



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

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**August 28, 2024** **7:30 PM** **LEONIA NEW MUNICIPAL CENTER**

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The Borough of Leonia Planning Board held its regular meeting on AUGUST 28, 2024, at 7:30 p.m. located at 229 Fort Lee Road, Leonia, NJ.

Meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM.

**FLAG SALUTE**

**ROLL CALL**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Michael DeGidio, Vice Chair Ira Gold, Mayor Bill Ziegler, Councilman Christoph Hesterbrink, Patrick Botten, Timothy Ford, William Russell, *Ron Wolf (Arrived 7:34pm)*, Sean Thompson

**MEMBER(S) ABSENT:** Haeseok Ko, Damee Choi

**ALSO PRESENT:** Attorney – Dan Steinhagen

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion to approve the minutes of the June 26, 2024, regular meeting made by: Mr. Ford and Seconded by Mr. Botten:

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows

Mayor Ziegler:	Yes	Chair DeGidio:	Yes	Councilman Hesterbrink:	Yes
Vice Chair Gold:	Yes	Mr. Russell:	Yes	Mr. Ford:	Yes
Mr. Botten:	Yes	Mr. Thompson:	Yes	Mr. Wolf:	Absent
Mr. Ko:	Absent	Ms. Choi:	Absent		

*Motion Passes.*

**RESOLUTIONS**

Motion to approve the resolution for application **PB24-09 – Mel Conti, 138 Broad Ave**, made by: Mr. Botten and Seconded by Mr. Ford:

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows

Mayor Ziegler:	Yes	Chair DeGidio:	Yes	Councilman Hesterbrink:	Yes
Vice Chair Gold:	-	Mr. Russell:	Yes	Mr. Ford:	Yes
Mr. Botten:	Yes	Mr. Thompson:	Yes	Mr. Wolf:	Absent
Mr. Ko:	Absent	Ms. Choi:	Absent		

*Motion Passes.*

**NEW/CONTINUING APPLICATIONS**

**PB24-08 – Jessica Sim, 169 Broad Ave, Block: 1608 / Lot: 1 – Variances related to an addition and the expansion of a non-conforming use.**

Chair DeGidio asked that Mayor Ziegler, Councilman Hesterbrink and Vice Chair Gold all step down from the dais as they are either ineligible to vote or otherwise recusing themselves for this application.

Peter Pulice explained the changes to the board.

Chair DeGidio confirmed that no members of the public present wished to speak on the application.

Motion to Approve application PB 24-08, Jessica Sim, 169 Broad Ave, with conditions made by Mr. Botten and Seconded by Mr. Russell.

Mayor Ziegler:	-	Chair DeGidio:	Yes	Councilman Hesterbrink:	-
Vice Chair Gold:	-	Mr. Russell:	Yes	Mr. Ford:	Yes
Mr. Botten:	Yes	Mr. Thompson:	Yes	Mr. Wolf:	-
Mr. Ko:	Absent	Ms. Choi:	Absent		

*Motion Passes.*

Motion to approve the resolution for application **PB24-08 – Jessica Sim, 169 Broad Ave**, 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:	-	Mr. Russell:	Yes	Mr. Ford:	Yes
Mr. Botten:	Yes	Mr. Thompson:	Yes	Mr. Wolf:	-
Mr. Ko:	Absent	Ms. Choi:	Absent		

*Motion Passes.*

Chair DeGidio entered into the record that <<not sure what this is?>>

**PB24-07 – Ike Kitman, 147 Crescent Ave, Block: 1211 / Lot: 10 – Variances related to the construction of a garage.**

Chair DeGidio called for Mayor Ziegler, Councilman Hesterbrink and Vice Chair Gold to rejoin the dais.

Ike Kitman, 147 Crescent Ave, was sworn in by Mr. Steinhagen. Mr. Kitman presented his application.

Chair DeGidio asked about the coverage calculation and expressed concern on how close it is to the allowed coverage.

Chair DeGidio asked about the trees that would need to be removed. Mr. Kitman explained the trees that would need to be removed and stated that he would follow the tree removal procedure.

Mayor Ziegler asked if Mr. Kitman would be willing to put pervious pavers instead of the asphalt driveway that is presented. Mr. Kitman stated that he would be happy to switch to the pervious pavers.

Mr. Botten asked that the pervious pavers be stipulated as a specific type of paver. Mr. Botten also asked what the height of the garage would be. Mr. Kitman answered he would be willing to use the specific paver and stated the height of the building.

Mr. Botten asked if this building would trigger required storm water management. Mr. Steinhagen answered that this would most likely be under the amount that triggers the ordinance.

Chair DeGidio confirmed that no members of the public present wished to speak on this application.

Mr. Steinhagen explained that Mr. DiSessa mentioned a need for storm water management in his letter and Mr. Kitman agreed to comply.

