

**BOROUGH OF WOODCLIFF LAKE  
PLANNING BOARD  
FEBRUARY 17, 2022  
MINUTES**

**Call to Order:**

This virtual meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. at Borough Hall by Chairman Friedberg.

**Adequate Notice Statement:**

Chairman Friedberg announced that the Meeting was in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Law, P.L. 1975, Chapter 231. Notice of this meeting was posted in two newspapers, The Record and The Ridgewood News. The public was advised of the Planning Board's rule that the meetings will be concluded by 11:00 p.m.

**Flag Salute**

**Roll Call:**

Corrado Belgiovine	Present
Jane Ann Whitchurch-Carluccio	Absent
Michael Casale	Absent
Nilufer DeScherer	Present
Stephen Falanga, Councilman	Absent
Robert Friedberg	Present
Josephine Higgins	Present
Jennifer Howard	Present
Brian LaRose	Present
Thomas Panso	Present
Heidi Pollack	Present
Carlos Rendo, Mayor	Absent
Brian Eyeran, Attorney	Present
Anthony Kurus, Engineer	Present
Elizabeth Leheny, Planner	Present
Meg Smith, Secretary	Present

**Review and Discussion of Revised Draft Master Plan**

Ms. Leheny, Board Planner, reviewed changes and additions to the draft Master Plan. The draft now includes the factual info regarding the process and the town, as well as the Circulation and Utilities Elements which were prepared by the Board Engineer, Mr. Kurus of Neglia Engineering. The goals and objectives have previously been reviewed as well as the relationship to last Master Plan. Implementation with time tables has now been included.

Chairman Friedberg asked if any Board members had questions of Ms. Leheny before Mr. Kurus begins his review.

Councilwoman Higgins noted that the next scheduled Planning Board meeting has been changed from Monday, March 14<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday, March 16<sup>th</sup>.

Chairman Friedberg confirmed this date changed and noted that if this review goes as planned then a vote for adoption of the Master Plan would be scheduled for the meeting on March 16<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Friedberg also noted that the Master Plan would be posted to the Borough website at least 10 days prior to the March 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. Chairman Friedberg noted that he felt confident that none of the subjective parts of the draft Master Plan have changed.

Mr. Kurus reviewed the factual inventory of circulation including location and type of transportation facilities, inventory of roads and road classifications, signalized intersections, modes of public transportation and accident data. Mr. Kurus reviewed factual inventory of utilities including sanitary, sewer, gas, water, electric, telephone and storm water. Mr. Kurus explained that this information is provided to help with grant opportunities and to guide with future developments.

Councilwoman Higgins questioned a traffic light at the intersection on Werimus.

Mr. Kurus stated that a traffic study had not been done.

Ms. Pollack noted that as the Galaxy Gardens area gets developed there may be other traffic concerns at this intersection.

Mr. Panso noted that this intersection had been investigated previously and that it would require taking a large part of one resident's property to implement changes.

Chairman Friedberg state that it was important to note the areas of concern.

### **Public Session**

**The meeting was opened to the public** on a motion from Vice Chairman Belgiovine, seconded by Councilwoman Higgins, and carried by all.

The phone number was provided to the public to call in with any questions or concerns. The public was also advised that if they were participating via Zoom that they could raise their hand to ask a question or make a comment.

Mr. Padover stated that he felt that there was a rush to pass the Master Plan.

Chairman Friedberg stated that this process started in April 2021 and there has been a public meeting and public survey. A Master Plan Development Committee has met over the last several months. The draft has been presented at several public meetings. Chairman Friedberg disagreed with the comment that this process has been rushed.

Ms. Leheny noted that the Planning Board has met to discuss the draft recommendations several times and confirmed that it is the Planning Board who adopts the Master Plan. Ms. Leheny stated

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that any changes to zoning would be done by the Mayor & Council. Ms. Leheny stated that adopting a Master Plan does not change the zoning.

Vice Chairman Belgiovine stated that this process has not been done in a hurry and noted that it has been underway for 10 months. He noted that once the draft is complete that it can be published.

Mr. Padover questioned when the last Master Plan was done.

Ms. Leheny stated that a re-examination of the Master Plan was done in 2019.

Ms. Chen stated that the last complete Master Plan was done in 2002 or 2004.

Ms. Laura Jeffas noted that traffic incidents had been provided for the intersection at Werimus and Woodcliff Ave and asked if similar information was available for the intersection of Broadway and Woodcliff Ave.

Mr. Kurus stated that no accident data had been provided for this intersection but that it was listed as an area of concern.

Ms. Jeffas asked if more information could be provided for this intersection.

Chairman Friedberg noted that none of that information would affect anything in the Master Plan.

Ms. Leheny noted that requests for development would need to go thru Site Plan review and that a traffic study would need to be provided.

Ms. Jeffas stated that she was thinking of 188 Broadway and other residential developments.

Mr. Alex Couto asked Ms. Leheny about recommendations for the area on Broadway south of Highview.

Ms. Leheny stated that recommendations for this area include proposed density up to 10 per acre and height of 40 feet.

Mr. Couto questioned why density is recommended for 10 per acre on Broadway but only 6 per acre, which was lowered to 4 per acre on the Egg Farm.

Chairman Friedberg stated that he felt 4 was more in keeping with the neighborhood near the Egg Farm and felt that density of 10 was more in keeping with Broadway.

Ms. Leheny stated that the recommendations for Broadway were in line with the development at 62 Broadway which has a density of 11 per acre.

