

TOWNSHIP OF MAPLEWOOD
COMMUNITY MEETING

 :
 3 IN THE MATTER OF: : AUDIO TRANSCRIPTION
 : OF VIDEOTAPED
 4 MAPLEWOOD THEATER : PROCEEDING
 REDEVELOPMENT :
 5 -----
 :

Thursday, March 14, 2024
Town Hall
574 Valley Street
Maplewood, New Jersey 07040
Commencing at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENTER:

PAUL GRYGIEL, Professional Planner

TRANSCRIBED BY:

MICHELE QUICK, CCR, RMR, CRR
NJ Licensed Stenographer

QUICK COURT REPORTING, LLC
47 BRIAN ROAD
WEST CALDWELL, NEW JERSEY 07006
(973) 618-0872
office@quickreporters.com

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1 (Meeting is already in progress when
2 recording begins.)

3 MAYOR ADAMS: So this is all what you
4 tell us what we'll take into consideration and how
5 we'll then create the redevelopment plan, so I'm
6 going to introduce Paul. Paul Grygiel is our
7 planner and he's going to lead you through the
8 presentation and then we'll do community input.
9 That is really what's going to be a SWOT exercise,
10 which is a little different than the first meeting.
11 SWOT stands for "strengths, weaknesses,
12 opportunities and threats." I always forget the
13 last one. So we'll do that and we want -- when we
14 do the SWOT analysis, we want you to think about the
15 whole village, not just necessarily this block
16 because, you know, that's what we want to hear, the
17 strengths, the weaknesses, the opportunities and
18 threats in the whole village, so I'm going to turn
19 it over to you. Thanks, Paul.

20 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you all as well
21 for coming out here on the nicest night of the
22 entire winter thus far. Thank you.

23 Paul Grygiel's my name, I'm a
24 Professional Planner with the firm of Phillips
25 Preiss Grygiel Leheny Hughes, we're based in

1 Hoboken, we've been consultants to Maplewood on and
2 off now for about 20 years in various projects. I
3 was heavily involved in the Master Plan back in --
4 ten-plus years ago as well as the post office
5 redevelopment plan and other redevelopment plans
6 throughout the township.

7 I have a quick question up front. How
8 many people were at the first community meeting two
9 weeks ago? A good amount. And how many -- let's
10 see how many were not. A bit more. Okay, so as the
11 mayor mentioned, we're going to recap or go over
12 some of the same information from the last meeting
13 as well as recap some of the main points for the
14 benefit of those who were not here. What I'm most
15 interested in tonight, though, as the mayor
16 mentioned, is hearing some more input, questions,
17 ideas, but also a focused exercise with regard to
18 how this redevelopment area and the village as a
19 whole could be improved, what opportunities there
20 are, and again, start thinking about the future of
21 this particular site.

22 Okay, very briefly, with regard to the
23 redevelopment process, you're probably familiar with
24 it here in Maplewood, it's one of the many
25 municipalities throughout New Jersey that has taken

1 advantage of this law, the state law, that allows
2 for designations of areas in need of redevelopment
3 or rehabilitation. There are different categories
4 and different criteria for both of those. Maplewood
5 has both. However, the outcome is the same with
6 regard to a redevelopment plan. Examples are the
7 old post office site where the Clarus is now, the
8 former PSE&G site, which is (inaudible) now; more
9 recently, Parker Avenue over at area 2, which is now
10 by (inaudible) Park. There are plenty of examples
11 throughout Maplewood, as well as South Orange,
12 Montclair, many other towns, cities throughout the
13 state utilizing redevelopment.

14 A quick overview of the benefits. The
15 process that allows for more specific regulation of
16 development than you'd be allowed to do so under
17 standard zoning; again (inaudible) what uses are
18 permitted in different sections of the town, the
19 heights, setbacks, that type of thing. It allows
20 for very specific requirements with regard to the
21 site, building design as well as things such as
22 community amenities, streetscape improvements,
23 parking, other public benefits that can be asked to
24 be provided by a developer.

25 So with regard to the process, this

1 particular area we're dealing with includes
2 Maplewood theater as well as a number of other
3 parcels; I'll get to the specifics momentarily. The
4 township committee authorized the Planning Board to
5 undertake a study last year that was adopted by the
6 Planning Board, came up with its findings with
7 regard to the retainer agreement designation. Next
8 up in the process, we are here in the redevelopment
9 plan process. If and when that gets done, if a plan
10 is adopted by the Township Committee, that will set
11 forth development regulations for this area, then
12 the township can enter into agreements with one or
13 more redevelopers. Again, no one's selected,
14 there's no plan out there just yet. And then there
15 would be a chance for public review and Planning
16 Board review following that for very specific
17 building designs, site improvements, that type of
18 thing. Next slide.

19 Again, the examples we cited last time,
20 some of you might be familiar with, by the Wellmont
21 Theater in Montclair, the new development project
22 along Seymour Street is the product of a
23 redevelopment process there. Downtown Morristown is
24 a number of different projects as well, but as I
25 mentioned, Maplewood, South Orange, Cranford,

1 Westfield; I could name probably dozens of towns at
2 this point throughout New Jersey that have utilized
3 this process to provide for mixed-use development,
4 for transit-oriented development, again, for a
5 different, more specific type of development than
6 you would get through letting the marketplace just
7 do what it will.

8 I kind of went through this already,
9 but the scope of the plan that we'll be looking to
10 provide for the redevelopment area includes uses
11 that are permitted, what's allowed, what's not
12 allowed, how tall buildings can be, how far they
13 should be set back from the street, the amount of
14 units, all those types of things, the parking,
15 layout, the amount of parking, pedestrian
16 facilities, bicycle facilities, et cetera, and as
17 has been practiced here in Maplewood, it certainly
18 contains sustainability measures, the design will
19 be, you know, green design, as well as an affordable
20 housing component if there's any residential
21 permitted.

22 Okay, the area. 2.14 acres in the
23 heart of Maplewood Village. It's being referred to
24 primarily as "the theater site" but there's other
25 properties adjoining the theater. I'll just point

1 to the screen. No. 175, that's lot No. 715, is the
2 Maplewood Theater property. To its left, you have
3 the Green Way Markets, then the former Bank of
4 America building. In the back, there's a small
5 parking lot owned by the township behind the
6 theater. And then you have the Burgdorff Center,
7 and then wrapping around next to the theater, the
8 small retail strip with the three restaurant spaces,
9 again, totaling just over two acres. This is the
10 area that was designated by the Planning Board and
11 then the Township Committee as the redevelopment
12 district.

13 This is an aerial view. Again, you're
14 probably familiar with it but it just helps in the
15 sense of how it looks. Maplewood Ave. is at the
16 bottom of this aerial photo, Inwood Place on the
17 left, Durand Road to the right, and off to the top
18 is Woodland Road just across to the back of the
19 parking lot. I don't need to tell you about
20 Maplewood Village, I would assume it might be a big
21 reason why you moved here in the first place or
22 remained here. It's certainly a draw from around
23 the region, it's a draw for both people coming to
24 visit as well as residents of the township and
25 others to enjoy the mix of uses that are there.

1 It's unique in the fact that it has the train
2 station right next door but also, as many people
3 have pointed out before and we heard the other night
4 as well, it's not a -- there's no through street
5 there. You have to make a decision to get to
6 Maplewood Village. It's not off a main drag, it's
7 not something you just happen upon.

8 In terms of context, we've been
9 receiving lots of information with regard to
10 historic resources. Thank you, Susan. Thank you,
11 Historic Preservation Commission. The area,
12 Maplewood Village as a whole, has been listed as a
13 designated National and State Register historic
14 district. The boundaries roughly coincide with the
15 business district, the redevelopment area is up
16 towards the top right on the -- what we're showing
17 on the screen. This information's, of course,
18 available on the town's website where we provide
19 more detail for you.

20 A quick clarification because there
21 were questions at the last meeting regarding
22 historic designation and the difference between
23 state and local. On the one hand, National Register
24 designation is great in terms of recognition, it
25 provides for some protections with regard to public

1 action. So if the township or any other government
2 agency is seeking to redevelop, to improve a street,
3 to do anything else, there would be an extra layer
4 of review. It does not take away private property
5 owner's rights, though, to -- essentially to build
6 differently, to demolish, to change buildings, it
7 does not have strict protections at the local level,
8 so that's something that Maplewood would need to
9 undertake or potentially through this redevelopment
10 plan process, we would put in some protections with
11 regard to historic preservation and adaptive reuse.
12 The historic designation does incentivize owners to
13 potentially get grants, tax credits, that type of
14 thing as well.

15 And we do have one just one example
16 here. This is a picture taken just under 50 years
17 ago of the Maplewood Bank and Trust Company
18 building, up until recently, Bank of America, just
19 to give you an idea of one of the most historic and
20 notable buildings in the redevelopment area and the
21 township as a whole.

22 A quick overview on zoning. The
23 downtown Maplewood Village is currently primarily in
24 the RB retail business district, it allows for the
25 standard type of uses you find in a downtown

1 setting, retail ground floor, restaurants, services,
2 upper floor residential office. That zoning is
3 what's in place now. It allows, actually, as we
4 talked about last time, up to 50 foot of building
5 height. As some people pointed out, there are not
6 really many 50-foot-tall buildings but the Maplewood
7 Theater building actually, if you measured it, would
8 probably go higher than that, I'm almost certain
9 it's higher than that in the rear portion of the
10 building, not on Maplewood Avenue. There's also a
11 small portion behind the theater that's in a
12 residential zone district, similar to the
13 surrounding neighborhoods.

14 I gave you an overview so we can skip
15 through the (inaudible).

16 Again, just so it's clear, any
17 development plan could either keep the zoning in
18 place, it could change it, it can override it, it
19 can provide, you know, wholly different standards,
20 so that's to be determined whether we're going to
21 keep it the same, you know, come up with something
22 completely different or allow property owners to
23 choose.

