



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

**APRIL 26, 2023**

**7:30 PM**

**LEONIA SENIOR CENTER**

The Borough of Leonia Planning Board held its regular meeting on APRIL 26, 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, Ron Wolf, Haeseok Ko, Damee Choi.

**MEMBER(S) ABSENT:** Judah Zeigler

**ALSO PRESENT:** Attorney – Dan Steinhagen

Meeting called to order at 7:30 PM

**ROLL CALL**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair DeGidio stated that the previously approved Minutes for the February Meeting contained an error regarding Board member attendance.

Motion to rescind prior approved minutes and approve the minutes of the FEBRUARY 15, 2022 meeting as corrected made by: Vice Chair Gold 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:	-
Mr. Botten:	yes	Mr. Thompson:	yes	Mr. Wolf:	-
Mr. Ko:	yes	Ms. Choi:	-		

Motion to approve the minutes of the MARCH 22, 2022 meeting as presented made by: Mr. Botten and seconded by Councilman Fusco:

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows

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

**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, Planning Board Attorney, stated that there have been multiple communications with the applicant’s attorney Mr. Conway, and that the applicant has not met the requirements in order to continue. The applicant would have to re-notice and submit revised plans. Mr. Steinhagen added that the applicant did extend the Board’s time to act, and that notice is not carried and would have to be re-noticed.

**PB23-01** – Weimin Zhang, 11 Brook Terrace, Block:206 / Lot: 9 – Variances related to constructing a porch outside the existing house entrance.

Chair DeGidio asked the secretary if there was an issue with this project.

Michael Greco, Planning Board Secretary, stated that the applicant failed to notice the newspaper and turn in their affidavit.

Chair DeGidio and Mr. Steinhagen discussed that there is no need to carry as they have not noticed yet, but they have already sent out the certified letters to property owners. The secretary confirmed this.

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

**Codification of Ordinances – Ch. 232 Sign Ordinance**

Chair DeGidio stated that the Mayor and Council has formally asked for the planning board to review Ch. 232 of the Borough Code, a Sign Ordinance. He explained the history of this, and that a prior committee was named to handle this, but following the decisions there was never any action on it, and now it has come back. He stated that he would like to reestablish a committee to review this. The Committee includes Chair DeGidio, Mr. Botten, Vice Chair Gold and Mr. Myszka, the Zoning Officer. He added that he would circulate the necessary current and past information to the board members.

**Redevelopment Plan Update**

Vice Chair Gold stated that there was some general discourse, and Ms. Chavan, Borough Planner, sent out some documents that the Committee is reviewing.

**PLANNING BOARD ATTORNEY REPORT**

Mr. Steinhagen stated that they are waiting on a case management conference to be scheduled in the Rocha Litigation and there is nothing to report. He also stated that he spoke with the attorney for Pacific Outdoor Advertising, and he is waiting on something from the Borough Attorney, and that they are pretty close to reaching a deal with the Borough and that they would soon be returning to the board. He told the public that their new plan is further away from the residential properties.

Chair DeGidio confirmed with Mr. Steinhagen that it would be in the zone it is already permitted to be in. Mr. Steinhagen confirmed it is in the correct zone as a conditional use.

Vice Chair Gold asked if, generally speaking, the tax impact of a project is something that the board should take into consideration.

Mr. Steinhagen confirmed that it is not something that the board should consider, but that it is good information for the public.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD – CORRESPONDENCE**

Lydia Maurice, 392 Grand Ave, stated that she has attended all the meetings and she explained that she understands everything so far, but she would like to know what comes next for the Area in Need of Redevelopment.

Chair DeGidio responded explaining the process of an Area in Need of Redevelopment to Ms. Maurice.

Mr. Steinhagen offered some additional information.

Councilman Fusco asked if there are any more reviews scheduled, and Chair DeGidio confirmed there are not until the draft plan is presented publicly.

Mr. Steinhagen spoke briefly on the nature of the Planning Board and their role in these matters and that all final decisions will be made by the Governing Body, as opposed to the Planning Board.

William Torres, 124 Leonia Ave, asked about the process and where he would find information about future meetings. He then stated that he is in the Area in Need of Redevelopment and that he was not noticed.

Chair DeGidio and Mr. Steinhagen spoke on this and explained that the original designation of the larger study area dated years back, and stated that they would need to confirm if he is actually in the area in question. Mr. Steinhagen offered that the borough can choose to send additional notices, but they are not required. Chair DeGidio explained all the other places that notices for the meetings could be found.

Mr. Wolf stated that he came in late and missed roll call, and Chair DeGidio confirmed with the secretary that he has him marked as present.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

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 7:52 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Greco  
Planning Board Secretary