



BOROUGH OF LEONIA
Leonía Planning Board
MINUTES

FEBRUARY 23 , 2022

7:30 PM

REMOTE MEETING VIA ZOOM

The Borough of Leonia Planning Board held a meeting on February 23, 2022 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: Chairman Michael DeGidio, Vice Chair Ira Gold, William Russell, Ron Wolf, Patrick Botten, Timothy Ford, Sean Thompson, Haeseok Ko, Damee Choi

MEMBER(S) ABSENT: Mayor Judah Zeigler, Councilman Pasquale Fusco.

ALSO PRESENT: Planning Board Attorney - Daniel Steinhagen, Zoning Officer – Adam Myszka, Planning Board Engineer – Drew Di Sessa, Planning Board Planner – Sanyogita Chavan & Paul Cancilla

Meeting called to order at 7:30 PM

OPENING MEETING STATEMENT, ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion to approve the minutes of the January 26, 2022, regular meeting, made by: Mr. Botten

Seconded: Mr. Wolf

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows

Chairman DeGidio:	yes	Mr. Wolf:	yes	Mr. Thompson:	yes
Vice Chair Gold:	yes	Mr. Botten:	yes	Mr. Ko:	yes
Mr. Russell:	yes	Mr. Ford:	yes	Ms. Choi:	yes

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTIONS:

Area in Need of Redevelopment Study Resolution

Motion to approve Resolution for The Area in Need of Redevelopment study was made by: Mr. Botten

Seconded: Mr. Thompson

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Chairman DeGidio:	yes	Mr. Wolf:	yes	Mr. Thompson:	yes
Vice Chair Gold:	yes	Mr. Botten:	yes	Mr. Ford	yes
Mr. Russell:	yes				

PB21-20 - 337 Hillside Avenue - Driveway buffer variance and driveway width variance

Motion to approve Resolution PB21-20 was made by: Mr. Thompson

Seconded: Chairman DeGidio

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Chairman DeGidio:	yes	Mr. Wolf:	yes	Mr. Ford:	yes
Vice Chair Gold:	yes	Mr. Botten:	abstain	Mr. Thompson:	yes
Mr. Russell:	yes				

PB22-01 - 341 Broad Avenue – Sign Waiver

Motion to approve Resolution PB22--1 was made by: Mr. Ford

Seconded: Vice Chair Gold

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Mr. Ford:	yes	Mr. Russell:	yes	Vice Chair Gold:	yes
Mr. Thompson:	yes				

PB22-02 - 2235-2239 Jones Road - Minor subdivision and ancillary bulk variances for lot width and side yard setback.

Motion to approve Resolution PB22-02 was made by: Mr. Botten

Seconded: Mr. Wolf

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Vice Chair Gold:	yes	Mr. Wolf:	yes	Mr. Thompson:	yes
Mr. Russell:	yes	Mr. Botten:	yes		

NEW/CONTINUING APPLICATIONS:

PB21-17 – Carried to the 03-23-22 meeting with no further notice.

PB22-03 – Carried to the 03-23-22 meeting with no further notice.

PB22-04 – Carried to the 03-23-22 meeting with no further notice.

PB21-15 – 131 Fort Lee Road LLC/Sima Development LLC, 131 Fort Lee Road, Block: 802/ Lot: 16 - Preliminary & Final Site Plan Approval, Residential Use in D-Zone, Building Height, Rear Yard Setback, Side Yard Setback, Parking Spaces, Parking Aisles and Parking Requirements Variances

The applicant’s attorney, Carmine Alampi, addressed the Board on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Alampi outlined a reminder of what portions of the case were heard at the prior meeting. He also reviewed the changes made to the application since the last meeting.

H2M revised planner’s report dated 01-18-2022 was marked as exhibit D-5
Pennoni revised engineering report dated 01-24-2022 was marked as exhibit D-6
Fire Prevention revised report dated 01-25-2022 was marked as exhibit D-7

New architectural plans dated 01-10-2022 were introduced and marked as exhibit A-6
New engineering plans dated 01-05-2022 were introduced and marked as exhibit A-7

Mr. Zaccone remained sworn in from the previous meeting and provided testimony as a licensed professional architect, he was deemed qualified by the board.