24 In terms of planning context, Maplewood
25 has a very recently updated Master Plan. That's the

1 name of a document that's adopted by a Planning
2 Board. That essentially is a policy guide, a
3 statement of vision for a municipality. In
4 Maplewood's case, there was a process that took a
5 few years to update the former document to come up
6 with a vision for what the community wants to see
7 throughout the township as well as specifically in
8 areas such as Maplewood Village. It does have some
9 general guidance, it's really not any specific
10 recommendations with regard to this particular site.

11 I'm sure you can't read that in the
12 back, but there are some goals that are relevant in
13 the Master Plan. Again, we can provide this
14 information later. It's safe to say these are more
15 general kind of guidance statements dealing with,
16 you know, maintaining commercial areas, the vitality
17 of commercial areas, providing for better mobility,
18 make sure it's safe for pedestrians, bicyclists and
19 others. Supporting appropriate infill development,
20 again, not just leaving things as they are but in
21 some cases, allowing for new development.
22 Reinforcing residential quality of life and
23 protecting historic resources and cultural
24 resources.

25 Okay, there's a mouthful here. A

1 planner certainly wrote this. There's
2 recommendations with regard to places such as near
3 the train station, being an appropriate location for
4 new development and redevelopment to take advantage
5 of goods and services nearby, jobs nearby,
6 transportation options, providing for different uses
7 that essentially add to the vitality of the business
8 district. And specifically as mentioned, targeted
9 use of the redevelopment tool including in this
10 section of Maplewood.

11 Other things that will be taken into
12 account with regard to this plan, as I mentioned,
13 green objects. It's been my experience here in
14 Maplewood going on well over ten years now with
15 regard to buildings, for example, the Clarus is the
16 first (inaudible) -- I looked this up the other day
17 but -- as well, right? Yeah. The first one in --
18 North America? In New Jersey, okay, maybe I'm
19 jumping ahead. Anyway, it's something that, ten
20 years ago, was thought about, yes. And all of the
21 other redevelopment projects as well as most other
22 township efforts are, you know, focused on energy
23 efficiency, greenhouse gas reduction, that type of
24 thing. In addition, we're looking to work with
25 stakeholders in Maplewood Village, whether it's the

1 merchants, property owners, the alliance, try to
2 come up with something that makes sense both for you
3 and the community as a whole but also for those who
4 will be most impacted on a regular basis and can
5 benefit from any redevelopment. And overall, the
6 idea is to take advantage, again, of a train station
7 being there, of having things within walking
8 distance, to try to reduce the dependency on
9 automobiles and maybe to not have as many parking
10 spaces as you would typically find in a new
11 development project.

12 Okay, last community meeting two weeks
13 ago, we had over 120 people. Thank you for coming
14 out to the woodland, went through the same
15 presentation in a little bit more detail. We took
16 -- it was going to be just initial questions, it
17 turned into an hour and a half worth of questions
18 and comments, which is great, we have it all
19 transcribed. I don't have the transcript yet
20 (inaudible) we'll have that soon, we'll have -- I
21 was told right around now, about two weeks now, but
22 that was all taken into consideration. There were a
23 number of questions and comments at that time.

24 So what I want to do now is give a
25 quick recap, so if I say something, if you're the

1 one who said one of these things and I got it wrong,
2 please, during the question-and-answer, during the
3 discussion part, feel free to correct me. We tried
4 to break out, in general categories, what was
5 discussed at that first community meeting.

6 So with regard to the first topic is
7 uses, and we heard a lot about the theater itself,
8 about opportunities for reuse of the theater. In a
9 perfect world, for many people, it would be great to
10 see a single theater there, you know, restored to
11 its original grandeur, it would be for live
12 performances, for movies, for other types of things.
13 There are other uses that sound nice but, you know,
14 the reality is that might not happen, and the
15 building has been modified greatly since it was
16 built. It was also the -- the other issue being --
17 a couple of other issues, actually. You already
18 have the Burgdorff Center there right in the
19 vicinity that is used for performing arts space, and
20 on a larger scale, there are still other theaters in
21 operation for movies in the vicinity, there are
22 other performing arts centers, so it's a matter of
23 where something could fit into that context and
24 whether there's, you know, willingness at a local
25 level to support this funding with, you know, other

1 development opportunities that might be able to make
2 it happen.

3 Other considerations with regard to
4 theaters is, you know, parking, traffic. If you're
5 going to have a place that has a large number of
6 patrons coming to it, you need to be able to get
7 them in and out, you need a place for them, mostly
8 to park. Again, if you live, you know, a half mile
9 away, up to a half mile away, you'll be able to
10 walk; for the most part, people are going to be
11 coming from a greater distance. So that's going to
12 be a limiting factor with regard to any
13 redevelopment of the theater. Likewise, with regard
14 to traffic management, it's a very -- as I
15 mentioned, it's not a through street, Maplewood
16 Avenue, so it certainly makes it tougher to get cars
17 in and out from the broader region, and for that
18 matter, you have a traffic pattern that's pretty
19 well set in place and I'm not sure you're going to
20 want to be adding a lot of traffic to residential
21 areas.

22 (Discussion not picked up on audio recording)

23 MR. GRYGIEL: Sorry, Zoom folks. I
24 can hear myself fine in here, but again, my
25 apologies.

1 Okay, so uses -- so that's the primary
2 focus on the use discussion, but there also, of
3 course, were other things such as residential, you
4 know, typically in redevelopment projects,
5 multifamily residential is the driver, if you will,
6 that is the money maker that oftentimes can pay for
7 other things that there's market demand for and
8 that, again, frankly makes sense in a setting such
9 as Maplewood Village. It's a matter of how much, if
10 you do it, how big, what types of units, how many
11 are affordable, you know, that type of thing.

12 The next topic was dealing with
13 building height and density or as we call in
14 planning circles, bulk standards, how much should go
15 there, how much is too much, you know, if you allow
16 50 feet now, do you say that's fine to do that? Do
17 you say go taller because you can accommodate people
18 living across the street from the train station in
19 the downtown? Is it less because you're worried
20 about character, you know, to the neighboring
21 residential areas?

22 Historic preservation, I already kind
23 of touched on that, but that again is a huge
24 consideration here as to how the township can deal
25 with historic preservation and ensure that, you

1 know, we're trying to prevent demolition in any type
2 of new construction being sensitive to what you have
3 already, enhancing it. You know, we've heard ideas
4 such as putting a restaurant on the Bank of America
5 building. It seems like a no-brainer to me; to most
6 of us, it would make sense. Not my decision to do
7 that but we can allow for that and hopefully
8 incentivize that if that's what the community is
9 looking to see.

10 Parking and circulation, again, we've
11 sort of touched on that as well, but again, just
12 being realistic here, we used the example last time
13 about Green Way Markets, the old Kings. For years
14 now, you have trucks backing, you know, into a
15 loading zone that's about nine or ten feet wide. I
16 know the street gets blocked off in the mornings for
17 deliveries now, but that's certainly not an ideal
18 situation, it's not what you find in traffic
19 planning manuals, but what would you do otherwise?
20 If you want to keep a supermarket there and you have
21 deliveries, do you build some other, you know,
22 loading area, do you have a different circulation
23 pattern that allows trucks to drive underneath a
24 building? That's the kind of thing you think about
25 because you don't really want to be adding more

1 driveways on Maplewood Ave., but I don't think you
2 want to be putting trucks in a residential
3 neighborhood to the rear either.

4 Likewise, with regard to parking, we
5 heard a lot of folks say "Hey, a parking deck would
6 be great," others say "You're out of your mind, that
7 would completely ruin the character of the area."
8 So that's definitely something to consider and see
9 whether it's worth trying to provide more parking or
10 to say "Hey, Maplewood Village has lots of parking
11 already, it's a short distance away, you just need
12 to know how to get to it, you need to have better
13 wayfinding signage, you need to connect it," you
14 know, "at a pedestrian level, improve lighting,
15 improve circulation," that kind of thing.

16 Affordable housing, I mentioned as
17 well, but just to recap, it's been the township's
18 practice, its policy, essentially any time there's
19 new redevelopment projects, to require a set-aside
20 of affordable units to low and moderate income
21 households. That both helps address the township's
22 obligations but also it's just an equity stance that
23 it makes sense if it's new development, that it
24 should be available to more than just those who can
25 pay, you know, the high rents that oftentimes go

1 along with new development.

2 And lastly, one of the big topics was
3 impacts of development, so not just traffic, but we
4 heard about stormwater runoff, the sewer system,
5 schools, public services, fire and rescue, probably
6 a bunch I'm forgetting, but essentially whatever,
7 you know, we're looking to allow in a redevelopment
8 plan, if it can be accommodated through existing
9 services or does the township, through other
10 entities, need to improve facilities, add on to
11 facilities, does a developer pay for that, does a
12 developer chip in for something, you know, beyond
13 what you typically would see in new development?

14 Right before we get to the SWOT, I just
15 wanted to do a -- mention one other quick thing.
16 You can come up and get ready, Mayor. I was looking
17 into parking and circulation and I was sent a 1949
18 map, a plan for Maplewood Village about parking, how
19 to improve parking. So an issue back then, you
20 know, someone actually recommended some of the lots
21 you have mid block now off of Baker and Highland and
22 back in those areas; it actually changed the
23 circulation patterns around Ricalton Square. What I
24 found was interesting, I just want to put this out
25 there before I get to a discussion, is there were a

1 number of -- all the land uses, all the existing
2 businesses were listed on that -- on that plan, and
3 it reminded me of how much things change even
4 though, in our mind, it's always exactly the same.
5 So the street pattern, again, was pretty much the
6 same back then. I'll share this map later.