Mr. Couto stated that 62 Broadway was granted by variances and now 216 Broadway is

requesting density of 18 per acre. Mr. Couto suggested that starting at a density of 10 could lead to requests for higher densities of 20 per acre.

Ms. Leheny stated that any development not meeting the density requirements would need to go to the Zoning Board for review and approval.

Vice Chairman Belgiovine stated that Broadway had a train station and a downtown environment and that Overlook Drive does not. Vice Chairman Belgiovine stated that when a Planner is asked to determine density that they consider transportation nearby.

Mr. Couto asked how much acreage could be affected by the density change.

Ms. Leheny state that it was hard to determine what the build out would be.

Mr. LaRose asked how setting density in the Master Plan would insulate the Borough from future litigation.

Vice Chairman Belgiovine stated that the Master Plan helps to provide guidance to the Zoning Board, Planning Board and the Mayor and Council.

Mr. LaRose stated that providing density creates uniformity for the area. He stated that he is against high density projects like those being built in neighboring towns of Park Ridge or Montvale. Mr. LaRose stated that density for new development in these neighboring towns is 20 to 30 units per acre. Mr. LaRose stated that reality is that density of 10 is not that high and that we need to balance and not choose a density that is too low. Mr. LaRose stated that Fair Share Housing will be involved and that requesting a density that is too low and prevents development could be viewed negatively and could put the Borough at risk.

Mr. Couto stated that with litigation and variances that this recommended density could go higher.

Mr. LaRose agreed and stated that a reasonable density could mitigate litigation.

Chairman Friedberg stated that without a current Master Plan a developer would have the benefit of asking for higher density because the Master Plan was outdated.

Mr. Eyerman agreed and stated that requirements for Fair Share are also part of the necessity for a current Master Plan.

Mr. Couto stated that the affordable housing planned on North Broadway is 16 units on 2.3 acres or density of 6.6 units per acre. Mr. Couto requested the density on Broadway to be lowered to this density stating that starting the density lower because it only goes higher from this point.

Ms. Borrelli stated that 62 Broadway was used as a benchmark and stated that residents don't love that building. She stated that 62 Broadway should not be used as a benchmark and that density should not be 10 per acre. Ms. Borrelli stated that density of 10 would be attractive to

developers but not residents. Ms. Borrelli questioned the beautification of Broadway when it has 3 story buildings and looks like a canyon. Ms. Borrelli stated that traffic on Broadway needs to be addressed at the Mayors' meeting. Ms. Borrelli strongly urged the Board to re-consider the density of 10 and re-consider the recommendation for apartment buildings. Ms. Borrelli stated that she took offense to the density of 10 on the East side of the borough when density is less on the West side of the borough. Ms. Borrelli also stated that the application at 216 Broadway with a proposed density of 17 will set a precedent.

Ms. Levine disagreed with the statement that the Master Plan does not affect density and height and that this would be up to the Mayor and Council to implement. Ms. Levine stated that she believes that the Master Plan sets the starting point and that variances could be requested which would cause the density and height to go higher. Ms. Levine stated that affordable housing is used to justify more units. Ms. Levine questioned why all densities in town are not the same.

Vice Chairman Belgiovine stated that many factors are considered and that some areas in town have much higher densities. Access for transportation and trains must be considered. There are different areas in town and the area by the train station has different size lots. Broadway from Hillsdale thru WCL is a downtown area and it is looking rundown and needs to be revitalized.

Ms. Levine stated that sidewalks on Broadway between Hillsdale and Park Ridge are neglected and broken.

Ms. Leheny stated that there are recommendations to fix the sidewalks and reinvestments/redevelopment will help pay for this expense.

Ms. Levine would like the Master Plan posted and requested that density on Broadway be lowered.

Ms. Geller requested the survey results and disagreed with the description of Broadway as blighted. Ms. Geller stated that she likes the small town and does not want an urban area. Ms. Geller stated that she would like to see garden apartments, townhomes or low density apartments. Ms. Geller stated that traffic studies need to be done on Broadway.

Chairman Friedberg noted that recommendations are based on the information collected from the public meeting and the survey.

Ms. Appelle stated that density of 4 per acre has been recommended on Overlook Drive which doesn't have a train station but it does have the Garden State Parkway. Ms. Appelle stated that she has lived here for over 40 years and that the Broadway area was all residential and has now changed with more commercial and more trains. Ms. Appelle noted the current recommendations for changing 2 ½ stories to 3 stories, and height from 36 feet to 40 feet. Ms. Appelle stated that builders have the ability to add 10% to these recommendations. Ms. Appelle stated that she wants the recommended densities and heights to start lower because they only go higher. Ms. Appelle stated that changes on the East side affect everyone in the borough.

Mr. Deutsch stated that he is confused about so much effort being expended to attract high

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density. Mr. Deutsch stated that he wants recommendations that benefit the borough and residents.

With no other members of the public wishing to speak, **the meeting was closed to the public** on a motion from Mr. Panso, and seconded by Councilwoman Higgins, and carried by all.

Chairman Friedberg stated that the Master Plan Development Committee and the Planning Board have studied the results of the survey and the public meeting, have had several public meetings and have been completely transparent throughout this process.

### **Minutes**

**The minutes of January 10, 2022** were approved on a motion from Vice Chairman Belgiovine, seconded by Councilwoman Higgins, and carried by all members that were present at the meeting.

It was noted that the next Planning Board meeting is scheduled for March 16, 2022.

**The meeting was adjourned** on a motion from Vice Chairman Belgiovine, and seconded by Ms. Pollack, and carried by all.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meg Smith  
Board Secretary