Mr. Zaccone reviewed the new plan revision in its entirety. He outlined and detailed the contents of the drawings on page A-1 which contains ground level parking, stairs, elevator, lobby, a refuse compactor area and the second-floor layout. Mr. Zaccone gave an extensive overview of the dwelling units as presented on the second-floor layout. Mr. Zaccone then moved on to presenting page A-2 which details the 3rd and 4th floors of the building, which he explained are identical in layout to the previously discussed second-floor. Mr. Zaccone then proceeded to detail plan

page A-3 which contains the details for the 5th floor and the roof. He stated that the 5th floor contains the amenities containing the utility room, fitness center and a conference room in addition to the two 3-bedroom units. Mr. Zaccone then focused on the roof detail and described his drainage model. Mr. Zaccone then moved on to defining the contents of page A-4 which contains all 4 elevation drawings. He explained how the height of the building was calculated and the aesthetic details of the façade. Mr. Zaccone addressed the contents on the Fire Prevention letter dated 01-25-2022. Chairman DeGidio explained that the fire prevention letter could contain requests which exceed the minimum requirements of the fire code and the applicant would be agreeing to this increased standard when they approach the building stage. Mr. Zaccone agreed to meet the requirements and include them in the scope of work as requested in the letter. Mr. Botten asked Mr. Zaccone to clarify the size of the units, the parking requirements, the total height of the building along with drainage inquires. Chairman DeGidio asked the architect to clarify the trash room and trash chute layout as they don't align directly from floor to floor. Additionally, Chairman DeGidio pointed out several inconsistencies between the elevation drawings and the color rendering provided.

Color rendering was introduced and marked as exhibit A-8

Mr. Zaccone stated that the elevation drawings show the true finished façade layout, and that the rendering contains errors. Chairman DeGidio also questioned the protruding nature of the rear stairwell as it impacts the rear yard setback. The architect explained that the space that would have been used by the stairs was used in meeting the apartment size requirements. Ms. Choi wanted Mr. Zaccone to detail which portions of the building were below grade. She also wanted clarification the location of the emergency generator and the bicycle rack, along with inquiring about what security and safety measures are being taken in relation to the open floor plan style of the ground level. Mr. Zaccone referred to the H2M planners report which suggests fencing, and stated that he is not opposed to the idea of erecting a fence for both security and aesthetic purposes. Ms. Choi also inquired about the mechanical needs of the units in relation to heating and cooling and if the windows are operable. Mr. Zaccone detailed the mechanical locations for the units and the common areas and stated that there is an additional mechanical space in the Basement which doesn't have a defined use as of yet. Mr. Botten pointed out an inconsistency with the loading area in the rendering, Mr. Zaccone stated that the architectural floor layout if the correct proposed location and look to the loading area. Mr. Wolf had questions about the drainage system, Mr. Zaccone detailed the drainage layout from the roof. Mr. Zaccone was asked about parking space size and height in relation to fitting large cars and about how storage is handled for the tenants.

Mr. Steinhagen wanted Mr. Zaccone to detail the Electric Vehicle requirements for this site including the number of spaces which will provide EV charging as well as the number of EV ready spaces. Mr. Alampi agreed to provide 5 EV spaces one of which will be a handicapped space. Mr. Steinhagen then asked for a detail of how this change will be provided considering the parking layout proposed as they are not detailed on the plans. Mr. Zaccone stated that these have not been detailed yet and would follow manufacturing specifications. Mr. Steinhagen requested information on how the affordable housing would be handled along with what model of ownership would this building use. Mr. Zaccone stated that he did not know this information and it would be better answered by the property owner. Mr. Alampi then added that the intention for the property is rental form of ownership and that the project intends to comply with affordable housing requirements for rentals, and any deviation from that would see the project brought back in front of the board. Mr. Steinhagen asked Mr. Alampi if the building has a Superintendent's apartment. Mr. Alampi stated that there isn't one but he is willing to specify one of the one-bedroom apartments as a Superintendent's apartment.

The meeting was opened to the public for questioning of Mr. Zaccone.

No members of the public provided questions.

Hearing no questions from the public, the public questioning portion was closed.

Mr. Hubschman was asked to provide engineering testimony, he remained sworn in from the previous hearing regarding this case and he was deemed qualified by the board.

Mr. Alampi asked Mr. Hubschman to go through the revised plans in detail. Mr. Hubschman presented a colored version of the site plan.