7 Unfortunately, I didn't add it into my presentation,
8 I just saw it today and started thinking about this.

9 The library was essentially where the
10 Clarus is now, so on Ricalton Square. That's where
11 you have a new building now that was, before that, a
12 post office. The post office actually used to be on
13 Baker street. The post office now has moved to a
14 different location. Looking at the specific land
15 uses on this map, there are, not one, not two, but
16 three what we called "supermarkets" in Maplewood
17 Village on Maplewood Avenue. So where Green Way is
18 now -- I see a lot of nodding heads of folks --
19 there's a couple others down the street as well.
20 There's a five and dime, I'm told, if you were
21 familiar with that. There was drugstores,
22 haberdasheries, so the point being you had a lot of
23 things that unfortunately are no longer there and
24 maybe don't make sense maybe anymore. Some things
25 were the same, there were a few liquor stores, there

1 are realtors, there are cleaners, beauticians. I
2 did notice no nail salons listed on there. There
3 also were five houses in this redevelopment area, so
4 behind the bank building -- behind the theater
5 building were actually single-family homes or maybe
6 two-family but there were houses in those locations.
7 So again I just put that out there as we start
8 thinking about the future of this particular site.
9 Remember that as much as you might remember when you
10 moved here five years ago, ten years ago, you were
11 born here 50 or 80 years ago, things weren't exactly
12 as they were before. I'm not advocating for
13 wholesale change but I'm advocating for having an
14 open mind to look at what would make sense, you
15 know, given the realities of the theater and the
16 other land uses that are there and the fact that you
17 might, you know, tip my hand at the opportunity
18 here, you might have a parking lot that didn't exist
19 in 1949 that was houses before that was built for a
20 drive-thru bank in the middle of your downtown. I
21 think that's a great opportunity to take something
22 like that and say "No, it's not -- we don't need
23 that anymore." We actually can take that plot and
24 turn it into something that you want to see.

25 Mayor, I've talked way too much.

1 MAYOR ADAMS: That's okay. You're
2 supposed to.

3 MR. GRYGIEL: (Inaudible)

4 MAYOR ADAMS: That's what we pay you
5 for. Okay, so you're going to do the SWOT. Yeah,
6 the other mic. Go ahead and explain that.

7 MR. GRYGIEL: This mic -- it's on now.
8 Okay, there we go.

9 So we were talking after last meeting
10 about what would be a useful way to guide the
11 discussion at this meeting, and this is a planning
12 tool that, you know, five years, regularly over that
13 time, in certain projects, you undertake a SWOT
14 analysis. That stands for "strengths, weaknesses,
15 opportunities, threats." So what we want to do is
16 go quickly here, you know, we'll just rattle things
17 off. Patrick is going to -- are you going to take
18 notes on this for us? All right, so we'll be typing
19 this up as we go, and just literally just saying
20 what comes to mind, so we don't need you -- no
21 offense but we don't need anybody to sit here and
22 give us a long-winded discussion on any of these
23 items unless you think it's useful for context, but
24 we want to try to focus it on things that, you know,
25 are strong right now starting out and then going

1 where there are weaknesses and then flipping the
2 discussion to "Well, what's an opportunity?" So,
3 again, I gave one example, a plot that's no longer
4 needed. And what threats are there? You know, ten
5 years ago when we did the post office plan, we were
6 always thinking there'd be a chance the movie
7 theater would close, there was a chance that, you
8 know, the Bank of America would close and that the
9 supermarket would go away. Unfortunately, two of
10 those three things happened. So what could we
11 foresee looking forward? And that will, then,
12 again, hopefully end at a good note to say "Okay,
13 let's prioritize what makes sense and we'll tell you
14 what we think, you know, we should be doing next in
15 this process."

16 MAYOR ADAMS: So are we going to start
17 with strengths?

18 MR. GRYGIEL: We'll start with
19 strengths, yeah, so we'll just --

20 MAYOR ADAMS: Okay.

21 MR. GRYGIEL: -- look at the Village
22 as a whole.

23 VOICE: One of the words that really
24 struck me in what you just showed was the word
25 "cohesive." I don't think that's what we want in

1 Maplewood Village, I think we like the diversity of
2 the buildings there. I think that keeping those
3 historic buildings, the fact that the church -- that
4 the Burgdorff Center is in that plan is a little
5 shocking to me, and I think that the strength is in
6 that we have these very large historic buildings and
7 I don't want to lose that character of Maplewood.

8 MR. GRYGIEL: Perfect. Thank you.

9 MAYOR ADAMS: Jenny? All right, you
10 stole my thunder but that's exactly the kind of
11 thing -- I was going to say, too many towns in New
12 Jersey and elsewhere are turning into the same kind
13 of buildings. The building that's on Dunnell Road,
14 that's not the building we want in Maplewood
15 Village. Each building was built individually, each
16 building speaks to the history of this town; even
17 though the uses of the building have changed, the
18 buildings themselves have not changed terribly much.
19 I mean, some have but not that much. And it's
20 important that we live here, see the history.
21 Maplewood Bank and Trust was an element of building
22 this town, the people who had started years and
23 years ago, and it's important that that's there and
24 that engraved name, "Maplewood Bank and Trust,"
25 remains.

1 VOICE: Thank you.

2 VOICE: That was a long one word.

3 VOICE: Just building on what has just
4 been said, I would want to point out the kind of
5 cuteness of Maplewood, which is not Disneyland cute,
6 it's just -- you can -- you can relate to it, but
7 that's one of the reasons that people want to move
8 here and it's one of the reasons our real estate
9 values are so high, painfully high, in terms of
10 property taxes, but in terms of the value of our
11 houses, they're high because people want to live in
12 this kind of village and anything we do that
13 threatens that, I think threatens the whole feeling
14 of the town.

15 MR. GRYGIEL: Going back to the
16 threats part. Thank you.

17 VOICE: Hi, I just -- I wanted to put
18 "walkable." You've been talking about parking a lot
19 and I think -- I know parking's important but I also
20 think part of the charm of Maplewood is that it's
21 not the most important thing in the Village and
22 people will figure out how to get there if they want
23 to be there and I think it's an important part of
24 our Village and its DNA.

25 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you.

1 VOICE: If I can make a suggestion
2 that we give Pat a little latitude, if he hears
3 something that's not a strength in what someone's
4 saying, that he drops it into another category.

5 MR. GRYGIEL: For the other category?

6 VOICE: Yeah, because --

7 MR. GRYGIEL: We're trying to focus it
8 but that's fair.

9 VOICE: The point being is that the
10 comments -- some of the comments about the strengths
11 identified as "threat" which is that the typical
12 pattern of development is counter to all those
13 strengths, you know? So it's a market issue that's
14 a threat.

15 MAYOR ADAMS: Got that, Pat? I think.

16 VOICE: Okay, another vote for
17 historic buildings and how lucky we are to have such
18 a livable, walkable village. If the town is very --
19 the size of the buildings, the context, all of these
20 things are really important to how it feels. The
21 historic buildings pull it all together, but it's
22 also the human scale of all the buildings. There's
23 nothing too tall -- well, the Clarus is a little
24 tall but not too tall, and I think that's really
25 important. Also, the theater building is the only

1 building that's Terracotta in our downtown area and
2 that's pretty significant.

3 VOICE: This is another vote for
4 historic buildings because as someone who's grown up
5 here since 1999 when we moved here, it's been
6 something that has really -- that has really made me
7 feel proud of living here, was because all of the
8 wonderful buildings, like the high school, like
9 Tuscan where I went to elementary, and there's a --
10 I love the sense of cohesiveness of the historic
11 buildings and I think that, not just for the major
12 redevelopment plan but for any new buildings in
13 Maplewood, I feel like they should maintain the
14 original character of the architecture and that any
15 new buildings should have similar architectural
16 language to -- as those that are nearby it, and I --
17 that's something that I'm really proud of.

18 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you.

19 MAYOR ADAMS: Thank you. Anybody
20 else?

21 MR. GRYGIEL: One quick thing I should
22 have said at the outset too, just so it's clear, so
23 if you agree with what someone said, we don't need
24 to --

25 MAYOR ADAMS: Repeat them all.

1 MR. GRYGIEL: Just because we want to
2 get through as many ideas as possible. It's not
3 like we're weighting them or saying, you know, 20
4 people said this.

5 MAYOR ADAMS: (Inaudible)

6 MR. GRYGIEL: No, we'll get the sense
7 of it, don't worry.

8 VOICE: Just to further the -- us
9 having an educated discussion or debate about the
10 use of the theater, Susan, the town historian, was
11 kind enough to send me kind of a recap of the
12 history of the theater. There was a presentation of
13 Durand Hedden in 2015. I would encourage everyone
14 to read that. The theater, there's real history in
15 that theater, real theatrical, important history, a
16 revival of Oregon Best came there and then went back
17 and was massive in its kind of second run on
18 Broadway. That's just one example. And -- I know I
19 talked about this last week, I don't want to go too
20 far into it, but just to add to this, sure, it would
21 be easy to just, you know, kind of renovate the
22 whole village in that red-brick look of so many
23 developments that are going on in New Jersey now,
24 and just to kind of paraphrase JFK, we do these
25 things not because they're easy.

1 MAYOR ADAMS: Hey. One of the things
2 that keep -- nobody ever accuses me of not speaking
3 loud enough. One of the things that I always say
4 when people ask me about Maplewood is this was a
5 great place to raise my children and the scale of --
6 and the ease that the kids can move into the
7 businesses and just in terms of what we are choosing
8 in terms of going into these spaces, that is a huge,
9 huge thing. For me, I think it's the thing that
10 recommends Maplewood the best, frankly.

11 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you.

12 MAYOR ADAMS: Hey. Now I'm going to
13 trip. I'm going to ask you to pass this.

14 VOICE: One of the great things, I
15 think, is there's a lot of space in these existing
16 historic buildings. We have a lot of space, much of
17 which is unutilized and ready for creative thinking.
18 Gentleman I live on Maplewood Avenue and I bought my
19 house because it's walkable to the Village and I was
20 just saying to my husband last week that that block
21 is special because it has second-floor -- second-
22 story retail space, where the comic book store is,
23 which is (inaudible), and the music school is up
24 there, and so there's constantly people in and out
25 bringing their children to music lessons, music

1 pouring out of those rooms, and the parents going to
2 the supermarket and going to takeout and there's
3 just so much life on that block, which I think is a
4 strength that we don't want to lose if we turn that
5 upper story into residential.

