



**Borough of Demarest
Planning Board Meeting
MINUTES**

May 1, 2024

7:30 PM

DEMAREST BOROUGH HALL

The Borough of Demarest Planning Board held its regular meeting on WEDNESDAY, MAY 1, 2024, at 7:30 p.m. located at 118 Serpentine Road Demarest, NJ 07627.

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Ms. Hayden.

FLAG SALUTE

The Board was led in a salute to the flag by Ms. Hayden.

ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Theodore Alevrontas, Mayor Brian Bernstein, Jodi Brenner, Councilwoman Daryl Fox, Fatemah Mamdani, Lynn Paulison, James Tabacchi, Youngsam Yu, Mary Hamilton, Marian Hayden

MEMBER(S) ABSENT: -

ALSO PRESENT: Michael Greco – Secretary, Douglas Bern – Attorney, Austin Vijen – Planner

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve the minutes for the March 6, 2024, Reorganization meeting, was made by: Vice Chair Tabacchi and Seconded by Mayor Bernstein:

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|--------|------------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| Mr. Alevrontas: | Yes | Mayor Bernstein: | Yes | Ms. Brenner: | Yes |
| Councilwoman Fox: | Absent | Ms. Mamdani: | Yes | Mrs. Paulison: | Yes |
| Vice Chair Tabacchi: | Yes | Mr. Yu: | Yes | Mrs. Hamilton: | Yes |
| Chair Hayden: | Yes | | | | |

Motion passed

Motion to approve the minutes for the December 6, 2023 Executive Session, was made by: Vice Chair Tabacchi and Seconded by Mayor Bernstein:

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|--------|------------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| Mr. Alevrontas: | Yes | Mayor Bernstein: | Yes | Ms. Brenner: | Yes |
| Councilwoman Fox: | Absent | Ms. Mamdani: | Yes | Mrs. Paulison: | Yes |
| Vice Chair Tabacchi: | Yes | Mr. Yu: | Yes | Mrs. Hamilton: | Yes |
| Chair Hayden: | Yes | | | | |

Motion passed

NEW/OLD BUSINESS**Redevelopment Discussion**

Chair Hayden introduced the Resolution adopted by the Mayor & Council authorizing the Planning Board to conduct a study on the new Redevelopment Area. Chair Hayden explained the history of this, and she asked Mayor Bernstein about the criteria.

Mayor Bernstein stated that the governing body is putting it to the Planner and the Planning Board to do the study and select the criteria required.

Mr. Vijen, Stand in Board Planner, explained the criteria selected.

Councilwoman Fox asked if the goals from the original rehabilitation area still be applicable in the new redevelopment area. Mr. Vijen answered that it can.

Mayor Bernstein spoke on the need for Redevelopment in the area selected. He stated that his understanding allows for a better investment opportunity to developers increases with the a redevelopment area as opposed to a rehabilitation area.

Chair Hayden asked a question about taxes and the pilot.

Councilwoman Fox answered that we would retain a large percentage under the pilot.

Ms. Brenner asked what would happen if an owner did not want to change.

Mr. Bern answered that the area is non condemnation, but there are a lot of incentives for owners to work with developers to improve.

Councilwoman Fox stated that there are multiple borough owned properties in the area and those would all give 100% increase in taxes for the lots.

Chair Hayden summarized the next steps.

Mayor Bernstein asked that Mr. Vijen explain the next steps for the Planner and the Board.

Mr. Vijen discussed the steps with the board.

Vice Chair Tabbacchi asked about eminent domain and the car service station.

Chair Hayden and Mayor Bernstein discussed that there are people already discussing possibilities for improvement and many have expressed excitement over the redevelopment area.

The board discussed the possibilities of where the businesses in the area could move to.

Mayor Bernstein confirmed with Mr. Greco what the planning board should be doing next.

Ms. Brenner asked about the time frame when the board should expect to see the plan.

Ordinance 1131-24

Chair Hayden explained the ordinance to the board. She then asked where this ordinance came from.

Councilwoman Fox explained that this ordinance came from the state and is being adopted by many municipalities.

Chair Hayden asked if this should mention residential districts.

Councilwoman Fox and Mayor Bernstein stated that this is already not allowed in residential zones.

The board discussed the naming of ordinances and chapters in the code.

Mr. Vijen stated that the ordinance is not inconsistent with the master plan.

Motion to approve Ordinance 1131-24 and the planning board will prepare and send a letter to the governing body declaring the ordinance as not inconsistent with the Master Plan, was made by: Vice Chair Tabacchi and Seconded by Mayor Bernstein:

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|---------|------------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| Mr. Alevrontas: | Yes | Mayor Bernstein: | Yes | Ms. Brenner: | Yes |
| Councilwoman Fox: | Abstain | Ms. Mamdani: | Yes | Mrs. Paulison: | Yes |
| Vice Chair Tabacchi: | Yes | Mr. Yu: | Yes | Mrs. Hamilton: | - |
| Chair Hayden: | Yes | | | | |

Motion passed

Ordinance 1134-24

Chair Hayden introduced the ordinance and asked Mr. Greco to explain where this ordinance came from.

Mr. Greco explained the discussions with the professionals and how the ordinance is updating an out dated fee schedule.

Motion to approve Ordinance 1134-24 and the planning board will prepare and send a letter to the governing body declaring the ordinance as not inconsistent with the Master Plan, was made by: Councilwoman Fox and Seconded by Mayor Bernstein:

On roll call, the vote was recorded as follows

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|---------|------------------|-----|----------------|-----|
| Mr. Alevrontas: | Yes | Mayor Bernstein: | Yes | Ms. Brenner: | Yes |
| Councilwoman Fox: | Abstain | Ms. Mamdani: | Yes | Mrs. Paulison: | Yes |
| Vice Chair Tabacchi: | Yes | Mr. Yu: | Yes | Mrs. Hamilton: | - |
| Chair Hayden: | Yes | | | | |

Motion passed

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD – CORRESPONDENCE

A motion to open the meeting to the public was made by: Mayor Bernstein and seconded by Councilwoman Fox. All in Favor – Motion Passed

Chair Hayden confirmed that there were no members of the public in attendance to make comment.

A motion to close the meeting to the public was made by: Mayor Bernstein and seconded by Vice Chair Tabacchi. All in Favor – Motion Passed

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business presented, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by: Mayor Bernstein and seconded by Vice Chair Tabacchi.

All in Favor – Motion Passed

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michael Greco
Planning Board Secretary