REORGANIZATION & REGULAR MEETING OF THE MONTVALE PLANNING BOARD

MINUTES

Tuesday, January 6, 2026 at 7:30PM
Municipal Complex, 12 DePiero Drive in Council Chambers

Please note: A curfew of 11:15 PM is strictly adhered to by the Board. No new matter involving an applicant will be started after 10:30 PM. At 10PM the Chairman will make a determination and advise applicants whether they will be heard. If an applicant cannot be heard because of the lateness of the hour, the matter will be carried over to the next regularly scheduled meeting.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - Chairman opened the meeting at 7:34 pm leading everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS - Chairman read into the record the Open Public Meetings Act Statement.

OATHS OF OFFICE:

ALL APPOINTMENTS MADE BY MAYOR GHASSALI ON 1/1/2026:

1. Class III – 1 Year 1/1/2026 – 12/13/2026
   Dieter Koelling, Councilmember
2. Class II – 1 Year 1/1/2026 – 12/13/2026
   Chris Gruber
3. Class IV – 1 Year 1/1/2026 – 12/13/2026
   Anita Bagdat, 2nd Alternate
4. Class 1 Mayor's Designee – 1 Year 1/1/2026 – 12/13/2026
   John Ryan

REAPPOINTMENT OF JEANNE FONDACARO, BOARD SECRETARY FOR 2026 - A motion was made to reappoint Jeanne Fondacaro as Board Secretary for 2026 by Mr. Lintner and seconded by Councilmember Koelling. A roll call vote was taken with all present stating aye.

NOMINATION OF BOARD CHAIRMAN – The meeting was turned over to the Board Secretary, Ms. Fondacaro, to accept a motion to nominate the Board Chairman. A motion to nominate John DePinto was made by Mr. Lintner and seconded by Councilmember Koelling. No other nominations were made, to which Ms. Fondacaro deemed the nominations closed. A roll call vote was taken with all present stating aye and Mr. DePinto abstaining and accepting the nomination.

NOMINATION OF BOARD VICE-CHAIRMAN – The Board Secretary, Ms. Fondacaro, asked for a motion to open nominations for Vice Chairman. A motion to nominate William Lintner was made by Mr. DePinto and it was seconded by Councilmember Koelling. No other nominations were made, to which Ms. Fondacaro deemed the nominations closed. A roll call vote was taken and all present stating aye with Mr. Lintner abstaining and accepting the nomination.

RESOLUTION TO APPOINT ANDREW R. HIPOLIT, PE, PP., CME OF COLLIERS ENGINEERING & DESIGN, INC., AS PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING CONSULTANT FOR 2026 - A motion to appoint Mr. Hipolit as the Planning Board Engineer for 2026 was made by Councilmember Koelling and seconded by Mr. Gruber. A roll call vote was taken with all present stating aye.

RESOLUTION TO APPOINT ROBERT T. REGAN, ESQ., TO CONTINUE AS PLANNING BOARD ATTORNEY FOR 2026 - A motion to appoint Mr. Robert T. Regan as the Planning Board Attorney for 2026 was made by Mr. Lintner and seconded by Mr. Gruber. A roll call vote was taken with all present stating aye.

RESOLUTION TO APPOINT DARLENE GREEN, COLLIERS ENGINEERING & DESIGN, INC, AS THE PROFESSIONAL PLANNER TO THE PLANNING BOARD FOR 2026 - A motion to appoint Darlene Green as the Planning Board Planner for 2026 was made by Mr. Gruber and seconded by Mr. Ryan. A roll call vote was taken with all present stating aye.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE PLANNING BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE: Meetings to be held on the first and third Tuesdays of the month, unless otherwise specified, convening at 7:30PM and to be adjourned subject to the call of the Chairman. A motion to approve the Meeting Schedule was made by Mr. Huseynov and seconded by Mr. Tsai. All present members stated in favor with aye.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE PLANNING BOARD BY-LAWS - A motion to approve the By-Laws was made by Mr. Lintner and seconded by Mr. Gruber. All present members stated in favor with aye. There were no changes to the By-Laws

RESOLUTION TO DESIGNATE <u>THE RIDGEWOOD NEWS</u> AND <u>THE BERGEN RECORD</u> AS THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPERS - A motion to designate the above newspapers was made by Mr. Lintner and seconded by Mr. Gruber. All present members stated in favor with aye.

