. He also felt that property values would be hurt by this meeting. People don't know whether or not to rebuild. He said everyone is talking but there aren't many answers. Mrs. Doyle agreed that "to build or rebuild" is the toughest question an owner can have. Would you rebuilt if another flood is coming? If the answer is yes, do it. We are here for one very narrow answer — for the planning board to give the governing body their recommendation. Many people have come here with the feeling that they were going to get a different discussion. She said she cannot assure the residents when the levee will be built; she can only parrot what FEMA has told her. We may need hundreds of people to start writing.

Mr. Myer, of the west side of East Street (he called it the "forgotten side"), asked if he could get a letter regarding the contamination in the flood water. Mrs. Doyle said she is not sure if the contaminants hit the Winsor Brook, as the properties are south of him. When asked if he could get a letter indicating what the contamination was, Mrs. Doyle said he would have to see if samples were taken. We know that barrels floated down and we know these sites are under the Environmental Protection Agency. Hopefully the NJ Department of Environmental Protection can give him the information he wants.

(Break)

The meeting was reconvened at 9:45 p.m. Mr. Strain announced the board was at the point of deliberation. Mr. Rodgers had prepared a resolution, and Mr. Strain called for a motion and a second to adopt it. Mr. Rodgers read his resolution.

Mr. Custy made a motion, seconded by Mr. Anderson, that the board adopt the resolution with a correction by Mrs. Doyle "as far as Winsor Brook."

Mr. Anderson recommended that the board adopt the resolution. He recognized that some folks have a concern about the scope of the study and he agrees. But he feels it is important to approve this as written to go on to the second phase.

Mr. Custy noted that on page 2 of the study it summarizes in four lines what the needs of the community are. He feels that is the essence of the redevelopment needs and, on that basis, he feels the board should pass this motion.

Mr. Gaglia said it is fairly certain that the area in question needs redevelopment, or at least rehabilitation. But he would hesitate to give up 1/5 of the town at this point for a lower value than it would be worth in 3-4 years. In reality, after that time we will not flood again. He said he was not in favor of designating a redevelopment area.

Mrs. Pournaras stated "We have all been flooded." And she felt everyone had to admit that parts of the proposed area really need to be redeveloped; it would be beneficial to everyone. But she has a problem with 200 acres all at one time. She felt that portions of the area should be a starting point, and then move on. If a developer comes in and proposes new housing, maybe the people being displaced will have a place to move to. She feels for people who have sunk more money into rebuilding after a flood, and she knows what it feels like. Once you have done this, you don't want the town to come in and take your property. The developer will have the benefit of the higher property values. She disagrees with the report a little bit; she feels the businesses suffer as much as the homeowners. There are seven new businesses that have opened since the flood, and we welcome them. She doesn't think that a 200-acre section of property would be easy to manage for any planning board or any council. She feels a few mistakes were made in this process. She feels no one will be able to sell their homes because they may be knocked down in a couple of years. She truly believes there has to be someone to tell the other side of the story. She has an alternative in mind to this resolution with areas she believes should be redeveloped.

Mr. Anderson agreed, and he did not think the entire 200 acres need to be redeveloped. The difficulty he had was being able to make a decision as to which sections, and he does not feel it should be his opinion or any other individual's opinion. He thinks that the board will set it in motion when they designate the area. Those pieces we don't think make sense will be agreed to. He doesn't think this is a 200 acre deal.

Mr. Ruscetta asked Mrs. Pournaras if the board could hear her plan, and she spelled out which sections she would like to see included and suggested the board start with those. She feels these properties are something that conceivably could be developed into something.

Mr. Strain cautioned that describing individual areas could result in someone across the street, who had the same amount of water, being left out. What rationale could the board use to leave some properties out of the plan? And if the board agreed to this type of segregated plan, would they have to come back to this process to do it all over again? He suggested just getting it over with. All the board is doing is approving an area that meets the criteria; that does not mean the whole area will be redeveloped.

Mrs. Pournaras insisted the board is hanging a label on a 200-acre area. Mr. Strain said the label is already there. Mr. Ruscetta noted that he has difficulty eliminating someone on one side of the street and wondered how Mrs. Pournaras identified these particular areas. Mrs. Doyle reminded the board that they can't expand the map they were given beyond what was there. She stated they are not leaving anyone out.

