

**BOROUGH OF LONGPORT SPECIAL COMMISSION MEETING
MUNICIPAL BUILDING, 2305 ATLANTIC AVE
LONGPORT, NJ 08403
MONDAY, MARCH 29, 2021 – 6:00 PM**

The meeting was called to order with the Flag Salute.

Municipal Clerk Kyle read the Opening Statement pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act. A notice of this meeting was emailed to the Press of Atlantic City and the Current on March 24, 2021. In addition, copies of notices were posted on the bulletin board and filed in the office of the municipal clerk. Notices on the bulletin board have remained continuously posted. Official action may be taken at this meeting.

ROLL CALL:	Nicholas Russo	present
	James P. Leeds, Sr.	present
	Daniel Lawler	present

Alternate Borough Solicitor Agnellini, Administrator Porter, Chief Culmone, Engineer Dennis, Zoning and OEM Officer Funk, Building Department Head Hirsch, and Municipal Clerk Kyle also present.

Emergency Exits, Public Speaking Announcement – by Mayor Russo.

There were technical issues experienced with the remote portion of the meeting. At approximately 7 pm, remote members attending the meeting were bumped off the meeting. It was later noted that some members were able to successfully re-join the meeting after several attempts. It is unknown how many were able to re-join.

A petition was submitted to the Governing Body with signatures of residents who had serious concerns regarding Margate’s traffic direction change on Amherst Avenue. It requested immediate action and the following of the Chief of Police’s safety plan to address these concerns.

Mayor Russo explained that this meeting was called forth in the spirit of openness and transparency. He said this is an opportunity for all to understand where the Governing Body is in this process. He noted that the Borough cannot control what other municipalities can do, and that it can only regulate what happens in Longport. He noted that both Margate’s report and the Borough’s traffic engineer report would be discussed.

Public Comment or questions on listed resolutions:

There was no public comment or questions on the listed resolution.

RESOLUTIONS

Number	Title
2021-59	A Resolution Authorizing the State of New Jersey to Enforce the Elevator Subcode MOTION – LEEDS, SECOND- LAWLER, All AYES- none opposed.

DISCUSSION ON MARGATE CITY PROMENADE PROJECT AND PROPOSED TRAFFIC DIRECTION CHANGE ON AMHERST AVENUE TO ONE-WAY TOWARDS LONGPORT FROM WASHINGTON TO COOLIDGE AVENUES

Commissioner Lawler noted that what the City of Margate City is doing does not involve the Borough of Longport. He explained that Longport cannot control what Margate does. He noted that his concerns included increased traffic into the Borough and parking near the project area. He noted that the meeting was an opportunity for the Governing Body to listen to residents' concerns and suggestions.

Mayor Russo asked Traffic Engineer Sandy Koza of McMahon Associates, Inc. to discuss her impact statement report regarding the Margate Promenade Project. Ms. Koza explained how she developed her report including looking at the following information: Amherst Avenue Promenade Construction Plan Set as prepared by Arthur W. Ponzio Co. & Associates, Inc., dated September 3, 2020; and the Traffic Engineering Evaluations Amherst Avenue Development Plan as prepared by Shropshire Associates, LLC dated August 31, 2020. She compared this information to some historical data that she had collected from the summer of 2019. Ms. Koza discussed the amount of traffic volume during different times of the day and seasons. Based on the traffic volume data, Ms. Koza did not believe that the modification of Amherst Avenue from two-way to one way would not have an adverse impact on the Borough. She also discussed the parking impact based on the new development in Margate. She noted that there will be more cars parking in Longport near the promenade project. She felt the biggest impact to Longport would be the parking impact when the restaurants were operational. She also recommended that the intersection of Amherst Avenue and Coolidge Avenue be converted to an all-way stop to address potential safety issues associated with the northbound and southbound lanes being aligned with each other. She also discussed some additional signage and road markings in that area. She also discussed an aqua park in the area and that while it was operational during the summer the Borough would be impacted at that time with additional traffic. There was further discussion on the report.

Engineer Dennis questioned Ms. Koza regarding traffic volumes at estimated peak hours, asking if the the vehicles would increase to approximately 16-30 additional cars coming into Longport. He asked about any suggested changes for parking in Longport. Commissioner Leeds asked about the intersection at Coolidge and Amherst, nothing that the traffic would turn down Coolidge Avenue. He asked if these cars might turn down before Coolidge at 36th Avenue. He also discussed a potential recommendation she had to turn a section of a street to be made one way south bound. Ms. Koza noted that mapping programs would have to be notified of any changes to traffic flow. He also discussed traffic continuing south bound for another five or six blocks in Longport. Ms. Koza noted that there currently isn't a bike path in this area of Longport, but it is something that could be continued into the Borough.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Patrick Armstrong of 302 N. 34th Avenue thanked the Governing Body for holding the special meeting and listening to residents' concerns. He discussed all the new businesses at the Margate Promenade project. He said all these attractions only have one exit that 'dumps' into the Borough of Longport. He noted that there will be much more overflow parking in the Borough. He discussed having a portion of Amherst Avenue converted one-way towards Margate. He fully supports the Chief of Police's safety plan to address the traffic.