CHAIRMAN'S APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE. Chairman DePinto appointed the following to Site Plan Review Committee: Councilmember Koelling, Mr. Gruber, Mr. Lintner, Mr. Stefanelli, Mr. Regan, Ms. Green, Mr. O'Brien, and himself. Board Secretary is required to attend.

CHAIRMAN'S APPOINTMENT OF LIAISON TO ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION. Mr. Tsai, the current liaison, stated that for personal reasons he must step down from his position as the liaison. Chairman DePinto stated that the position will remain open and they will address the matter at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

The meeting continued into the regular Planning Board Meeting for the evening.

REGULAR MEETING OF THE MONTVALE PLANNING BOARD
Minutes
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ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Christopher Gruber; Councilmember Koelling; William Lintner; John Ryan, Mayor Designee; Javid Huseynov (arrived late 7:40pm); Sherwin Tsai; Joseph Puglisi; Anita Bagdat and Chairman DePinto

ALSO PRESENT: Darlene Green, Borough Planner; Carl O'Brien, Borough Engineer; Robert Regan, Board Attorney; Mr. John Kurz, Fire Official and Jeanne Fondacaro, Land Use Administrator and Board Secretary

ABSENT: John Culhane and Frank Stefanelli

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION LIAISON REPORT: None

SITE PLAN COMMITTEE REPORT: None

MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE REPORT: None

ZONING REPORT: None

CORRESPONDENCE: On back table

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: None

USE PERMITS:

1. **Block 1001, Lot 1** – **Divorce Logic LLC** – 135 Chestnut Ridge Road, Suite 285 (2,300 sq. ft.) – Sam Smith of Kantrowitz, Goldhammer & Graifman, P.C. represents the applicant, James Joseph Mota of Divorce Logic LLC, who was sworn in by Mr. Regan. The Chairman read the application into the record. The space will be used as a general business office for a company providing financial expertise specific to individuals navigating divorce. The applicant currently occupies a 1,266 sq. ft. office and are moving to a larger space within the same building. There will be 6 employees occupying the space, the area will be altered to 5 rooms, an outdoor sign is not required, parking will be 6 employee spaces and all other is parking in common. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Huseynov and seconded by Councilmember Koelling. A roll call vote was taken with all present stating aye.

PUBLIC HEARINGS (NEW):

1. **Block 1001, Lot 2** – **Dynarex Corporation** – 155 Chestnut Ridge Road – Site Plan Review and Variance Application – Andrew Bolson of Meyerson Fox and Conte stepped forward to represent the applicant. Mr. Bolson stated "In accordance with the site plan submitted, the applicant proposes to replace the freestanding sign monument sign with a new freestanding monument sign that is 52.10 square feet consisting of three colors.
   As the architect of my client, architectural classified too and additionally the applicant seeks to install a new 37.5 square foot internally illuminated wall mount sign, there are three variances that we are here to request from the borough variance. The variance Section 400-607-A mandate said one sign is to be erected on any building and the applicant is proposing 2 signs here. In addition, that is very Section 400-

607-A2A references that any free-standing sign shall not exceed 32 square feet and again our proposed sign is 52.10 square feet. 52.10 And finally, the variance from Section 400.67 A 2C which mandates that the street address number of the site may be added to a free-standing sign provided that the number shall not exceed 4 inches in height. An additional an additional 2 square feet of sign area shall be permitted to accommodate the street address. In our situation, the numbers are 4 inches in height, but the width it is the duration of the sign and so the IT exceeds the two additional square feet by .53 square feet, which is relatively diminished."

Mr. Bolson called for the applicant's Architect, Mr. David Bilow from Bilow Garrett Group, Architects and Planners, P.C. to testify and answer questions regarding the application and plans.

