



**BOROUGH OF LEONIA**  
**Leonia Planning Board**  
**MINUTES**

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**OCTOBER 26, 2022**

**7:30 PM**

**LEONIA SENIOR CENTER**

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The Borough of Leonia Planning Board held a regular meeting on OCTOBER 26, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. located at 305 Beechwood Place, Leonia NJ.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Michael DeGidio, Vice Chair Ira Gold, Timothy Ford, Councilman Pasquale Fusco, Patrick Botten, Sean Thompson, William Russell, Damee Choi.

**MEMBER(S) ABSENT:** Mayor Judah Zeigler, Ron Wolf, Haeseok Ko.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Planning Board Attorney - Daniel Steinhagen, Zoning Officer – Adam Myszka.

Meeting called to order at 7:30 PM

**OPENING MEETING STATEMENT, ROLL CALL**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion to approve the minutes of the September 28, 2022, regular meeting, made by: Mr. Botten

Seconded: Vice Chair Gold

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows

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

**NEW/CONTINUING APPLICATIONS:**

**PB21-15** – Carried to the 11-22-22 regular meeting with no further notice.

**PB21-17** – Carried to the 11-22-22 regular meeting with no further notice.

**PB22-11** – Carried to the 11-22-22 regular meeting with no further notice.

**PB20-03** – Carried to the 12-14-22 regular meeting with no further notice.

**SUMMARY REVIEW:**

**Chairman DeGidio recused himself from the discussion.**

Ms. Sanyogita Chavan gave a presentation outlining the contents of the Area in Need of Redevelopment Preliminary Investigation Report - Grand Ave & Willow Street Road Area which was prepared by H2M Associates.

**The meeting was opened to the board for questioning of Ms. Chavan.**

Mr. Russell inquired about the condition of the properties in the area. Ms. Chavan and Mr. Steinhagen explained the redevelopment standards being used for this area.

Vice Chair Gold asked about any negative by products of such redevelopment. Ms. Chavan stated that redevelopment is a tool for improvement of communities and if done correctly has no negative criteria.

Councilman Fusco inquired about how the new zoning would affect proposed development. Ms. Chavan and Mr. Steinhagen explained the incentives for potential developers.

Mr. Botten asked for a clarification for the inclusion of properties currently owned by Kulite. Ms. Chavan explained that all properties affected by the redevelopment plan will be noticed, to receive their input.

Vice Chair Gold reiterated that this is a non-condemnation plan.

Ms. Choi inquired about the designation of the properties in the area and how standard the specific designations are. Ms. Chavan specified that the designation is in line with this type of redevelopment. Mr. Steinhagen added that including all the properties listed is required to create a viable redevelopment area. Ms. Choi also asked for a clarification of the redevelopment plan and its purpose, which Ms. Chavan explained. Ms. Choi additionally questioned the timeline for the plan to take effect. Ms. Chavan clarified that there is no clear timeline and this is only the first step in the process.

**Hearing no questions from the board members, the board questioning portion was closed.**

**The meeting was opened to the public for questioning of Ms. Chavan.**

Freddy Batres of 392 Grand Ave asked how the different properties will be designated in the plan. Ms. Chavan and Mr. Steinhagen clarified that there is no plan yet and the public will be notified if a plan is slated to be adopted. Mr. Batres also inquired if the PowerPoint presentation show at the meeting will be publicly available.

Marc Teitelbaum of 136 Schor Ave inquired about designation criteria for the parcels designated under section 3 and criteria H. Ms. Chavan reiterated the requirement for section 3 and criteria H. Mr. Teitelbaum also inquired about possible holdouts in regards to not selling to interested developers. Mr. Steinhagen outlined what happens in such situations.

Jeffrey Geltman, Esq., 3 West Railroad Avenue, Tenafly, New Jersey on behalf of Nobuaki and Greta Sai of 368 Grand asked about the details of how the information presented about 368 Grand Avenue was gathered by the Borough Planner.

Lydia Maurice of 392 Grand Ave asked how this affect her. Ms. Chavan clarified that this is the initial step in the redevelopment process and that she was currently only assessing the satisfying of the criteria for development. Ms. Maurice then asked about the timeline for the plan preparation, to which Ms. Chavan clarified that it would be a few months' time before the plan draft would be ready and the members of the public would be notified.

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Michael Lacanlale of 140 Schor Ave wanted to know what a redeveloped area would look like. Ms. Chavan explained that currently this is a redevelopment designation only, no plans have been put forth and the proposed area is not something she can predict. Mr. Steinhagen added that the borough and future developers would need to agree on what would be proposed. Mr. Lacanlale also inquired about adjoining properties not being included in the current redevelopment area. Ms. Chavan clarified that these properties were chosen by the governing body and the planner undertakes the study of the properties provided to them. Mr. Steinhagen clarified that the entire redevelopment area is designated by the governing body.

Mr. Russell inquired about the implementation of a rail system in the redevelopment. Ms. Chavan pointed out the light rail details on page 20-21 of the report.

Lydia Maurice of 392 Grand Ave asked how the public will be notified about the upcoming meetings regarding the redevelopment. Mr. Steinhagen explained the following steps for this redevelopment process. Ms. Maurice inquired how this project would affect someone in affordable condominiums. Vice Chair Gold and Mr. Steinhagen clarified that this process is too preliminary to answer and the borough attorney would have to assess the issue of affordable units.

Councilman Fusco inquired about the difference between the total rehabilitation area versus the area of redevelopment being discussed. Ms. Chavan clarified the distinction between the two.

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

**The meeting was opened to public comment.**

Lydia Maurice of 392 Grand Ave thanked the board for not including imminent domain into this redevelopment plan.

Marc Teitelbaum of 136 Schor Ave voiced his concerns regarding the redevelopment.

Jeffrey Geltman, Esq., 3 West Railroad Avenue, Tenafly, New Jersey on behalf of Nobuaki and Greta Sai of 368 Grand presented the letter to the board attorney and requested 368 Grand Avenue ( Block 802, Lot 10) to not be included in the study.

**Hearing no comments from the public, the public comment portion was closed.**

The board deliberated in relation to facts of the presentation.

Motion finding the Area in Need of Redevelopment study consistent with the master plan made by: Mr. Russell

Seconded: Mr. Botten

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows

Vice Chair Gold:	yes	Mr. Botten:	yes	Ms. Choi:	yes
Mr. Russell:	yes	Mr. Thompson:	yes		
Councilman Fusco:	yes	Mr. Ford:	yes		

**Chairman DeGidio returned to the meeting.**

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**DISCUSSION ON BOARD MATTERS – NEW/OLD BUSINESS:**

None

**COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT:**

Councilman Fusco thanked the board for voting favorably on the study.

**BOARD ATTORNEY REPORT:**

Mr. Steinhagen suggested that the Housing Element Fair Share Plan should be implemented as quickly as possible.

**BOARD PLANNER REPORT:**

None

**ZONING OFFICER REPORT:**

None

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD – CORRESPONDENCE:**

There was no public comment.

With no further business presented, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by: Vice Chair Gold

Seconded: Councilman Fusco

All in Favor – Motion Passed

The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Adam Myszka  
Planning Board Secretary