Mr. Rodgers reminded the board that the process started with the council asking the board to consider this area. Right now the board only has jurisdiction to review the areas the council delineated. Mrs. Doyle said part of the planning process is to go through several meetings with the public. At that point the redevelopment plan will be created and the agency will implement that plan. If they decide, for example, that they want a developer who is particularly competent in terms of historical structures and renovations, they may decide to phase it. The options are endless once we get to the planning phase.

Mr. Ruscetta reported he has been asked why a couple of affected roads were left out of the plan. Mrs. Doyle did not feel it would be appropriate to ask those present to speak for the council, but Mr. Rodgers saw no harm if someone had the information. Mr. Cilo asked if the board can add caveats, and possibly add these streets to the study area. He thought it may just have been overlooked, and it can be brought to their attention at any time.

Mr. Rodgers explained that the council has to accept the recommendation of the planning board, but it might or might not accept all of it. They could accept a lesser area. Once the designation has been finalized the council begins their studies. The plan has to come back to the planning board for its approval.

Mr. Thompson asked when we could let the residents know if they are in a redevelopment zone. The zone could be reduced, and he feels once it is determined we should make public notice so that everyone is aware if their property is in the zone. We need to put their fears to rest as soon as possible.

Mrs. Doyle felt it would be appropriate to write the governing body and tell them that we want expeditious action with regard to all the studies and that people should have that knowledge as soon as possible. Mrs. Pournaras asked if she could amend her suggestion to begin at Tea Street to Vosseller Avenue for the first part and then from Vosseller to downtown. Mr. Strain was not sure he could agree; he felt it would be

easier to do it once and let the community know what the goals are. If we agree that the flood impacted the community, it impacted this entire area equally. He has a problem with saying we will only do a portion of it. The development may well be done in phases.

Mr. Anderson said he is not sure that putting it in two phases solves the problem. Mrs. Pournaras said the board is saying they don't care how they hurt anyone's financial position by hanging a label on an area that suffered great financial loss. She truly believes that whether you are a home owner, a business owner or a commercial property owner you will be affected when the media picks up the fact that the whole area is a redevelopment area. She asked who will buy your home? Who will buy your business? Who will buy your commercial property? If you want to reinvest, who are we to say you are wrong?

Mr. Anderson said his point is that he doesn't think it is the right way to approach it by taking a large area and, somewhat arbitrarily, splitting it into one half to be addressed first and the other half to be addressed later. It seems that what makes the most sense is to take a look at the entire scope and collectively determine the best approach. Anything short of including all the properties is doing a disservice to people.

Mrs. Pournaras asked if there is any way we can put a time limit on how long they can take to decide whether or not they can have a viable plan and what areas would be involved. Mr. Rodgers said he is not aware of anything in the statute to circumvent the request that was made of the board. We, as a board, can't limit the time the council has to act. We are only making a recommendation. They will make the final decision as to what area will be included.

Mr. Gaglia asked, if this redevelopment were put on a fast track, when any of the development would take place. Mrs. Doyle said it is very difficult; we are told there will be funding for flood control. She was also told that FEMA will take a great deal of time. Once we know what the plan is, everyone is going to be put on notice. We will commence with the public hearings as soon as the governing body gives the okay. After those hearings, within six months we should have a plan that people can rely on.

Mr. Gaglia felt that if we redevelop the area there are some good parts and some bad parts. If we had a group of inspectors to do their jobs we wouldn't have people in these buildings today. Mrs. Doyle noted we have difficulty in a cohesive plan that functions. We have, in many cases, uses that are so dissimilar they are counterproductive. This would be a community that would function as a community, rather than the piecemeal approach.

Mr. Custy pointed out that historically the Army Corps of Engineers complete a project once started. There is nothing that says these projects cannot go concurrently. He thought the borough's aim was to make them go at the same time.

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A roll call vote was taken as follows:

AYES: Mr. Ruscetta, Mr. Gaglia, Mr. Strain, Mr. Custy, Mr. Krauser, Mr.
Thompson and Mr. Anderson
NAYS: Mrs. Pournaras

MOTION CARRIED 7-1

Mr. Custy made a motion, seconded by Mr. Thompson, to adjourn the meeting at 10:35
p.m. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Malone
Recording Secretary