Mr. Mark Hyman of 4 N. 31st Avenue discussed two options for the traffic flow: one was to allow it to travel southbound or (west) into the Borough or to put up Stop signs to stop people from entering. He wanted to know what the Governing Body's position was on this topic.

Mr. Bruce Funk, Emergency Management Coordinator for the Borough of Longport discussed concerns that he had about the project. He noted that there are several restaurants located there, the water park and marina slips. He discussed truck traffic servicing the restaurants and also tanker trucks that are refueling boats. He was concerned about these trucks entering Longport and potential fires or environmental hazards from spills.

Mr. Tom McAllister of 20 N. 31st Avenue came to speak as a concerned resident, he also noted he is the Chairman of the Planning and Zoning Board. He thought it was a poorly conceived and ill-planned project on Margate's part. He was disappointed that Margate did not communicate with Longport on this project. He agreed with Mr. Armstrong to stop the cars from entering into Longport.

Ms. Fran Kenny of 225 N. 36th Avenue said she was in favor of making Amherst one way towards Margate and adding a 'Do Not Enter' sign at Amherst & Coolidge avenues. She was also concerned about the large trucks parking and idling in Longport. She also expressed concern about the increased traffic.

Ms. Lisa Galante of 226 N. 36th Avenue agreed with Ms. Kenny's comments. Ms. Galante was concerned with the increased amount of trucks in the area and the overflow of parking in Longport. She agreed with keeping the traffic from entering Longport.

Commissioner Leeds asked if she thought it would increase traffic on 36th Avenue. Ms. Galante was concerned about the increased volume of trucks believing it will triple in volume and felt that it would affect numerous streets near the area.

Mr. Bob English of 130 N. 32nd Avenue was concerned about traffic being pushed onto side streets such as Monmouth and Winchester in order to access the bridge. He also suggested making Sunset south all way to 32nd Avenue. He also suggested adding additional speed monitoring equipment that notifies drivers of their current speed to help keep speeding under control throughout the Borough including on Monmouth and Winchester avenues. He noted that there is a smaller version of the speed monitoring equipment in the Somers Point area near Clancy's restaurant. Mayor Russo agreed with Mr. English's suggestion to add more speed monitoring equipment in the Borough if funding was available.

Mr. Fred Lutz of 205 N. 36th Avenue noted that he had appeared before the Governing Body at a past meeting to voice his concern prior to the water park being built. He agreed with Commissioner Leeds about controlling traffic down Coolidge Avenue and not on 36th Avenue. He agreed with placing a Stop sign and barrier in the area. Mr. Lutz said that there has been an overflow of parking on 36th Avenue due to the business district in Margate. Mr. Lutz suggested making the area residential parking and providing residents with placards to help alleviate parking issues. Mayor Russo discussed a similar parking issue on Atlantic Avenue near a high rise in the area. He noted that this issue was alleviated by making the area hourly parking. Mr. Lutz reiterated his suggestion for residential parking permits.

Mr. Mike Mulvey of 3212 Monmouth Avenue was concerned about Margate traffic coming into Longport on Monmouth Avenue. He suggested changing the traffic flow of Monmouth Avenue to one-way towards Margate.

Mr. John Murphy of 18 S. 30th Avenue voiced his concern with the increased traffic and parking in Longport due to the promenade project in Margate. He voiced his support of deterring traffic from coming into Longport. He was also in favor of residential parking with parking stickers.

Ms. Linda Young of 204 N. 36th Avenue voiced concern about the increased parking and traffic into Longport. She said she has lived in Longport since 1974 and that over time the parking issue has increased. She said that family members cannot park on her street due to the overflow of bay and restaurant parking. She requested that a barrier be placed at the border with Margate to prevent cars from entering. She also supported adding a 'Do Not Enter Sign' in the area. She also discussed potentially having the barrier from Memorial to Labor Day if it could not be permanent. She said the restaurants should provide its patrons with parking. She also suggested closing it off as a walking promenade. She was also in favor of residential parking with parking placards.

Mr. Glenn Falso of 300 N. 33rd Avenue voiced his concern about increased traffic and parking in the bay area of Longport and the safety of bicyclists and joggers. He also suggested forming a safety committee to address these issues.

Ms. Diane Feliciano of 18 N. 36th said she has been a Longport resident since 1966. She supported barricading the end of Amherst Avenue seasonally. She also supported residential parking permits.