6 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you.

7 MAYOR ADAMS: Anybody, more strengths?
8 Strengths. Hello.

9 VOICE: This is an obvious strength
10 but I think it really leads to so many calculations
11 that flow from it. Maplewood Avenue meanders, we
12 don't live on a grid, and this means that cars have
13 never been able to move quickly, and the
14 intersections -- everyone -- it's almost like a
15 circle where cars know they have to slow down when
16 they're making lefts or right onto Maplewood Avenue.
17 That really serves and creates the conditions for a
18 good pedestrian center. Cars simply cannot move
19 quickly.

20 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you. Natural
21 traffic (inaudible).

22 MAYOR ADAMS: Okay, we're focusing on
23 strengths, so...

24 VOICE: Strengths. Yes. One of the
25 strengths that I will discuss now is the different

1 heights of the buildings, and I want to recommend
2 that the height of 149 Maplewood Avenue, owned by
3 the estate of Harold Bobrow, is a one-story building
4 and it goes nicely from the two stories of the movie
5 theater to the one story to the excluded Christian
6 Science Reading Room and then to the residential mix
7 on the next block.

8 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you.

9 MAYOR ADAMS: Positive, Michelle,
10 positive.

11 VOICE: I would like to echo a little
12 bit on the walk built. I would say that Maplewood
13 -- Maplewood definitely embodies the 15-minute city
14 where we can walk to all of our basic needs within
15 15 minutes, so I would say are there any basic needs
16 that we are missing within that and maybe we can
17 address that.

18 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you, that's a good
19 one. That can be under the opportunities, I think,
20 too. Opportunities. You get both categories.
21 Thank you. It's okay.

22 VOICE: Like many here, I'm a long-
23 time resident of Maplewood, and the reason that drew
24 us as a family to move here continues to exist, the
25 quaintness of the community, and I do not live on

1 Maplewood Avenue, I live on the other side of town,
2 where I can walk, it's a good -- it's a long walk
3 going down the hill, coming back up can be rather
4 challenging, and I would like to -- I love this
5 community, I love this town, have always and why I
6 remain here, but we don't have a lot of resources to
7 be able to -- even though we have a -- we have
8 jitneys and what have you, but depending on what's
9 put in here, a lot of people do not have access or
10 comfortable access. If you're in the immediate area
11 of town, you do. And I drive, I have a car. Other
12 people don't have that ability.

13 MR. GRYGIEL: Weakness.

14 VOICE: That's a weakness.

15 MR. GRYGIEL: That's fine. Thank you.

16 VOICE: That's a weakness.

17 MR. GRYGIEL: That's okay.

18 VOICE: I'm wondering, you know, and
19 I'm asking you, has anyone -- the movie theater's
20 been up for sale for quite a while. Has anyone
21 addressed the town for a space or usage? Maybe this
22 was discussed at another meeting, but has anyone
23 approached the town? Has anyone suggested perhaps
24 that a little boutique hotel go up there? Here we
25 have Seton Hall where parents are coming in from out

1 of town, so -- but I see that as a positive.

2 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you: And there's
3 been no formal plan put forth by any property owner
4 or others, but that's -- what we're trying to do is
5 process to guide that and give us some parameters
6 and your ideas.

7 MAYOR ADAMS: And I'll just reiterate
8 that they're privately owned so they wouldn't really
9 come to us, they would see what's zoned right now.

10 VOICE: Yeah. Oh, yeah, I know, but
11 that's one of the reasons we're doing this, so if
12 there's, you know, if there's something we could
13 perhaps zone it for that it might not be allowed
14 now. Yes.

15 VOICE: Since we're sort of jumping
16 around, I'm just going to -- I'm just going to go
17 into opportunity for a second.

18 MR. GRYGIEL: (Inaudible)

19 VOICE: In 2008, the bookstore on
20 Baker Street was closing and then my parents bought
21 Words bookstore, has been there since 2009, but sort
22 of the point of the "opportunity" concept, and I'm
23 very much in favor of the movie theater staying
24 there, which I'll talk about in a second, but we
25 have the ability to change things up a little bit,

1 we change the location, we ended up being able to
2 get a lease, you know, on Maplewood Avenue so that
3 way, it was expanded, and that created -- and has
4 really become the staple of our town, and I think
5 that there's -- we employ people with special needs
6 was a big part of it. There's so many opportunities
7 within having a movie theater in our village that --
8 we could employ teens to work there, there's many
9 movie theaters, including some in New Jersey and New
10 York State, that hire people with special needs, and
11 I think that -- I'm actually -- I do film producing
12 and I grew up in this town. I have several friends
13 who are also producers and directors and part of
14 that was this movie theater in our town that we grew
15 up with in the early '90s. I think that it would be
16 great for -- and I feel for the kids now also that
17 there's not that many things on cold days to do when
18 you're a kid around here. I think it inspired us
19 and I think that, like, we could -- there's really
20 just so much actual opportunity within that theater
21 and SOPAC -- I'm sorry to everybody on Zoom -- but,
22 like, just doesn't have that same community feel
23 that the theater did in Maplewood and so I think
24 that would be a real, real extreme loss to lose it
25 and also Anne Hathaway's first date and kiss was at

1 Maplewood Movie Theater. Okay.

2 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you.

3 MAYOR ADAMS: Well, that's a historic
4 reason not to get rid of it. Oh, I'm sorry.

5 VOICE: Yeah, so just piggybacking on
6 that about the movie theater, and I made a statement
7 last meeting that we had. First of all -- first of
8 all -- first of all, the movie theater, in terms of
9 history, it was the architect of that movie theater,
10 I don't know his name, Susan, maybe you know his
11 name, but he is the same architect that designed the
12 Newark post office, he was a very, very famous
13 architect, so that building has that history. Aside
14 from having the history of starting out before
15 talkies, having an organ and an orchestra in it,
16 that theater, Gypsy Rose Lee was in that theater,
17 there's so many notable people that were in that
18 theater; it really is a national treasure, and it
19 always kind of blows me away that this is a theater
20 town, but when you mention that to people who are in
21 the theater, "Do you know the history of the
22 Maplewood Theater and who played there?" they just
23 look at you like they don't know what you're talking
24 about, but it would really be a crime to get rid of
25 that theater. Also -- also -- also -- okay. Also,

1 what I mentioned is that David Geffen has a
2 foundation that will give money to restore old
3 theaters if you have an organization that he can
4 work with.

5 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you.

6 MAYOR ADAMS: Oh.

7 MR. GROSS: Sorry I came late. My
8 name is Mitch, I'm district leader for District 4.
9 Oh, hi. Mitch Gross, district leader for District
10 4. Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and
11 threats. What I've come to talk about is how
12 difficult it is to judge that because, basically, it
13 seems like you've taken three leg-sets and thrown it
14 at us and, you know, one person says "I want a
15 theater" and another one says "I want a giraffe" and
16 another one says "I want a roller coaster." Right?
17 And you're both planning professionals and
18 supposedly there's been no study about what could go
19 in there. I mean, we know what that property --
20 would bring the most property in Maplewood, and
21 that's apartments, just like it is in South Orange
22 and Millburn and all these other things. So if we
23 made it back to a legitimate theater -- my wife
24 worked for the New Jersey Performing Arts Center.
25 It's not simply a matter of bringing in that first

1 15 million to make it a theater again; they had to
2 bring in millions of dollars every year. Ticket
3 sales, alcohol sales, snack sales, none of that
4 makes NJPAC -- allows NJPAC to keep their doors
5 open. Right? And we heard that from the guy from
6 South Orange last time. There's got to be some
7 thinking that's gone into how much money that space
8 has to make -- isn't there? -- and how we would make
9 that money. I just point out one thing: South
10 Orange has an arts center. South Orange has a, you
11 know, business incubator, but if you take a look at
12 South Orange, they demolished an entire block and
13 put up a Behemoth, right? They have Third & Valley,
14 they have SoFi behind that, and they're building
15 something else big behind that. They've sold
16 everything, they've sold out the town so they can
17 have a little business incubator and, you know, a
18 performing arts center on its last legs. Do we want
19 (inaudible) is that what we're looking for?

20 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you. I will just
21 --

22 MAYOR ADAMS: Did you get something
23 out of that, Pat?

24 MR. GRYGIEL: -- take a quick break
25 from this to point out that's the whole point of

1 doing this process is to hear these things because
2 I've been doing this, again, for a long time,
3 everyone here has ideas; we want to make sure we
4 can, you know, if there's something we might be
5 missing, we don't want to just go down the road of
6 saying what makes the most money and what makes the
7 most sense to a developer. We want to try to
8 incorporate these ideas.

9 VOICE: I want to go back to strengths
10 because -- hi, I'm Deb -- I don't think anyone's
11 mentioned our small business owners and I know I've
12 seen a couple of them in this room and I just want
13 to say they are a big strength, a lot of our small
14 business owners live here and are raising their
15 family here and I want to, you know, just say that
16 we need to be supportive of our small business
17 owners and give opportunities for other people who
18 want to have small businesses because retail space
19 is hard to find, good retail space is hard to find,
20 so that is an opportunity as well.

21 MR. WARD: Hi. Pat Ward. A strength
22 is certainly the proximity to the train station, I
23 haven't heard that one yet. This is a stone's throw
24 from the train station. Another strength is the
25 existing zoning. This is a five-story zone, no

1 density, 2,500 square feet of lot area, so it could
2 have incremental development, that's what I'm
3 hearing here tonight.