Mr. Regan swore in Mr. Bilow, as well as the Borough's Planner, Ms. Green and the Borough's Engineer, Mr. O'Brien. Mr. Bilow stated his qualifications and background information, to which Mr. Regan deemed him qualified and the Chairman accepted the recommendation.

Mr. Bolson admitted Exhibits A1 and A2 into evidence: a board with small-scale Site Plan of the existing sign and the entrance to the complex dated 9/18/24 was marked as Exhibit A1 and the building mounted sign proposal, dated 6/3/25 was marked as Exhibit A2.

Mr. Bilow summarized the applicant's proposal to replace the existing sign with a slightly smaller one, the lighting calculation of the new sign, the updating the sign for a more modern contemporary look and to have a divided roadway entering and exiting the site. He also discussed the building mounted sign, which will be slightly larger with the company logo and back lit. Mr. Bilow stated that the building sign is designed to be 138 inches in terms of the elevation against 250 feet.

Mr. Bolson asked Mr. Bilow about the function of the proposed island to which Mr. Bilow answered that the applicant is very happy at the Montvale location and that the island, "gives a little bit more presence in the building that this is their building, even though they don't occupy 100% they do occupy a large percent of the district home base. It gives a little bit more presence in the community."

Mr. Bolson asked the Chairman if the board had any questions for Mr. Bilow at the time. The Chairman stated that he would like to introduce the Borough's Planner review letter, dated 10/1/25 as Exhibit B1 and ask Ms. Green to summarize her review before moving on to the board's questions.

Ms. Green summarized her review and stated her few questions and concerns; primarily regarding the third variance that was triggered by the revised plans that were submitted and she would like that added to the application and updated plans reflecting the corrected measurements. The Chairman stated that Mr. Bilow would have to address the discrepancies in the numbers with revised plans reflected the corrected measurements, in order to have the correct information for the Resolution to be written, to which he and Mr. Bolson agreed.

The Chairman then introduced the Borough's Engineer review letter, date 9/29/25 as Exhibit B2, and requested Mr. O'Brien to summarize his review before moving on to the board's questions. Mr. O'Brien summarized his review and stated that he did not see any problems in the revised plans.

The Chairman then opened to the board for questions for Mr. Bilow. The board asked about the scale of the plans of the sign on the presentation, what percentage of the building the applicant occupies, the lighting of the signs, the coloring of the sign and the building color, the inconsistency of the two sign designs. Mr. Bilow addressed the concerns and answered the questions.

The Chairman went on to state the concern about the possible inconsistency of the coloring of the minor tenants on the monument sign and that it would be his recommendation that the minor signs be black and white and he would like that to be a condition in the Resolution, to which the applicant agreed.

The Chairman motioned to open to questions from the public. A motion to open was made by Mr. Lintner and seconded by Mr. Ryan. All in favor stated aye. No one stepped forward. A motion to close to the public was made by Councilmember Koelling and seconded by Mr. Huseynov. All in favor stated aye.

The Chairman motion to request the Board Attorney to prepare the Resolution to approve the application, which will incorporate any changes discussed during the course of the meeting and upon receiving the corrected plans. The motion to approve was made by Mr. Lintner and seconded by Mr. Gruber. There was no additional discussion on the motion. A roll call vote was taken with all members stating aye

PUBLIC HEARINGS (CONT):

1. **Block 1002, Lot 7 – Veolia Water New Jersey Inc.** – 127 Summit Avenue – Major Soil Movement Application; Site Plan Review and Variance Application – ***Please See Attached Transcript***

A five-minute break was taken at 9:02 pm.

RESOLUTION: None

OTHER BUSINESS: None

OPEN MEETING TO THE PUBLIC: No one from the public present

ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn was made by Councilmember Koelling and seconded by Mr. Gruber. All present stating aye.

Next Regular Scheduled Meeting: January 20, 2026

Respectively submitted:

Theresa DiPopolo,
Assistant to the Land Use Administrator