At this point in the meeting there were technical difficulties with the remote portion of the meeting. Remote members were bumped off. Some were able to re-join. Solicitor Agnellini was asked if the meeting needed to end because of the issues. He explained that since no decisions were being made at the meeting and information was just being collected he recommended that the meeting could continue. He further explained that members of the public could send in their comments and that the recording would be available online for interested members of the public to listen to. The Governing Body was in agreement to continue the meeting as the meeting was for feedback and that no decisions were being made at this meeting.

Commissioner Lawler also reminded residents that they can apply for a permit to park in front of their driveway.

Mr. Michael Dion of 3203 Sunset Avenue also voiced his concern about the increased traffic volume and parking in the Borough. He expressed his concern about people speeding in the Borough on Amherst and Sunset avenues, and rolling through two Stop signs on Sunset, as well as parking all along Sunset Avenue. He also recommended putting a barrier at the Margate border to keep vehicles from entering Longport.

Ms. Susan Lutz of 205 N. 36th Avenue said that this is a safety and parking issue and the Borough needs to take it seriously and be proactive. She also voiced her support of resident parking placards.

MS. Terri Grossman of 3202 Sunset Avenue noted that she moved from Margate for the quieter lifestyle in Longport. She expressed concern about the increased traffic and the safety of people in the area.

Chief Culmone of the Longport Police Department provided a detailed plan to help address increased traffic volume and parking in the Borough from the traffic direct change of Amherst Avenue and Promenade Project in Margate. Some of the plans including making a section of Amherst Avenue in Longport one way to 33rd Avenue and Sunset one way toward the LP/Margate border. He also

recommended converting Monmouth Avenue to one way towards the bridge and making Winchester one way towards Margate. He explained that this would direct traffic to the larger streets in the Borough and alleviate the traffic flow on the smaller residential streets. There was further discussion on the Chief's plan. He also discussed a 'road diet' on Atlantic Avenue in Margate.

Engineer Dennis noted that Margate is looking to reduce Atlantic Avenue to one lane in each direction, similar to what Longport has done on Atlantic Avenue. Chief Culmone stressed the need to reduce the traffic flow on the back streets in the Borough. He also suggested placing 'Do Not Enter' signs at the border, he also discussed placed some type of structure there. Mayor Russo requested that Chief Culmone present his recommendations to the Governing Body.

There was also discussion about 36th Avenue being one way and installing speed bumps.

Mr. Gary Rubin of 228 N. 35th Avenue said he was in favor of the Chief of Police's plan.

Mr. Richard Hirsch of 103 S. 26th Avenue questioned if anyone had asked Margate to change the direction of traffic on Amherst Avenue to one-way towards Ventnor instead of towards Longport.

Mr. Jim Gillin of 219 N. 36th Avenue said one of the main reasons he moved to Longport was to get away from the crowds and busy streets of Margate. He agreed with many of the points made at the meeting. He said his main concern was safety. He noted that cars often speed down Amherst Avenue and discussed making it one way.

A resident who also called in (name and address could not be ascertained) was concerned about increased traffic into Longport. He was also concerned with more impaired drivers entering Longport. He agreed with the Chief's recommendations. He suggested beautifying the gazebo area at 36th Avenue.

Ms. Mary Nugent of 2604 Oberon Avenue said she was concerned about Margate's promenade plan and a lack of parking included in the project. She also discussed residential parking permits. She also questioned how Borough owned land near the gazebo at 36th Avenue could be incorporated, possibly making the area a public park area. She was against the change in traffic direction.

A caller of 227 N. 36th Avenue said he was strongly in favor of barriers. He also expressed concern that too many traffic changes could cause confusion. He also discussed some other traffic direction changes in Margate.

Ms. Connie Pappas of 200 N. 36th Avenue noted she had been bumped off the call several times, and that she was asked about the amount of U-turns in the Borough. She noted that needed to be taken into consideration, as well as additional speeding enforcement.

Mr. John Fitzgerald of 3215 Monmouth Avenue voiced his concern about increased traffic on Monmouth Avenue. He noted that traffic is already heavy on Monmouth Avenue.

Ms. Lanzilotti of 100 N. 35th Avenue (and Ms. Eileen Mulligan of 35th & Winchester avenues) noted that cars park on both sides of Winchester Avenue and that vehicles dangerously speed down the street. She supported making Winchester and Monmouth avenues one way. She also supported permit parking for residents.

Commissioner Lawler said that Chief Culmone had discussed several key points and recommended that the Chief and the Engineer get together to discuss implementing a plan for the Borough. Commissioner Lawler expressed the importance of having a plan in place prior to Memorial Day.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION – COMMISSIONER LAWLER, SECOND – COMMISSIONER LEEDS. All AYES- none opposed.

Adjournment – 7:40 pm.