4 A weakness would be that we should
5 clarify the existing ordinance. The setbacks on the
6 front of the building above 30 feet shouldn't be
7 there, no building is built like that. Another
8 weakness is that there's lack of clarification. We
9 say that they shouldn't have any parking but then we
10 say that we should follow the RSIS standards. It
11 doesn't make any sense. There's a lack of clarity
12 there.

13 An opportunity is that -- is that we
14 have a very nice facade right now, nice front. We
15 should prohibit driveways along Maplewood Avenue.
16 If a lot doesn't have access to another street,
17 parking shouldn't be required.

18 And the last thing, the threat, is
19 certainly the theater, it's gone. Zoning does not
20 tell someone what to do. It's a private decision.
21 Theaters are not permitted in this zone now. Maybe
22 we can do that, but that's not going to make it
23 happen.

24 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you.

25 MAYOR ADAMS: Hi.

1 VOICE: Hello. I work with the
2 Maplewood strollers for many years, and knowing the
3 Burgdorff the way I do, and working with Sally, who
4 was here for a very short time and then left us, we
5 have so many arts programs and so little space, and
6 one of the opportunities for this theater possibly,
7 if we could do both legitimate theater and the movie
8 theater, if we can make it a mixed-use space, is to
9 possibly take some of the load off of Burgdorff
10 because there are so many groups that want to use
11 the Burgdorff and there's not enough space and time
12 to book everything and people are constantly butting
13 up against each other and, you know, trying to find
14 other places, so that's just an opportunity,
15 possibly, for this, and I understand it's privately
16 owned, hopefully the person who owns it will see the
17 light.

18 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you.

19 VOICE: Unfortunately, I don't know
20 specifics, but there are business models of the kind
21 of thing that Carol mentioned of independent movies
22 and theater and activities and things like that, but
23 there are -- like in Montclair, the Montclair Cinema
24 has developed something, it's very hard to have a
25 movie theater. We know that it's financially

1 viable, but there are business models. I know in
2 Barrington, Massachusetts, they just opened one, so
3 there are things that exist (inaudible).

4 MAYOR ADAMS: Whoops. Okay, Susan.

5 VOICE: I don't think this was
6 mentioned. I couldn't hear everything. I couldn't.
7 I just want to say that the National Register does
8 -- and the State Register provide tax credits for
9 developers who are knowledgeable about how to use
10 them so this one -- up to 60 percent of
11 rehabilitation lost as long as they follow Secretary
12 of Interior standards, and it would be -- if we
13 could get a really creative developer -- a creative
14 developer could be attracted here, it would care
15 about that, it would be terrific, great. Thank you.

16 MAYOR ADAMS: Yes.

17 MR. KELLY: I'll hold it up. Is this
18 -- can you hear? Okay. I'm Brian Kelly and I
19 worked downtown in the Bank of America building, and
20 I guess my thought is about great spaces and how it
21 conflicts with parking. I'm not sure how this maps
22 in here, but 30 seconds, here we go. It's -- I
23 think the parking requirements we have both at a
24 state level and a municipal level, are a result of
25 urban sprawl -- suburbia sprawl in the 1950s. They

1 shouldn't apply now because we have just too much
2 parking. I know that's ironic for a place like
3 Maplewood because we don't have a lot of parking.
4 That said, we have the -- the difficulty of having
5 our most beneficial great space on the other side of
6 the railroad tracks so our park is not accessible.
7 That's a bumper. It's too bad. If you look at
8 other towns, like Westfield, they're going to do the
9 Lord & Taylors thing, that's an amazing project. If
10 you look at what Cranford has done on its south --
11 excuse me, the North Avenue circle, it's where you
12 go with your kid in the morning in a stroller and
13 have coffee and you're talking to people. We need
14 more spaces like that in Maplewood. Carlton Square,
15 I think is a joke. I think Starbucks is kind of a
16 commercial version of that, that's a nice place to
17 meet other people, but we need more great spaces.
18 Catecorner from Hershey's Ice Cream, that's turning
19 into something. So if we can concentrate on that.
20 I mean, even across from Carlton Square in the
21 Coldwell Banker little parcel there, the one that's
22 excluded from the redevelopment zone, I think that's
23 a great spot for some sort of a group space, a great
24 space. We don't do those in America, which we
25 should.

1 MAYOR ADAMS: Thank you. Who else?
2 Trish.

3 VOICE: Hi. I'd like to just sort of
4 piggyback on what this gentleman just said about
5 communal spaces and relate that to a parking issue,
6 so parking being a problem, this being an amazing
7 opportunity. I don't -- it's been said that we have
8 plenty -- enough parking here. We don't have enough
9 parking for downtown Maplewood, we just don't, and I
10 can tell you that small businesses are all feeling
11 that squeeze. I work with a trainer at the core
12 place. She said that she has had -- several times,
13 people who have their trainings with her in the
14 middle of the day, they'll call her up and say "I've
15 been around the town five times, I can't park, I'm
16 canceling our session." I mean, that's -- she
17 wanted me to come here and say that. And I know
18 that other small businesses are feeling, on a
19 Thursday night, Friday night, Saturday night, the
20 parking here is really problematic, especially for
21 people with mobility issues.

22 Now, here's the pie-in-the-sky
23 opportunity vision that I have that I know is a long
24 leap away, but when you mentioned communal spaces,
25 suppose we had parking -- suppose we figured out

1 some way of adding some extra parking with this
2 redevelopment plan that you're considering, like,
3 don't take away that bank parking lot, do something
4 interesting and creative with it to make more
5 parking spaces back there, and then let's have, at
6 least for some hours of the day, a pedestrian zone,
7 in our beautiful three blocks, with no cars. I
8 mean, European villages and, you know, towns, as you
9 all know, do that all the time. We don't -- I don't
10 -- I think we might be the only -- if we did that,
11 we would be the -- we might be the only town in New
12 Jersey that had that, and that would be an
13 incredible draw, an incredible asset for every
14 single -- in every way I can think of. That's it.

15 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you. Make sure we
16 get everyone who hasn't spoken yet, so --

17 MAYOR ADAMS: Yes.

18 MR. GRYGIEL: -- (inaudible).

19 VOICE: Sorry, this is actually just a
20 point of clarification. So it's been said that this
21 private space -- I just want to be very clear so I'm
22 understanding. What -- are we making
23 recommendations for how the area should be zoned but
24 it's going to be private -- like, if I said "I'm
25 going to buy the movie theater tomorrow," I can do

1 whatever I want, right? Within the current
2 guidelines? I'm trying to understand what exactly
3 we're doing.

4 MR. GRYGIEL: Sure, I'll be happy to
5 try to give you a 30-second answer to that and speak
6 directly into the mic so they can hear me on Zoom.
7 I've been chastised already, someone texted me about
8 that, actually.

9 Right now, the property owner has
10 regulation also, not just -- any property owner in
11 the village has this RB zone. They can develop
12 within the parameters of that, they can keep the
13 use. If it's a nonconforming use, that right stays
14 with the property. What the township is looking to
15 do is to either add additional regulations or change
16 the zoning altogether with the redevelopment plan,
17 which would supersede it. We could do -- I don't
18 want to get in the weeds here, but what's called an
19 "overlay zone," that it's an option on top of
20 certain properties or all properties where it would
21 allow for maybe a hotel, a cultural facility,
22 commercial recreation, people have told me, you
23 know, whatever -- those could be permitted uses as
24 well. We could also then talk about, in a
25 redevelopment plan, how tall the building could be,

1 whether it needs to provide parking, whether it
2 needs new pedestrian connections. The redevelopment
3 plan also allows us to say "We don't want red brick,
4 we want," you know, "a different" -- "tan brick" or
5 "We want Terracotta." Again, maybe you don't want
6 to get too specific, but we can provide those
7 regulations. That's the difference in doing a
8 redevelopment plan. The other thing is once that
9 plan's in place, the township can enter into
10 agreements to enforce, you know, essentially that
11 development versus -- you know, including timing.
12 Now, the difficulty here is that's not the -- the
13 township doesn't own the land other than the one
14 parking lot, so we have a little less leverage than,
15 say, when it was the post office site or the police
16 station site. The township actually de-designated
17 developers. But we're hoping, you know, with a
18 really good plan through a process that, you know,
19 outlines your vision, that we can encourage
20 developers to work with the town and then plan for
21 those -- those new uses.

22 VOICE: Thank you.

23 MR. GRYGIEL: That was more than 30
24 seconds, I think, sorry.

25 VOICE: Hi. So in terms of

1 weaknesses, all right, in terms of weaknesses, I do
2 think that we have a lot of spaces here for --
3 throughout the town, rather, for small children and
4 really no space at all for middle-school-aged
5 children. As somebody who was a middle schooler
6 that grew up here, that's always been the way, and
7 it's been the Bank of America steps for as long as I
8 can remember. So if we get rid of the Bank of
9 America building, we gotta put the middle-school
10 kids somewhere.

11 Separately, my question is: In terms
12 of, like, if we're designating the zoning or
13 whatever have you, is there a way to say that there
14 should not be further chains that come in, because I
15 thought that that was kind of a Maplewood ordinance
16 going back and now there's the Starbucks under the
17 Clarus, so where does that lie with what the
18 development's going to be?

19 MR. GRYGIEL: It's a bit beyond the
20 scope here but I can try to answer that that zoning
21 can talk about types of land uses. It's pretty
22 difficult as somebody who's been, you know, heard
23 this question before and, you know, wanting to do
24 this sort of thing, to regulate exactly how you say
25 what's a chain or what's not, you know, what if it's

1 a few business that's a few, do you set it at, you
2 know, sales of, you know, 5 million a year or 20
3 million a year, 100 locations? That's a hard thing
4 to do, but the redevelopment plan can hopefully, you
5 know, come into play with the size of the spaces
6 that are there, how they're designed, but you know,
7 we'll look into that. If that's something that
8 there's a strong design to say not to have any chain
9 businesses, we can look into that and see if that's
10 something that can be done.