New color site plan with landscaping dated 01-05-2022 was introduced and marked as exhibit A-9

Mr. Hubschman reviewed the changes to the new site plan which including the new loading area. Mr. Hubschman outlined that one 1 EV space is shown on this plan and that 4 more will need to be added and possibly integrated into the existing columns. He also discussed the possibility of fencing and how the column positions were revised. Mr. Hubschman went over the zoning and parking notes present on the site plan. Mr. Hubschman then moved on the second page of the plan to detail the drainage plan and seepage pit locations. Mr. Hubschman explained that the 3rd page details the soil erosion and sediment plan, he also clarified that this project would also require county planning board approval. Mr. Hubschman then moved on to explaining the contents of the 4th sheet which contains the lighting and landscaping plan. Mr. Hubschman then moved on to the 5th and final page of his engineering plans which contained the topographical details and existing conditions for the site, he outlined the current conditions and slope of the property and how he plans to approach redeveloping the property.

The meeting was opened to the board members for questioning of Mr. Hubschman.

Mr. Botten asked about the egress from the rear emergency stairwell and where the occupants would go in case of emergency if the property was enclosed. Mr. Hubschman explained that they would have to leave through the parking structure. Mr. Botten then inquired about widening the driveway entrance from 23 feet to 24 feet to match the isle width, Mr. Hubschman said he's working with the architect to see if he could accommodate that change. Chairman DeGidio asked for a breakdown of the height calculations in relation to the heights provided by the architect, Mr. Hubschman detailed how he calculates his measurements. Ms. Chavan defined how the height calculations are measured according to the Borough code, Mr. Hubschman replied that he will revise his height calculations based on the information given. Mr. Wolf requested the height of the 1st floor to be explained in greater detail, Mr. Hubschman pointed out the height details and area required for utilities between floors. Chairman DeGidio inquired about removing the stairwell to the roof and using a hatch access to reduce the height variance, Mr. Hubschman stated that this design was requested by the Fire Department. Mr. Steinhagen explained that the Borough allows for an 8-foot bulkhead where as this plan proposes a 12 foot one. Mr. Alampi said that the roof access will be revised. Chairman DeGidio requested input as to alternate locations for the elevator machine room, Mr. Hubschman said that there is room in the basement if required. Mr. Hubschman also stated the trash pickup will be done by a private hauler. Mr. Ford inquired about the type and location of proposed fencing, Mr. Hubschman suggested the fence would be erected at the property line and be a standard PVC type. Mr. Ford voiced concerns about how fencing would restrict the movement of people leaving through the rear stairwell, and requested the fence be added to the next rendering. Mr. Botten inquired how the proposed fencing would impact the location of the EV charging stations. Mr. Alampi replied that the designs for the fencing and EV stations will be added and submitted as a revised plan. Chairman DeGidio asked Mr. Hubschman about screening the generator, Mr. Hubschman replied that he would review the screening and noise dampening requirements and apply them to the plan. Mr. Steinhagen wanted the engineer to explain why the parking spaces are undersized, Mr. Hubschman explained that the width of the lot only allowed for this space size. Mr. Steinhagen asked Mr. Di Sessa if he had any questions in regards to his review letter, Mr. Di Sessa stated that the fencing and EV issues were already discussed.

The meeting was opened to the public for questioning of Mr. Hubschman.

No members of the public provided questions.

Hearing no questions from the public, the public questioning portion was closed.

Mr. Alampi outlined that he wishes to continue this case at the next public hearing after addressing the board concerns.

Application 21-15 is carried to the meeting of 03-23-22 without further notice.

Resolution 2021-04 – 475 Park Avenue Delaney Residence – Request for resolution extension

Mr. Delaney addressed the board outlining the difficulties he had faced with finding a contractor skilled in the structural style of the building he was approved for along with difficulties posed by COVID and being involved in an auto accident.

A motion to grant a resolution extension of 1-year until 05-2023 was made by Mr. Russell

Seconded: Mr. Botten

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows:

Mr. Wolf:	yes	Mr. Russell:	yes	Mr. Botten:	yes
Chairman DeGidio:	yes	Mr. Ford:	yes	Mr. Ko:	yes
Mr. Thompson:	yes	Vice Chair Gold:	yes	Ms. Choi:	yes

Application 21-04 was granted an extension for 1 year.

DISCUSSION ON BOARD MATTERS – NEW/OLD BUSINESS:

Chairman DeGidio advised that Master Plan comments from board members must be submitted by March 1st.

COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT:

Councilman Fusco was not present.

BOARD PLANNER REPORT:

Mr. Di Sessa stated he had nothing to report.

ZONING OFFICER REPORT:

Mr. Myszka stated he had nothing to report.

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. Russell

All in Favor – Motion Passed

The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Adam Myszka
Planning Board Secretary