



**BOROUGH OF LEONIA
Leonía Planning Board**

MINUTES

June 23, 2021

7:30 PM

**REMOTE MEETING VIA
GOTOMEETING**

The Borough of Leonia Planning Board held a special meeting on June 23, 2021 at 7:30 p.m. via remote video conference in lieu of an in-person meeting due to the Coronavirus pandemic and Governor Murphy’s Executive Orders 107 and 152 that restrict public gatherings.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ron Wolf, Councilman Pasquale Fusco, Chairman Michael DeGidio, Timothy Ford, Patrick Botten, Ira Gold, Damee Choi

MEMBER(S) ABSENT: Mayor Judah Zeigler, Vice Chair Vincent Petti, William Russell, Sean Thompson, Haeseok Ko

ALSO PRESENT: Planning Board Attorney Arthur Neiss, Zoning Officer Dan Melfi

Meeting called to order at 7:37 PM

FLAG SALUTE, OPENING MEETING STATEMENT, ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion to approve the minutes of the May 26, 2021 meeting was made by: Mr. Ford

Seconded: Councilman Fusco

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilman Fusco:	yes	Mr. Botten:	yes	Ms. Choi:	yes
Chairman DeGidio:	yes	Mr. Gold:	yes		

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION(S):

PB21-06 – Muhamet Imeraj, 470 Grand Avenue, Block: 503/ Lot: 13
Front Yard & Side Yard Variances

Motion to approve Resolution PB21-06 was made by: Mr. Botten

Seconded: Mr. Councilman Fusco

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilman Fusco:	yes	Mr. Ford:	yes	Mr. Gold:	yes
Chairman DeGidio:	yes	Mr. Botten:	yes		

PB21-07 – Andrea Cancro, 210 Christie Heights Street, Block: 504/ Lot: 7
Fence & Retaining Wall Height Variance

It was confirmed by Mr. Melfi that the fence should be installed on the west side of the property and shall be set back at least two feet from the wall.

Motion to approve Resolution PB21-07, as confirmed by Mr. Melfi was made by: Mr. Botten

Seconded: Mr. Councilman Fusco

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilman Fusco:	yes	Mr. Ford:	yes	Mr. Gold:	yes
Chairman DeGidio:	yes	Mr. Botten:	yes		

PB21-08 – Robert Tynan & Angela Toro, 118 Lakeview Avenue, Block: 205/ Lot: 5

Non-conforming Use, Side Yard Setback, Combine Side Yard Setback, Lot Area, Lot Width, Building Coverage & Lot Coverage

Motion to approve Resolution PB21-08 was made by: Mr. Botten

Seconded: Mr. Ford

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilman Fusco:	yes	Mr. Ford:	yes	Mr. Botten:	yes
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Mr. Neiss confirmed that three votes were sufficient to constitute a quorum for approval.

PB21-09 – Dino Redzic, 474 Grand Avenue, Block: 503/ Lots: 11 & 12

Pool Location & Lot Coverage

Board discussion was held regarding whether or not the applicant submitted revised plans and if those revised plans met the requirements stipulated as part of the application approval. Mr. Melfi confirmed that the applicants for PB21-08 and PB21-09 submitted plans that were modified per requirements.

Motion to approve Resolution PB21-09 was made by: Mr. Botten

Seconded: Mr. Ford

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Councilman Fusco:	yes	Mr. Ford:	yes	Mr. Gold:	yes
Chairman DeGidio:	yes	Mr. Botten:	yes		

NEW/CONTINUING APPLICATIONS:

PB21-03 – Soonrye Kim, 282 Grand Avenue, Block: 1209/ Lot: 5

Rear Yard Setback, Side Yard Setback and Continuance of Use – Applicant has requested to carry this matter to a later meeting.

It was confirmed that the attorney for the applicant has requested to carry the matter to the August Planning Board meeting. Mr. Neiss announced to members of the public that matter PB21-03 was being carried to the August 25, 2021, remote meeting of the Planning Board. Mr. Neiss advised that there will be no further notice published or mailed to property owners within 200 feet.

DISCUSSION ON BOARD MATTERS – NEW/OLD BUSINESS:

Presentation by Meridia: Capodagli Property – Concept Design for Development at Grand Avenue & Station Parkway

Mr. Neiss provided some guidelines regarding concept design presentations. Per Mr. Neiss, an applicant has the right to appear before the Planning Board with a concept plan. Mr. Neiss stated that a concept design allows

for an applicant to gauge the temperature of the Board. Mr. Neiss advised that anything discussed during a concept design review is non-binding; there are no votes, and the Board is not committed to anything discussed.

