

**BOROUGH OF DEMAREST  
PLANNING BOARD**

**MINUTES**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, 7:30 PM**

The Chairperson opened the meeting at 7:30 pm with the following announcement:

**Public Announcement of Meeting:** The notice requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act of the State of New Jersey have been satisfied by the inclusion of the date, time, and place of this public meeting in the annual schedule and notice of regular meetings of this Board. Such annual schedule and notice of regular meetings is posted at the Borough Hall, was mailed to The Newark Star-Ledger and The Record, is posted on the Borough website, and was filed with the Borough Clerk of Demarest on December 23, 2022.

**Roll Call**

Mr. Alevrontas – Present

Mayor Bernstein – Present

Ms. Brenner – Present

Councilmember Fox – Present

Chair Hayden – Present

Mr. Parlamis – Absent

Mrs. Paulison – Present

Mr. Rifkind - Present

Mayor Schooler - Present

Vice Chair Tabacchi – Present

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**PUBLIC MEETING:**

Swearing in of Class IV Member: Jodi Brenner, previously Alternate #2 member, was sworn in by Mayor Bernstein. Ms. Brenner’s term runs until 12/31/25.

**VOTE to Approve Minutes:** September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023: A motion was made to approve the minutes with a minor correction regarding the date of the next meeting.

**Motion:** Mayor Schooler

**Seconded by:** Mr. Tabacchi

**YES:** All eligible to vote: All in favor

**NO:** 0

**ABSENT for September 6<sup>th</sup> meeting:** Mayor Bernstein, Ms. Brenner, Mr. Parlamis

**The Minutes are approved**

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

**Public Hearing re: 2023 Master Plan Amendment**

- Prior to testimony, Darlene Green, the Planning Board Planner, (author of the Amendment) was sworn in by Mr. Bern, the Planning Board Attorney.
- Ms. Green gave a brief background regarding Municipal Land Use Law and the requirement that Planning Boards in New Jersey perform a reexamination of the Master Plan & Development Regulations on a periodic basis (a minimum of every 10 years).
- Demarest performed this re-examination in 2022. In preparing the ‘2022 Master Plan and Development Regulations Reexamination Report’ the Board looked at existing ordinances and the

goals that guide development in the Borough of Demarest to ensure they are current and still relevant. Recommendations were also made regarding Master Plan Elements recommended for future updating. For example: Open Space and Recreation.

- Reexamination reports contain recommendations and therefore do not carry as much weight as a Master Plan. The purpose of this Amendment is to make the findings, updates, and goals recommended in the Reexamination Report officially part of the Master Plan.
- Ms. Green briefly reviewed the categories in the Reexamination Report and the 2023 Master Plan Amendment and they were found to be consistent. These will be the goals that will establish the minimum standards for use, development, and overall guidance when planning decisions are made and applications are evaluated.
- Mayor Bernstein asked for clarification regarding the classification of the Downtown area as an area in need of redevelopment versus rehabilitation. Ms. Green responded that the terminology is confusing but rehabilitation was chosen because the area was unlikely to meet the criteria for redevelopment. The area in question, regardless of classification, would then have a redevelopment plan prepared. There was a brief discussion about the power of condemnation etc., the intent to use condemnation must be stated outright.
- Mayor Bernstein raised a question about section 1b. under Housing in the 2023 Master Plan Amendment, page 2: does 1b. restrict and or conflict with what is permitted under the Borough's accessory unit ordinance, and would it in any way affect applications for subdivisions? There was a brief discussion about accessory uses and principal uses. After a discussion it was agreed that the following sentence would be added for clarification: 'This goal does not apply to affordable accessory units.'

**Motion to Open the Meeting to the Public for questions on the 2023 Master Plan Amendment:**

**Motion:** Mayor Bernstein

**Seconded by:** Mayor Schooler

**All in favor**

Public Comment: No members of the public were in attendance.

**Motion to Close the Meeting to the Public for questions on the 2023 Master Plan Amendment:**

**Motion:** Mayor Bernstein

**Seconded by:** Mr. Alevrontas

**All in favor**

**Adoption of 2023 Master Plan Amendment:**

**Motion:** Councilperson Fox, noting the added provision that section 1b of the Amendment be modified to state that this goal does not apply to affordable housing

**Seconded by:** Vice Chair Tabacchi

**All in favor**

**Resolution Adopting the 2023 Master Plan Amendment to the Borough of Demarest Master Plan**

**Motion to adopt the 2023 Master Plan Amendment with the following corrections:**

Corrections: Paragraph 1, last line, instead of Master Plan it should state Re-Examination Report; and page 1, paragraph #6 should say 2023 Master Plan Amendment (instead of 2023 Master Plan).

**Motion:** Ms. Brenner

**Seconded by:** Mayor Schooler

**All in favor**

**Motion to Open the Meeting to the Public for non-agenda items:**

**Motion:** Councilmember Fox

**Seconded by:** Mayor Bernstein

**All in favor**

Public Comment: No members of the public were in attendance.

**Motion to Close the Meeting to the Public for non-agenda items:**

**Motion:** Mayor Schooler

**Seconded by:** Vice Chair Tabacchi

**All in favor**

**New Business**

**Nominating Committee:**

The Board Chair asked Mr. Alevrontas and Mayor Schooler to serve as the Nominating Committee for 2024 officers at the Planning Board Reorganization meeting

**RFQs:**

The Board Chair advised that the Borough has advertised for RFQs and responses are due by 11/28/23. The requested RFQs are for the positions of Planning Board Planner, Planning Board Engineer, and Planning Board Attorney.

**Remote Meetings:**

Ms. Brenner asked about remote capabilities for attendance by Board Members. Mayor Bernstein inquired whether remote attendance would count toward quorum and if so, it would be helpful towards establishing a quorum when needed to ensure a meeting can take place.

The Chairperson stated that in the past she briefly spoke to the Borough Administrator about setting up a procedure for emergency situations and will further discuss this with the BA. The Chair noted we are not currently staffed to do so at this time. Ideally, we would need a host and co-host, so two Board members capable of conducting a remote meeting. This would normally be a responsibility of the Board secretary.

A discussion ensued regarding access for the public to attend remotely. To be continued.

**Motion to adjourn the meeting:**

**Motion:** Vice Chair Tabacchi

**Seconded by:** Mr. Alevrontas

**All in favor**

**The meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m.**

**Next meeting December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023 7:30 p.m.**

Respectively submitted,

*Marian Hayden*

Marian Hayden

Demarest Planning Board Chairperson