



BOROUGH OF LEONIA
Leonía Planning Board
MINUTES

January 24, 2024 **7:30 PM** **LEONIA SENIOR CENTER**

The Borough of Leonía Planning Board held its regular meeting on JANUARY 24, 2024 at 7:30 p.m. located at 305 Beechwood Place, Leonía, NJ.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor William Ziegler, Chairman Michael DeGidio, Vice Chair Ira Gold, Councilman Christoph Hesterbrink, Patrick Botten, Timothy Ford, William Russell, Sean Thompson, Ron Wolf, Haeseok Ko, Damee Choi.

MEMBER(S) ABSENT: Mayor Bill Ziegler.

ALSO PRESENT: Secretary – Michael Greco, Attorney – Dan Steinhagen, Engineer – Drew DiSessa, Planner – Sanyogita Chavan.

Meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM.

FLAG SALUTE

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve the minutes of the December 20, 2023, meeting made by: Mr. Botten and Seconded by Vice Chair Gold:

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows

Mayor Ziegler:	-	Chair DeGidio:	Yes	Councilman Hesterbrink:	Abstain
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		

RESOLUTIONS

NEW/CONTINUING APPLICATIONS

PB24-02 – MSN Services LLC, 180 Fort Lee Road, Block: 1205 / Lot: 4 – Variance related to construction of a new 4-unit multifamily dwelling.

Mr. Steinhagen explained that the application would not be heard tonight due to a noticing error, and would most likely appear at the February meeting.

PB23-06 – High Jump Realty, LLC., 515 & 517 Grand Avenue, Block: 504 / Lots: 1&2 – Seeking Minor Subdivision Approval with a D2 Variance.

Chair DeGidio announced the application.

Mr. Steinhagen explained that the application appeared in October and a concern was raised over whether or not a D2 variance was required, and as the applicant has updated their submission to include request for approval of a D2 Variance, then the Class I & III members as members of the governing body are not eligible to vote and should step down.

Gregory Asadurian, from DeCotiis, FitzPatrick, Cole & Giblin, LLP, explained the application and their intent to the board.

Mr. Steinhagen asked if there was a previous resolution, and Mr. Asadurian explained that there is not to his knowledge.

Mr. Asadurian called John Obecnny, High Jump Realty Owner, as his first witness. Mr. Steinhagen confirmed that Mr. Obecnny was previously sworn in and he remains under oath.

Mr. Obecnny explained who he is and described the site and the intention of the application.

Chair DeGidio asked if there would be evidence on the preexisting conditions, and Mr. Asadurian explained he would have a planner come up.

Mr. Steinhagen asked if the applicant would be amenable to paying all applicable fees in the building department, and Mr. Obecnny answered that he would.

Mr. Ford confirmed that the new house would be a Single-Family home and asked about the existing structures on the property currently.

Mr. Asadurian called Bruce D. Rigg, Rigg Associates, 1000 Maple Ave, Glen Rock, NJ, as his next witness. Mr. Steinhagen confirmed that he was previously sworn in and is still under oath.

Mr. Riggs gave a presentation on the changes to the plans since the last meeting.

Chair DeGidio asked about the paving program and if the street in question has been paved recently, and Mr. DiSessa answered him.

Mr. Steinhagen and Mr. DiSessa discussed a condition of approval in reference to street opening permits.

Mr. Obecnny called Steven M. Lydon PP, AICP, Burgis Associates Inc., Westwood, NJ as his next witness. Mr. Steinhagen swore Mr. Lydon in.

Mr. Lydon gave a presentation on the application.

Mr. Botten asked a question about the sizes of the lots and Mr. Lydon gave his professional opinion on this.

Mr. Steinhagen asked Mr. Lydon to speak about the Borough's large lot ordinance. Mr. Steinhagen and Mr. Lydon discussed.

Chair DeGidio asked for clarification on what is currently in the rear yards of the current properties, and Mr. Lydon described them to him. Chair DeGidio asked about the trees on the properties and asked what landscaping plans have been made at this point. Mr. Lydon stated that he is not aware of a landscaping plan yet. Chair DeGidio also asked a question about water run off and was told that the engineer could answer after the planner finished. Chair DeGidio asked questions about the rear yard coverage. Mr. Lydon explained it to him. There was a board discussion on this topic.

Mr. Ko asked for more details. Mr. Lydon answered him.

Chair DeGidio opened the floor for public comment.

Ji Won Kim, 185 Harrison Street, was sworn in by Mr. Steinhagen, and made some comments in opposition of the application.

Chair DeGidio asked for Mr. Riggs to come back up to answer his question from earlier about water runoff.

Mr. Riggs explained the plan for storm water and the board discussed with him their concerns.

Mr. Asadurian stated that he has no closing statements and would ask for the Board to vote on the application.

Chair DeGidio confirmed that should the application be approved; would the applicant be amenable to keeping all construction vehicles from parking on the street.

Mr. Steinhagen explained to the board all of the conditions for approval discussed during the meeting. Then he explained the voting on the application and that as a D Variance, the application would require 5 affirmative votes to be passed.

Motion to approve application with all applicable conditions as detailed by Mr. Steinhagen, made by: Mr. Botten and Seconded by Mr. Ford:

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows

Mayor Ziegler:	-	Chair DeGidio:	No	Councilman Hesterbrink:	-
Vice Chair Gold:	No	Mr. Russell:	Yes	Mr. Ford:	Yes
Mr. Botten:	Yes	Mr. Thompson:	Yes	Mr. Wolf:	No
Mr. Ko:	-	Ms. Choi:	-		

With a Vote of 4 Yes and 3 No, the motion fails, constituting a Statutory Denial of the application.

DISCUSSION ON BOARD MATTERS – NEW/OLD BUSINESS

Chair DeGidio asked the board a question on the delivery of board packets monthly. With no objections, it was agreed that the board members would pick up the packets from borough hall.

Chair DeGidio spoke on 11 Brook Terrace, a previous resolution, and that there was a complication with the wording of the resolution and the code requirements of the building department. The board agreed that the resolution did not need to be changed and that the Construction Official should follow the building codes where applicable.

Motion to authorize the Board Secretary to send a correspondence to the Construction Official relaying this message, made by: Mr. Botten and Seconded by Mr. Russell:

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows

Mayor Ziegler:	-	Chair DeGidio:	Yes	Councilman Hesterbrink:	-
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		

COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

PLANNING BOARD ATTORNEY REPORT

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD – CORRESPONDENCE

CLOSED SESSION

ADJOURNMENT

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

All in Favor – Motion Passed

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Greco
Planning Board Secretary