Representatives from Meridia Capodagli addressed the Board regarding the proposal. The presentation included historical background regarding the company as well as redevelopments done in other New Jersey towns. The concept design included various features for the Leonia project including the proposed number of units, parking spaces, building and site design, security and affordable housing set-aside. Board discussion regarding the concept design included the following:

- Consideration for including a provision to maintain 55 and over residents as part of the redevelopment agreement and/or having a deed restriction for 55 and older occupancy.
- Obtaining examples of other senior living developments.
- Real estate tax implication for building pilot program.
- Public transportation options for occupants traveling to Broad Avenue/Business district – particularly if occupants elect to downsize the number of cars they currently own.
- Consideration for commercial space on the ground level of the development.
- Consideration for having the parking decks be below grade and having the living units start at grade.
- The appearance of the setback being closer to the street in comparison to the other buildings nearby on Grand Avenue.
- Traffic engineering review/study for Grand Avenue and Station Parkway.

The meeting was opened to members of the public for comments/questions. Hearing none, the public portion of the meeting was closed.

Chairman DeGidio advised that a smaller sub-committee may be convened to work together with the Mayor and Council in order to provide feedback to Meridia Capodagli within the next 60 to 90 days.

Ordinance 2021-06 – An Ordinance To Amend And Supplement The Code Of The Borough Of Leonia With A New Chapter Entitled “Chapter 12, Cannabis, Prohibition Of All Classes Of Businesses” So As To Prohibit The Operation Of Any Class Of Cannabis Business Within The Geographical Boundaries Of The Borough Of Leonia And Further To Supplement Chapter 290 Entitled “Zoning”, Article XIII “General Regulations”, Section 290-43.1 Entitled “Prohibited “Uses”” So As To Prohibit The Use By Any Class Of Licensed Cannabis Businesses Upon Any Premises In Any Zone Of The Borough Of Leonia:

Chairman DeGidio advised that the Mayor and Council have proposed the ordinance to prohibit all classes of cannabis business within the town. Per the Chairman, the Ordinance does not prevent the mayor and council from rescinding the resolution for one or more classes should they desire to do so at the appropriate time. A brief discussion was held to determine if the Ordinance is consistent with the Master Plan.

A motion was made by Mr. Botten to acknowledge that the Planning Board finds the Ordinance to be consistent with the Master Plan.

Seconded: Mr. Gold

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Mr. Wolf:	yes	Mr. Ford:	yes	Ms. Choi:	yes
Councilman Fusco:	abstain	Mr. Botten:	yes		
Chairman DeGidio:	yes	Mr. Gold:	yes		

Chairman DeGidio asked Councilman Fusco if he, in his capacity as liaison for the Mayor and Council, would recommend expanding the area for the Rehabilitation study.

Chairman DeGidio advised that the Master Plan survey will likely close at the end of June. Per Chairman DeGidio, there are approximately 800 public input responses. Mr. Botten stated that the survey has received a good

number of comments. Chairman DeGidio also advised that he will work with the Borough Administrator, Andrea Wardrop, on the Open House which is tentatively set for September.

Chairman DeGidio reported that the Mayor and Council has authorized H2M to develop a housing element and fair share plan component for the Borough's Master Plan.

Chairman DeGidio also advised that the Laws and Ordinances Committee of the of the Council would be reviewing the restriction for home businesses, considering the impact of COVID-19 and the changes in the way residents now work. Per the Chairman, the Laws and Ordinances Committee will revise the Home Business Ordinance and will then forward to the Planning Board to review for consistency with the Master Plan.

COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT:

Councilman Fusco expanded on the Mayor Council meeting updates raised by the Chairman.

BOARD ATTORNEY REPORT:

Mr. Neiss had nothing additional to report.

ZONING OFFICER REPORT/INTERPERTATIONS:

Mr. Melfi inquired about an interpretation, as it relates to parking in the rear yard. Mr. Melfi described the circumstances relating to a Zoning application for a driveway expansion in the rear yard. Per Mr. Melfi, the Borough Ordinances are geared towards parking in the front yard. Discussion was held as to whether the application presented an impact to coverage as well as parking standards in other towns. It was determined that the applicant should apply for a variance.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD – CORRESPONDENCE:

There was no public comment.

With no further business presented, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by: Mr. Botten

Seconded: Mr. Wolf

All in Favor – Motion Passed

The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Angela Copeland
Planning Board Secretary