11 (Pause in audio)

12 MR. GRYGIEL: Fair enough, there's a
13 balancing -- yes. Thank you. We'll look into that.

14 VOICE: Just in terms of weaknesses,
15 you mentioned affordable housing before. I think
16 the lack of affordable housing and access to
17 affordable housing is a weakness. You know, the
18 terms that you used were "equity stance" and also
19 "obligation," and by definition, when you're
20 fulfilling an obligation, you're not really taking a
21 stance on anything. I understand that equity is a
22 value of ours. I'd like to see us live that a
23 little more. I think our socioeconomic diversity in
24 this town is what keeps us from becoming a more
25 homogenous community, like Westfield, like, you

1 know, pick anywhere further out on 78. I don't want
2 to live in a town like that, that's why I moved
3 here. I like our socioeconomic diversity and I
4 think that, with property values going the way they
5 are, we are going to lose that, and when I see these
6 new buildings go up with the bare minimum, I think
7 we can have stronger codes, I think we could provide
8 more affordable housing, and I think, you know, talk
9 about how downtown's going to look, what's going to
10 be there, like what are the types of people that are
11 going to be there, are they going to be all one type
12 of person or are we going to have people from all
13 walks of life, all backgrounds, and I know it's not
14 related to the theater, but in general while we're
15 talking about the village and in the town in
16 general.

17 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you. Pat, maybe
18 under threats, something about affordability or --
19 you got that? Weakness, ah, weakness, sorry, okay.
20 Thank you. (Inaudible) it could be either way.
21 We're going to take some Zoom comments as well.

22 VOICE: Hi. I just want to say I
23 think there's a big opportunity for sustainable
24 redevelopment through adaptive reuse. A lot of
25 people love and treasure the existing architecture

1 and buildings that are there now. I'm a Bank of
2 America customer. I don't need a bank to be in that
3 space. There's lots of other great things that
4 could be done in that same building by preserving
5 that building and opening it up to different uses.
6 The same with the movie theater; I'd love for it to
7 be a theater, but if no one is willing -- no one can
8 get the money together to keep it as a theater,
9 there is a huge space in the back of the building
10 that we don't see from Maplewood Avenue. That could
11 be repurposed for many different uses without
12 destroying the streetscape and walkability along
13 Maplewood Avenue, so I hope through the
14 redevelopment that we can look for developers who
15 know that game of adaptive reuse, get architects who
16 know how to do that well and be a role model for
17 that type of work in the area.

18 MAYOR ADAMS: Thank you.

19 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you.

20 MR. ROSENBERG: Josh Rosenberg,
21 lifelong SOMA resident. Under "weaknesses" and
22 "threats," threat to development in town, I would
23 just say the current ownership of those properties
24 is really our biggest threat, and from a weakness
25 standpoint, it's kind of like the same -- the same

1 thing, I mean, it's really just about them not being
2 great owners and wanting to work with people. There
3 are -- there have been a bunch of proposals that
4 have gone in some of those buildings and the owners
5 have just not been willing to play ball. And if the
6 town could find a way to incentify them to make that
7 happen, that would be the biggest -- the biggest
8 help.

9 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you.

10 MAYOR ADAMS: And then we're going to
11 take one more right now and then, Patrick, can you
12 do the Zoom?

13 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: I wanted to
14 speak to what I think has been a weakness for a long
15 time in Maplewood and that is things for middle
16 school and above it to do. Now, when I was growing
17 up, that was the movie theater. The movie theater
18 is not that. But why not an entertainment center in
19 that place that can accommodate different things in,
20 you know, that children from middle school through,
21 like, teenagers; I mean, right now, it's Bank of
22 America's steps, so -- and I agree. And just one
23 thing about the interior of that building, I was
24 here long enough to have watched the water leak from
25 that beautiful ceiling and that massive space and

1 there's a lot of stuff that is historical under it
2 and there are a lot of -- you go to Italy, they're
3 preserving the historical and they're putting in all
4 kinds of new, you know, food places, high-tech
5 places.

6 MAYOR ADAMS: Yeah, while keeping the
7 historic integrity. No. No. No. Just because
8 people know me doesn't mean I'm going to give them
9 the mic. Otherwise, nobody talk. You got anybody?

10 VOICE: If any members of the public
11 joining us on Zoom would like to speak, please raise
12 your hand now. Quite a few. So I will -- I will
13 move Rona over to public portion.

14 Okay. Hi, Rona, you're here in public
15 portion, you may unmute yourself and speak.

16 MS. KWESTEL: Hi, this is Rona
17 Kwestel, I live in Maplewood on Maplewood Avenue.
18 One question that I have I didn't quite -- mean,
19 this question about the ownership, it's not clear to
20 me whether each owner is -- is every lot owned by a
21 different owner or is everything owned by one owner
22 except for that piece of parking lot that is owned
23 by the township?

24 MR. GRYGIEL: There are currently
25 separate owners of each of the parcels.

1 MS. KWESTEL: Okay, so we're talking
2 about a development plan as if we could somehow
3 coordinate all these owners to agree to find -- to
4 get one developer to buy all the lots and do some
5 cohesive -- when I use the word "cohesive," I just
6 mean that one person is in charge, it doesn't
7 necessarily mean that they're going to make one
8 cohesive building, right? But it's just unclear to
9 me how this is going to play out, like, each owner,
10 in theory, could sell it to some -- one person and
11 they could do whatever they want and then another
12 one maybe will conform with this plan and another
13 one won't, right? I mean, there's just no -- it
14 doesn't seem like there's really any control here,
15 other than to do some kind of general zoning and
16 then hope for the best. And I think it's a little
17 unfortunate. I can't help but feel like all this
18 discussion about the movie theater in particular and
19 I would say also the bank building -- well, and also
20 the Burgdorff. I mean, really, the whole thing,
21 right? That I wish there was a way to get together,
22 like kind of like a foundation or a group or
23 something that could say "This is what we as a town
24 want and we're going to kind of pool funds to make
25 something that's workable and not like a complete

1 cost sink but that -- but that serves the town well
2 and serves the history of the town and the future."
3 I mean, I know it sounds "pie in the sky" and I --
4 and I, you know, I have -- honestly, I have little
5 faith that we're not going to just end up with
6 another Clarus with a Star -- with a Dunkin' Donuts
7 on the bottom.

8 VOICE: And another South Orange.

9 MS. KWESTEL: And another South Orange
10 with just, you know, all these buildings that just
11 all look alike, cookie cutter.

12 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you. I'm now
13 moving over to Tracy White.

14 (Pause)

15 VOICE: The question being whether
16 it's going to be --

17 VOICE: ...property owners and the
18 reality of this actually happened.

19 MR. GRYGIEL: Respectfully, again,
20 we're at the beginning of the process here; I'd be
21 happy to do this, I don't want to try to take the
22 whole night to answer every question, but the idea
23 in this process is to build consensus to come up
24 with a plan that makes sense that might have the
25 entirety, it might have parts of the area, it might

1 be property owners, I know at least one has
2 expressed interest in not being a part of a plan, so
3 we have -- we don't have a plan for that yet, so
4 frankly -- you know, being honest with you, there is
5 no, like, one developer coming and saying we're
6 going to take everything out to build one massive
7 project. All I can say about the process, we'll
8 recap at the end but, yeah, the recap at the end but
9 the process is, going forward, preparing a plan,
10 coming back to the public to say "Here's what we" --
11 "We heard you. What do you think of this idea?" and
12 how we can do that, we're going to have to put our
13 thinking caps, you know, pen to paper, use all the
14 clichés we want, I guess, to say come up with
15 something that might guide the property owners to
16 choose to go along with a, you know, with a plan.

17 VOICE: Jonathan Walsh, you're now in
18 public portion.

19 MR. WALSH: Hi, everyone, this is
20 Jonathan Walsh, we live on Woodland, around the
21 corner from town. There hasn't been discussion
22 about a liquor license and I want to hear from the
23 group, basically, if that's an option, an
24 opportunity to follow your format, where the theater
25 could actually have a liquor license similar to what

1 Wellmont has and attract basically, not just, you
2 know, movies but also concerts and other options
3 that may make that a viable business.

4 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you. Someone did
5 mention that, actually, at the last meeting, so
6 thank you for bringing that to our attention again.
7 Yes, that was through state law -- changes in the
8 state law, that's now a possibility.

9 (Pause)

10 MR. GRYGIEL: A liquor license, yes,
11 for performing venues as well as regular theaters.

12 (Pause)

13 MR. GRYGIEL: Yes, the liquor license
14 before -- the mayor was saying liquor license for
15 them so you could actually transfer across municipal
16 boundaries now. We're getting there, we're coming
17 up to the modern day in New Jersey.

18 VOICE: Jonathan Poor, welcome to
19 public portion. You may unmute yourself and speak.

20 MR. POOR: Hi, this is Jonathan Poor,
21 I am a small business owner, I have an office on the
22 second story of the movie theater building. For
23 strengths, I would -- I want to mention the trees
24 that are in the back of your aerial photos behind
25 the buildings on Burgdorff, back in that corner. A

1 lot of nice trees. That's a strength we don't want
2 to lose, and I guess as a weakness, the tendency of
3 developers to kill trees and I guess I was also
4 going to -- I mean, other people have mentioned that
5 we need things for teens to do in town, like a movie
6 theater was great, and that's -- I'll keep it short,
7 that's it.

8 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you very much.

9 VOICE: I'm now moving over Chad to
10 public portion. Chad, you're in public portion.
11 Welcome. You may unmute yourself and speak.

12 (Pause)

13 VOICE: Chad, you're still muted. If
14 you would like to unmute yourself, you can speak.

15 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: Sorry about
16 that. Can you hear me?

17 VOICE: Yes, we can.

18 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: Sorry about
19 that. Full-time dad here with a two-month-old and a
20 four-year-old toddler, which is why I'm not there in
21 person. Can you hear me?

