



BOROUGH OF LEONIA
Leonia Planning Board
MINUTES

MARCH 22, 2023 **7:30 PM** **LEONIA SENIOR CENTER**

The Borough of Leonia Planning Board held its regular meeting on MARCH 22, 2023 at 7:30 p.m. located at 305 Beechwood Place, Leonia NJ.

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

MEMBER(S) ABSENT: Judah Zeigler, Ron Wolf

ALSO PRESENT: Zoning Officer – Adam Myszka, Attorney – Dan Steinhagen

Meeting called to order at 7:30 PM

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Steinhagen offered a spelling correction for the minutes.

Mr. Ford added that he was present at the meeting but marked absent.

Chair DeGidio stated that the corrections would be made.

Motion to approve the minutes of the FEBRUARY 15, 2022 Re-Organization meeting as corrected made by: Mr. Ford and seconded by Mr. Botten:

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows

| | | | | | |
|------------------|-----|----------------|-----|-------------------|-----|
| Mayor Zeigler: | - | Chair DeGidio: | yes | Councilman Fusco: | - |
| Vice Chair Gold: | yes | Mr. Russell: | yes | Mr. Ford: | yes |
| Mr. Botten: | yes | Mr. Thompson: | yes | Mr. Wolf: | - |
| Mr. Ko: | yes | Ms. Choi: | - | | |

NEW/CONTINUING APPLICATIONS

PB22-11 – MSN Services LLC, 180 Fort Lee Road, Block: 1205/ Lot: 4 – Variances related to construction of a new 4-unit multifamily dwelling.

Mr. Steinhagen let the public know that he received a late communication that the applicant could not appear tonight and requested that the meeting be carried without further notice to the April 26, 2023 regular meeting of the planning board.

Chair DeGidio asked Mr. Myszka zoning officer if there had been any new plans submitted and Mr. Myszka confirmed that there are no new Engineering Plans.

Mr. Steinhagen added that he would speak with the project attorney and make him aware of the requirements to move forward.

DISCUSSION ON BOARD MATTERS – NEW/OLD BUSINESS

Establishment of Redevelopment Plan Steering Committee

Chair DeGidio thanked the public who attended the redevelopment community meeting, and spoke on the success of it. He continued to explain that the planner is moving forward with the plan, and that she asked if a steering committee could be established to discuss ideas before presenting to the board. He stated that Vice Chair Gold, Mr. Russell and Mr. Botten would make up the committee.

Councilman Fusco clarified if he would be on the committee or not.

Chair DeGidio stated that the attorney advised that the councilman not be on the committee as the plan would ultimately end up at the mayor and council.

Ordinance Review – 2023-05 “Home Business Ordinance

Chairman DeGidio explained the history of the Ordinance. He described the differences between the previous Planning Board Recommendations and the current Ordinance.

Councilman Fusco explained the reasoning that the governing body have for introducing this Ordinance.

Mr. Steinhagen, Planning Board Attorney, and Mr. Myszka, Zoning Officer, discussed with the board their concerns that the wording of the Ordinance could be too broad.

The Board deliberated over what recommendation should be made to the governing body.

Chairman DeGidio summed up the Boards discussion and explained the recommendations the Board would send to the governing body.

Motion to find the Ordinance consistent with the Master Plan and recommend the Ordinance for approval with some changes made by: Vice Chair Gold and seconded by Chair DeGidio:

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows

| | | | | | |
|------------------|---------|----------------|-----|-------------------|--------|
| Mayor Zeigler: | Absent | Chair DeGidio: | yes | Councilman Fusco: | yes |
| Vice Chair Gold: | yes | Mr. Russell: | yes | Mr. Ford: | yes |
| Mr. Botten: | abstain | Mr. Thompson: | yes | Mr. Wolf: | Absent |
| Mr. Ko: | yes | Ms. Choi: | yes | | |

Impacts of Development on School Population

Chair DeGidio stated that he has noticed a lot of discussions occurring on this topic, and he explained that he spoke in length with Mr. Steinhagen, Planning Board Attorney, on this topic.

Mr. Steinhagen, Planning Board Attorney, clarified that this topic should not be considered when making decisions at the Planning Board level. He stated that this is a discussion for the Master Plan.

Mr. Russell asked if this issue could be brought up as an amendment to the Master Plan if it is not currently in the Master Plan, and Mr. Steinhagen confirmed this as possible.

PLANNING BOARD ATTORNEY REPORT

Mr. Steinhagen explained that the Chairman raised a question about the Affordable Housing Set Aside Ordinance, which he discussed with the Borough Attorney and the Borough Planner, and let the Board know that they can anticipate an Ordinance in the future to fix some problems in the current Ordinance.

Mr. Steinhagen stated that the Borough is a defendant in a litigation with Andres Rocha and gave the Board some updates on the current status.

ZONING OFFICER REPORT/INTERPRETATIONS

Mr. Myszka, Zoning Officer, explained that he was lacking clarity in the borough code when dealing with massage parlors.

Chair DeGidio suggested that Mr. Myszka generate a memo that the Board could review and send on as recommendations to the governing body.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD – CORRESPONDENCE:

Lydia Maurice, 392 Grand Avenue, asked the Board about the Area in Need of Redevelopment and voiced her concerns over the possibility of it becoming a condemnation area in the future.

Mr. Steinhagen explained that the recent designation of the area in which Ms. Maurice resides is “non-condemnation” and changing it to a “condemnation” area would require an action by the Mayor and Council which would require the entire process to be restarted. The decisions about these matters fall on the governing body and not the Planning Board.

With no further business presented, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by: Vice Chair Gold and seconded by Mr. Botten

All in Favor – Motion Passed

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Greco
Planning Board Secretary