

Committee Meeting — January 20, 2009

MAYOR'S REPORT

THE INAUGURATION:

Today marks the inauguration of our 44th President. It is the hope of all Americans that the issues facing our nation will be adequately addressed by our new administration in Washington. We are in the midst of a recession with a near record number of people that are unemployed, foreclosure rates are higher than in many years and businesses both big and small are on the brink of closing their doors. It is a time where our governments, both nationally and locally, feel the pain of the people that they represent. It is up to all of us, the representatives of the people, to set aside our party, to listen to our people and to move forward in a bi-partisan effort to correct the ills of our constituents. It is my hope that our new leader, President Barack Obama, will immediately address the issues at hand that are facing our nation. The faltering economy, unemployment, tax relief, the war in Iraq and Afghanistan and the most recent unrest in Israel. We must as a nation and a community, put aside the politics and make every effort to cure what is ailing our nation.

ON SITE BONDING:

On the agenda tonight is an amendment to our ordinance that addresses bonding requirements for commercial development. As I said from the start, this requirement puts Barnegat at a major disadvantage when trying to attract commercial ratables to our town. The Township is amply protected against any issues that may arise in the construction of commercial properties with bonds for all offsite construction in our right of ways. We are losing precious ratables to nearby town by continuing this requirement that costs builders tens of thousands of dollars more than if they built in Manahawkin, Little Egg or Ocean Townships.

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PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE CUL-DE-SAC:

The issue of the Committee's decision to perfect the cul-de-sac on Pennsylvania Avenue has resulted in a number of inquires from the residents that either live in the area or have children in the two schools on Bengal Blvd. The Committee along with our Police Department and school officials will be meeting this week to address the issues of traffic congestion and safety during the peak hours in the morning and afternoon. However, I want to make it clear to everybody that safety WILL NOT be compromised for convenience.

MENK ISSUES:

In a letter from the NJDCA to our township attorney, it appears that the State IS NOT willing to hold back the re-issuance of Menk's building license citing that Mink has complied with the original settlement agreement between Menk and the DCA. Neither the Township nor the homeowners were a party to that agreement and we strongly disagree with the recent decision of by the DCA. Our construction department will continue to inspect the balance of Menk homes and issue Notices of Violation for all defects found in them. Our attorney's office will continue to press the DCA and Menk to make timely repairs as violations are found and to increase the workforce dedicated to making those repairs. As an added note, the inspection of all residences will be completed on this Wednesday for issues of water in the crawl spaces and repairs are being performed on those already inspected. Finally, the Township has received a letter from DCA regarding the referral of the resident's petition to the appropriate law enforcement authorities for their review. Based on the letter, it has appeared that these law enforcement agencies have referred the issue back to the DCA. In plain English, the state has punted. As always, the Township will continue to handle this important quality of life issue for the residents of Mirage.

FIRE GRANTS

On the agenda tonight are two (2) resolutions pertaining to state fire grants for the Township. Barnegat officials have been working very closely with representatives from the Pinelands Commission and the Forest Fire Service, on the development and implemtation of a fire initiative plan for the

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Township. As a result of our hard work and cooperation with state officials, the Township will start to receive reimbursements from the state for wildfire mitigation activities. This would include providing some defensible spaces at both Brighton and Pinewood Estates Mobile Home Parks. Furthermore, the Township will be shortly submitting a second grant with the state to help cover the cost of equipment needed to enhance the Township's fire fighting abilities. We are currently working with Barnegat and Pinewood Fire Departments _____ in order to finalize our grant request. The Township Administrator will have additional details regarding these grants in his report.

Jeffrey M. Melchiondo
Mayor, Barnegat Township