22 MR. GRYGIEL: Yes, we can hear you.
23 Go ahead.

24 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: Okay, great.
25 So first of all, thank you so much for hosting this

1 panel. I am -- I have lived in Maplewood for about
2 three years and a huge portion of the reason that we
3 moved here, in my personal opinion, was the movie
4 theater. We live just off of Valley right by
5 Sabatino's, I am an NYU grad from the film program,
6 I have my master's from Columbia in film studies,
7 and there was just something so amazing about having
8 this movie theater here, and my job before being a
9 full-time dad was I worked for a nonprofit movie
10 theater in Westchester for about four years before
11 we moved here. And it's something that has just
12 resonated with me every time I have walked past the
13 Maplewood movie theater that this is something that
14 could happen here. That theater -- excuse me. That
15 theater in Westchester was called The Picture House
16 and it is over a hundred-year-old theater that was
17 slated to be, ironically, demolished to become a
18 Bank of America, and that community came together,
19 bought it, turned it into a nonprofit theater. It
20 only has two screens, and that has been successfully
21 running for over two decades. This is something
22 that we could do here, and every time I'm in town
23 with my son, with my daughter, I'm like "This is
24 something I could do, if I have the capacity to do
25 it," so I guess my question is, like, this is

1 something that we could do here. This is a program
2 that, not only did it run as a movie theater but --
3 in Westchester, it was in a similar, you know, area
4 to us that was -- they were fortunate, but there are
5 areas directly around it that benefitted from it
6 that had kids from low-income houses, kids from
7 low-income schools, that they had -- we ran
8 programs, our pinnacle one was Voice and Vision,
9 which was aimed directly at women -- or young
10 females of color, putting them behind a camera,
11 putting them in front of an editing machine,
12 teaching them how to make movies. This is something
13 we could do here. I feel like this is such pinnacle
14 Maplewood, like, this is -- this is the thing that
15 could happen here and I just -- I don't know, before
16 this becomes, like, an Avalon or, you know,
17 something incredibly depressing like a Panera, could
18 we see if maybe there's an interest in this
19 community to turn this (inaudible word) into it, and
20 that's it.

21 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you. Amos Elroy,
22 you're now being promoted to panelist. Welcome.
23 You may unmute yourself and speak.

24 MR. ELROY: Can you hear me?

25 MR. GRYGIEL: We can hear you now,

1 yes.

2 (Pause)

3 MR. ELROY: Sorry about that. So,
4 yeah, I love this idea, but I live in the
5 (inaudible) neighborhood, I just wanted to express
6 (inaudible word) how about, like, (inaudible)
7 something like Newark and Jersey City have done
8 (inaudible) development that they allowed in
9 exchange for a developer to build out the building,
10 they require them to put a particular (inaudible)
11 for a gallery. We could probably do that with
12 (inaudible) and have just a place for public art for
13 people to -- even if it's a small space that's part
14 of a building to add to the community. Also, think
15 about events taking place outside, perhaps that's a
16 little thing, electricity and stuff like that
17 accessible to the outside so that events can be
18 easily placed in front.

19 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you very much.

20 VOICE: Jim Valcourt, you're now being
21 promoted to panelist. Mr. Valcourt, you're now in
22 public comment. Welcome. You may unmute yourself
23 and speak.

24 MR. VALCOURT: Thank you for having
25 me. My name is Jim Valcourt, I live up on Hickory

1 Drive. Several speakers at this point have talked
2 about, you know, places for middle schoolers, high
3 schoolers, and I just want to both second those
4 opinions and also just put that in the language of
5 the third place, which is the sociological context
6 of places that people can be outside of home and
7 work. So I really view that as an opportunity for
8 this zone, to just have places where folks can be,
9 whether that's a theater or an arcade or what have
10 you, I'd love to see something like that in this
11 place. Thanks.

12 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you.

13 VOICE: I'm now promoting Rebecca
14 Silverstein to panelist. Ms. Silverstein, welcome
15 to public comment. You may unmute yourself and
16 speak.

17 (Pause)

18 MS. SILVERSTEIN: Sorry. A lot of the
19 things that have been said, I would totally echo,
20 but one thing I just wanted to add to the strengths
21 is the fact that without on the -- the Starbucks
22 notwithstanding, is the fact that we are a small
23 business, very small business oriented downtown, I
24 feel like that says a lot about our community and
25 it's something I think that you don't see very

1 often, so making sure to keep that a priority to
2 find some way to keep it small-business-oriented
3 downtown. That's it.

4 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you.

5 VOICE: I'm now promoting Carina to
6 panelist. Welcome, Carina. You may unmute yourself
7 and speak.

8 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: All right,
9 there we go. Yes, I have been a resident in
10 Maplewood for 20 years and I have to agree with
11 anyone who has been placing the movie theater, which
12 I think is an absolutely unbelievably nice attribute
13 to the town and all of Maplewood Avenue is also very
14 cute with its stores and attracts a lot of people,
15 but I just wonder now, there might be some real --
16 and, you know, there might be some realistic
17 limitation to all this planning, which is private
18 ownership of these properties, and therefore, I
19 wonder what can really be done realistically absent
20 raising money and buying the building for the movie
21 theater and then, you know, pooling money from the
22 town and people to renovate it? Therefore, I'm
23 wondering if the realistic thing that we can do is
24 have ordinances, for example, say that all building
25 -- if anybody, private owner sells it, sells any

1 piece of land, put limitations on how they can use
2 it, so for example, say they cannot build a building
3 that's higher than four stories, for example, and
4 maybe the first floor has to be for commercial use
5 of some sort and that they all have to be red brick
6 buildings, et cetera, et cetera, so I'm wondering if
7 -- are we really just limited to putting in
8 limitations on the use of the properties by the
9 private owners absent, as I said, raising money and
10 trying to buy them, the properties, and then do what
11 the town wants?

12 MR. GRYGIEL: I think -- thank you. I
13 think I can respond briefly to that. There's, I
14 think, three parts to it. One is on the private
15 side or the fundraising side; there's nothing to
16 preclude all of you, everyone, someone out there to
17 say "Let's make that happen for the theater." But
18 what we can do beyond that for the plan is the
19 township sets the stage -- I'm sorry to use that
20 term for that, the pun, but it is essentially
21 setting the foundation for the potential for whether
22 it's the theater or the other space we've talked
23 about to put the regulations in place. The other
24 thing for the redevelopment process is the town can
25 use other -- whether it's combining properties, if

1 there's township land, like the parking lot behind,
2 if that's useful, some of the land where the
3 Burgdorff Center is now is combined properties or to
4 change the lot lines, to, you know, do things like
5 that. There are some actions -- relocating where
6 parking is along streets; there's -- it's a limited
7 area but there's opportunities from that aspect for
8 the township that you wouldn't have through the
9 typical development process. So the short answer is
10 we're going to look into that through the plan that
11 we're coming up with and we appreciate, you know,
12 the comment.

13 VOICE: I'm now moving over Jonathan
14 Walsh to panelist. Mr. Walsh, welcome to public
15 portion. You may unmute yourself and speak.

16 MR. WALSH: Sorry. Again, John Walsh,
17 we live on Woodland Avenue. Or Woodland Road,
18 rather. So has there been any discussion about
19 eminent domain, whether we could basically seek to
20 recover this property for the benefit -- I think a
21 couple of different speakers mentioned the
22 opportunity to use this for affordable housing or
23 arts projects. Has eminent demain basically been
24 discussed as an option?

25 MR. GRYGIEL: The short answer is no,

1 at least in the process as it's been set out by the
2 township, they have not put that as an option in the
3 redevelopment process. Certainly, the caveat there
4 is that the town has the power, you know, for public
5 purposes in any type of project when you're talking
6 about affordable housing or something, but through
7 the redevelopment process, we can make it crystal
8 clear that this is a non-condemnation redevelopment
9 area. The state law makes you say that up front so
10 that's not an option. I know that might be a
11 weakness in some people's eyes but, you know, that's
12 the route that the township decided to take.

13 MR. WALSH: Why is that?

14 MR. GRYGIEL: As the floor, then we
15 can, yeah. Let me make sure I...

16 (Pause)

17 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: Apologies to
18 the Zoom folks. So just on eminent domain, my
19 follow-up is how -- is there anything on the books
20 for how long that property can remain vacant before
21 the township can take some option, if not eminent
22 domain? So we could be here indefinitely trying to
23 figure this out.

24 MR. GRYGIEL: Well, I'll put it this
25 way, is that the option -- again, this came up

1 before, that obviously, if the town says "We really
2 want to go down the road of doing that because it's
3 been sitting here five years" or whatever, a whole
4 new process would have to start. The state law
5 allows to say "Okay, it's not condemnation," now
6 that's on the table, but we have to go through the
7 whole process again just because the rights to
8 property owners changes and it might actually, you
9 know, be obviously more confrontational if the
10 township has the ability to take the land.

11 MAYOR ADAMS: And so we're done with
12 the Zoom comments. Is there anyone who hasn't had a
13 chance to say anything?

14 (Pause)

15 MAYOR ADAMS: I know. I was trying to
16 be proactive.

17 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: The non-
18 condemnation thing has come up at the last meeting,
19 right? And say the movie theater is sold to a new
20 owner, as a new owner, they can take that building
21 down; is that correct?

22 MR. GRYGIEL: Under current law, yes.

23 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: Okay, so the
24 same thing, whatever happens with the lease when
25 Bank of America is sold, that building can come down

1 if the new owner decides to do that. I think it's
2 important that everybody understand that part of it.

3 MR. GRYGIEL: Absolutely. That's
4 something that we're hoping to, you know, through
5 this process, make sure it's identified that
6 something might need to change.

7 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: Do we know
8 where the real estate listing is? Because I've been
9 looking for it and I didn't find it.