Motion to Approve application PB 24-07, Ike Kitman, 147 Crescent Ave, with the conditions discussed, made by Mayor Ziegler and Seconded by Mr. Botten.

Mayor Ziegler:	Yes	Chair DeGidio:	Yes	Councilman Hesterbrink:	Yes
Vice Chair Gold:	Yes	Mr. Russell:	Yes	Mr. Ford:	Yes
Mr. Botten:	Yes	Mr. Thompson:	Yes	Mr. Wolf:	Yes
Mr. Ko:	Absent	Ms. Choi:	Absent		

*Motion Passes.*

Mr. Steinhagen explained the next steps to Mr. Kitman.

Mr. Botten asked Mr. Kitman for a little history of his family who lived in town. Mr. Kitman told the board about his family.

**PB24-10 – Rupal Mistry, 149 Prospect St, Block: 1205 / Lot: 13 – Variances related to a home addition on a single-family dwelling.**

Peter Pulice was sworn in by Mr. Steinhagen.

Mr. Pulice explained the application and added into evidence, A1: Photo Exhibit.

Rupal Mistry, 149 Prospect St, was sworn in by Mr. Steinhagen.

Ms. Mistry explained her family history and why they chose to move into Leonia. Ms. Mistry explained why the plan would benefit her family.

Chair DeGidio confirmed that no public present had any questions for Ms. Mistry.

Mr. Pulice explained the plans.

Chair DeGidio asked about the cellar entrance, and Mr. Pulice answered that they would possibly move it, but currently it has not been discussed.

Mr. Ford asked some questions about the additions and confirmed that there would be no renovations on the second floor.

Mr. Botten asked the board if they would like to memorialize an existing nonconforming set back on the garage. Mr. Steinhagen asked when the garage was built. Mr. Pulice answered 1907 and confirmed that the set back is preexisting nonconforming.

Mr. Steinhagen confirmed the variance being presented was building coverage as a C2.

Chair DeGidio confirmed that no public in attendance wished to ask questions or make comments on the application.

Mr. Wolf stated his approval of the applicant in their attempt to maintain the character of the neighborhood.

Motion to Approve application PB 24-10, Rupal Mistry, 149 Prospect St, subject to compliance with the board engineer’s comments, made by Mr. Botten and Seconded by Vice Chair Gold.

Mayor Ziegler:	Yes	Chair DeGidio:	Yes	Councilman Hesterbrink:	Yes
Vice Chair Gold:	Yes	Mr. Russell:	Yes	Mr. Ford:	Yes
Mr. Botten:	Yes	Mr. Thompson:	Yes	Mr. Wolf:	Yes
Mr. Ko:	Absent	Ms. Choi:	Absent		

*Motion Passes.*

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

**Sign Ordinance – Chair DeGidio**

Chair DeGidio presented the history on the sign ordinance. He stated that he did a rewrite of the current sign ordinance which he circulated to the board and would like to open to the board for discussion on this.

Mayor Ziegler commended everyone involved in reviewing this ordinance, most notably Chair DeGidio for his work. Mayor Ziegler stated some thoughts on the revised ordinance including free standing banners and if they are outlawed.

Mr. Steinhagen stated that he believes there should be nothing on sidewalks.

The board discussed the revised ordinance.

Mayor Ziegler asked about an application that did not receive a permit for a sign. Then asked how many appeals this board has heard over the years.

Mayor Ziegler asked about the percent that a window can be covered and asked about the concept of questionable content.

The board discussed a prior sign case in Leonia involving questionable content.

Mr. Ford spoke about someone who put signs on their lawn and won a court case to keep them, the board discussed constitutionality of limiting signs on private property.

Chair DeGidio let the board know to send him any ideas, and he would do a rewrite and present it to the board for passing on to the mayor and council.

**Affordable Housing Set Aside Discussion – Mr. Botten**

Mr. Botten explained that this was discussed at the redevelopment committee meeting and wanted to bring this discussion to the planning board.

Mr. Steinhagen explained the concept to the board.

Chair DeGidio and Councilman Hesterbrink discussed the requirements.

Mr. Steinhagen discussed with the board the standard.

**COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT**

**MAYOR’S REPORT**

Mayor Ziegler spoke to the board on the flooding that occurred due to the large storms specifically on the people affected on Wood Terrace and Lakeview.

**PLANNING BOARD ATTORNEY REPORT**

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD – CORRESPONDENCE**

Lydia Maurice, 392 Grand Ave, complained that she could not hear the board.

**CLOSED SESSION**

A motion was made to enter closed session at 9:13 PM by: Councilman Hesterbrink and seconded by Mr. Botten.  
All in Favor – Motion Passed

A motion was made to leave closed session at 9:17 PM by: Mr. Botten and seconded by Vice Chair Gold.  
All in Favor – Motion Passed

**ADJOURNMENT**

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

All in Favor – Motion Passed

The meeting was adjourned at 9:23 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Greco  
Planning Board Secretary