10 MR. GRYGIEL: The real estate --

11 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: For the
12 Maplewood Theater. My understanding --

13 MR. GRYGIEL: The question was about
14 the real estate --

15 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: I think --

16 MR. GRYGIEL: -- the theater?

17 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: Yeah, I think
18 the owner of a theater has a broker. I don't know
19 where they're advertising it, probably not in the
20 typical places that houses would be advertised
21 but... Yeah.

22 (Inaudible)

23 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: Hi. Maybe you
24 can help clear some things up. Isn't part of the
25 idea of this redevelopment plan to, A, possibly

1 allow buildings to be enlarged and to -- also to
2 develop an excitement from developers, current
3 owners or possible developers who want to buy them
4 who develop -- we have two vacant buildings that
5 have been vacant a fairly long time. To help get
6 excitement for developing those buildings and
7 possibly develop a synergy between those properties
8 to become a more dynamic area of the township.
9 Isn't that part of the reason for doing a
10 redevelopment plan like this? Because I think
11 there's been some question like why are we doing
12 this, what kind of power do we have? The power that
13 we have is to develop that excitement for these
14 properties, inside Maplewood and outside, to the
15 developers who want to come in.

16 MR. GRYGIEL: The answer is yes, a
17 plan could allow for bigger buildings, taller
18 buildings, it could allow for other things that you
19 mentioned. Again, there's no plan yet, but to the
20 question about why we're doing it, yes, absolutely,
21 the Township Committee looked at it and said "Let's
22 look at this whole block, let's study it and not
23 just look at the theater, not just look at the bank,
24 if something can work on the entire property."

25 MAYOR ADAMS: Is there anyone else who

1 hasn't spoken? Hold on one second. Mr. DeLuca. I
2 gave up because there's a last row of people. Are
3 you talking or what?

4 MR. DeLUCA: I was looking for my
5 speech.

6 So one of the strengths is a current
7 law that we have on the books and that says that, if
8 I can find it, "No demolition can take place unless
9 the property owner, it could be the new property
10 owners, it could be the existing property owners,
11 can show a significant hardship." So that's number
12 one. And number two is that it has to have a
13 proposed alternative plan that is approved by the
14 Maplewood Village Alliance Design Review Committee,
15 the Village Alliance Board, and the Planning Board.
16 So the person who just asked about can a new owner
17 take it down, they can, but there is a process, a
18 very, you know, difficult process, and we put that
19 in place and we did go through it with the Clarus
20 when the town owned that property, but this is a
21 situation where it's going to be a private --
22 private sale, so they will have to show that there
23 is a hardship, financial hardship, not just a
24 hardship but financial hardship, significant, and
25 that there has to be a plan that gets done, so it's

1 very important, I think -- you're right, Eric, we
2 have to have this plan that we can generate the
3 right kind of developer coming in or purchaser
4 coming in or even an existing owner who's interested
5 in redeveloping their property, doing something on
6 our -- with our plan, not their plan.

7 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you.

8 MAYOR ADAMS: Okay, you talked. There
9 was somebody who hadn't talked yet, right? Could
10 you come because I...

11 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: Thank you. So
12 just -- a couple of comments. So the excitement
13 that you were speaking of, unfortunately, looks like
14 South Orange and East Orange -- sorry. So the
15 excitement for developers that we're going to
16 generate, unfortunately, for best use or most, I
17 guess, significant use from a financial standpoint,
18 looks like South Orange, looks like East Orange, so
19 I think we need to be careful as a community. It
20 sounds like the community outright agrees that we
21 don't want that here. Right? To the extent that we
22 can put protections in place now to prevent that as
23 part of this process, I think that's very important
24 for us. I love the word "adaptive reuse." I think,
25 to the extent that there is -- those are the

1 incentives I think the community should offer to a
2 developer is and adaptive reuse for parts of, if not
3 the entire parcel, if that makes sense financially.

4 MAYOR ADAMS: Thank you. Anyone else
5 who hasn't had a chance to say anything? You -- did
6 you speak before? Oh, no, somebody (inaudible).

7 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: Oh, no
8 (inaudible).

9 MAYOR ADAMS: Okay.

10 MS. HUGHES: My name is Amy Hughes, I
11 have a business in town, it's called Maplewood
12 Mercantile. One of the things -- it is an adaptive
13 reuse, actually, and it's a good example of, you
14 know, a building that we were told was not usable.
15 I did get a continued use permit, so I do understand
16 all this use stuff and it is serious in terms of
17 what kind of business you can operate in a spot,
18 but, you know, one of the things that we do talk
19 about South Orange, and I'm not -- if you talk to
20 some of the business owners, I don't know if you
21 guys have been to, like, Kitchen a La Mode or to the
22 pet store or to Neighbors Wine or to Indigo Road, I
23 mean, there are a lot of locally owned businesses in
24 these developments and a lot of that had to do with,
25 you know, incentives for these new developers to

1 work with local businesses, so I think, you know,
2 Deb had made that point, you know, part of the
3 strength of Maplewood is our independent business
4 owners, and most of us live in town, I mean, there's
5 a ton of us here right now, and we hire from within
6 and we support our schools and we support the
7 charitable organizations that put on a lot of our
8 arts programs and things that are so important to
9 us, so if we can keep that in mind that from a town
10 perspective, to make sure that those doors are open
11 to the small businesses if these larger square
12 footage, new state-of-the-art spaces come up, that
13 -- you know, another -- Oh! Canary is another one in
14 a new building. It's -- you know, we like new
15 buildings too, you know, but we just need to be able
16 to afford them, and we'd like that opportunity
17 before Starbucks or Panera.

18 MR. GRYGIEL: Thank you. Just one
19 quick follow-up. One follow-up on that. On the
20 1949 map I was looking at, your building says
21 "garage," so that was there as well and the use
22 certainly has changed from garage to -- yes.
23 Exactly, that's still there and it's evolved like
24 all the other ones I've mentioned. Just an example.

25 MAYOR ADAMS: So I just wanted to give

1 everybody who wanted to speak their chance to speak
2 if they haven't said anything. So everybody's
3 there. I'll take two who have already spoken,
4 that's it. Can you tell I raised five kids?

5 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: I just -- I
6 just want to mention really quick, there is a
7 difference architecturally also with businesses. I
8 helped -- I don't know if anybody knows Night Hawk
9 in Brooklyn, but I helped open the movie theater up
10 after and it's been from 1906, it's a historic thing
11 and we had to do a bunch of different construction
12 on it and how that works. The thing about movie
13 theaters versus other businesses is that due to
14 sight lines and architectural-wise, it is very
15 difficult to turn anything else into a movie
16 theater, just financially, so I do feel like -- and
17 it's sort of vice-versa of getting rid of a movie
18 theater and turning it into another business, so
19 just -- I know we're all talking a lot about the
20 finances of why the movie theater doesn't work, I
21 just feel like it might be a now or never situation
22 with that, I just don't think that will be a
23 situation that we can have a movie theater again.
24 It's going to be a lot more expensive in 20 years if
25 we decide that a movie theater is something we want

1 in Maplewood, so that's just something to think
2 about financially.

3 MAYOR ADAMS: Thank you. No? Okay.
4 I gave it to you. That was on (inaudible).

5 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: I just, having
6 seen redevelopment plans put into effect in this
7 town in the past, I'm very disappointed by the
8 developers who have actually come in and done the
9 work. They have not been very -- in general, not
10 very original, not very creative, they've done the
11 most basic, bland kind of buildings, and I think --
12 I don't know how you put that into a redevelopment
13 plan, but you need, as a township, as a governing
14 body, as a Planning Board and all these whatever
15 bodies are dealing with this, I think a really
16 creative developer with a good architect makes a
17 huge difference in what goes in there and not just
18 the one who could do the cheapest job.

19 MAYOR ADAMS: That's right. Okay.
20 For anyone who has any more they'd like to add, you
21 can always e-mail me at nadams@maplewoodnj.gov. I
22 have a few of my business cards and more in my
23 office if you would want to take one so you can
24 reach out later. So do you have any closing
25 comments?

1 MR. GRYGIEL: Yes, briefly. First of
2 all, that was about as good a segue as we could have
3 as to what our homework is here. First of all, just
4 thank you all for coming out and for joining online.
5 A lot of things are said, frankly, I figured I'd
6 hear, but there are a bunch more that never, you
7 know, occurred to me, and I'm sure for the Township
8 Committee members and administration, others as
9 well. So where do we go from here? I'm sure you
10 want an answer, when's the plan going to be written?
11 I don't know.

12 MAYOR ADAMS: Tomorrow.

13 MR. GRYGIEL: Yes, tomorrow, yeah.
14 You paid my business, right? You'll get to them?
15 No. No, the point is we now need to, you know, when
16 we set forth our proposal to do this work, we'll
17 have two community meetings and then kind of
18 reconvene and figure out where we are. Where we are
19 now is we have a lot to wade through as far as
20 identifying what we want to do next. It's not going
21 to be in three weeks or a month, you know, a couple
22 of months out from now, hopefully we'll be able to
23 provide you with more information and meet again to
24 offer some framework for the redevelopment based on
25 everything we've heard to date. But in the

1 meantime, yeah, we encourage getting more comments
2 directly through the mayor. Is that the best way
3 you expect to do it?

4 MAYOR ADAMS: Yeah.

5 MR. GRYGIEL: So send in more if
6 there's anything you forgot, any additional ideas,
7 and at that point, we will take them into
8 consideration, come up with, you know, something to
9 present to you, so thank you.

10 MAYOR ADAMS: Yeah, thank you all for
11 coming out. Thanks very much.

12 (Meeting is concluded)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, MICHELE QUICK, a Certified Court Reporter, Registered Merit Reporter, Certified Realtime Reporter of the State of New Jersey, authorized to administer oaths pursuant to R.S. 41:2-1, do hereby state that the foregoing is a true and accurate verbatim transcript of my stenographic notes of the within proceedings, to the best of my ability.



MICHELE QUICK, CCR, RMR, CRR
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