

**Borough of Garwood Workshop Meeting of
The Mayor and Council**

WORKSHOP

MINUTES

May 10, 2016

Start Time: 7:00 p.m.

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided to the Westfield Leader, and UC Local Source, advertised on January 7, 2016, notification was sent to the Star Ledger and prominently posted on the municipal public bulletin board and filed in the office of the municipal clerk informing the Public of the time and place according to the Provisions of the Open Public Meeting Law (Chapter 231, P.L. 1975).

ROLL CALL:

Mayor Lombardo	P		
Councilwoman Cuccaro	P	Councilman Sarno	P
Councilman Martin	P	Councilwoman Todisco	P
Councilman Mathieu	P	Council President Petruzzelli	P

Also, present: Borough Administrator/Clerk Christina M Ariemma, Borough Attorney Robert Renaud.

Borough Engineer Donald Guarriello – ABSENT

Borough Attorney Robert – NO REPORT

Administrator/Clerk Christina M Ariemma – NO REPORT

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - NONE

NEW BUSINESS – Mayor Lombardo read:

The Mayor will meet with Steve Greet, the Garwood Planning Board Chairman this week to discuss the findings on the variance applications, many of which were obtained from other local communities. It will then proceed to the membership of the Planning Board for review. I am pleased to announce that the spring/summer edition of the Garwood Gazette has been submitted to the printer and should be mailed out to all residents in about a week. It will also be published on the garwood.org website. Mayor's Saturday will be held on Saturday, May 21st, at 11:00 AM in Council Chambers. Council President Lou Petruzzelli has been invited to join the Mayor to meet with any residents who wish to stop by. We are extremely happy to announce another fine establishment in our borough. There will be an official ribbon cutting ceremony for Studio 111, a new fitness center, located on Center Street. The ribbon cutting will take place at 12 noon.

Comments or matters for discussion from members of Council:

Councilwoman Cuccaro – 1/ I put forth at the last meeting that I think the application for variances should be a simplified form for residential bulk variances specific for 1 and 2 family homes. An example is the current form for “Non-conforming use variance”. Obviously Variances should only be required if a homeowner cannot comply with the current zoning. What I bring before you again is the process itself should be streamlined.

I reached out to Adele Lewis, and we all know how knowledgeable she is in this capacity. She did the revised Non-conforming use variance application, as there were so many coming before the board. She also heard and saw firsthand the frustration by Garwood residents that the initial process to just try and get their application heard. I myself have seen people so upset that they were brought to tears. This is not the way it should be working for the taxpayers of Garwood.

Adele said this could be done very simply, very cheaply and relatively quickly, but that she would need assistance from Victor Vinegra. My question to him would be how much would it cost to get this done? And how long would it take. Based on the cost factor, if it is too much to fit in the budget can it be sub contracted out. The current application is too much for layman to understand, it also was meant for big projects, new construction, sub divisions, and such. These small items, driveways, decks, fences and the like should not be subjected to this type of mental anguish especially when it is not applicable. How can the process be started?

2/ I also had a few phone calls the past few weeks, concerning a request for speed bumps on East from Beech down to south, they said it is insanity the speeding. One of the residents made this request last year. I explained to them that it was not the chief's choice of speed deterrent, as I have brought the subject up countless times. So can the speed monitoring sign be placed at this location as well? How many of these signs do we have? Can more officers be placed at more locations? This is and has been an ongoing issue. It would be nice if the requests of the residents were addressed more to their liking.

3/ I had another call from a resident stating the underpass was in need of sprucing up, when was the last time it was done? Also I thought I remembered that the upkeep was done more frequently? Can someone address this issue?

4/ Lastly.. I am not in agreement with the change of limiting contacting the zoning officer Victor Vinegra. I said something a few weeks ago when his number was removed from the Boro website and his request that he only be contacted via e-mail with a new form. I do not think this is good policy, nor good practice and is just another form for the taxpayers to fill out in an already bloated application process. He works and is compensated by the taxpayers of Garwood, and should be readily available to answer their questions. I would like this new request made by the engineer himself to be rolled back. How many of us have the luxury of dictating to our employer what we want without a care of what the needs of our constituents should be?? What is the procedure to revert back to the previous means of contact??

Councilman Martin – NO REPORT

Councilman Mathieu – Commented on a resident of 62 years and his receipt of war awards that he recently received by Congressman Lance. He requested he be recognized by council.

Councilman Sarno – Commented on the recycling contract and the possibility of renewing vs. rebidding. He provided amounts suggesting that the contract be extended vs. re-bid.

Councilwoman Todisco – Commented that she supports simplifying the variance application but is concerned about cost. She said it should be investigated. Mayor Lombardo commented that he has spoken to Planning Board Chairman. She mentioned the Freeholder grant. She announced that she has been appointed to Union County Commission on Status on Women. She also commented on the Harry Hartman Park sign and the upcoming sign hanging ceremony.

Council President Petruzzelli – Commented on Street & Roads meeting in which they discussed purchasing a new garbage truck. He said they discussed the snow ordinance with Chief Underhill. He said Chief Underhill said the public is 95% compliant with this ordinance and also safety and other reasons the ordinance should not be amended. He said the committee 2 to 1 wants to buy a garbage truck and recommends buying a truck. He mentioned the condition of the underpass and the maintenance of that area. Councilwoman Todisco commented on the graffiti being removed from the underpass. Mayor Lombardo thanked the committee for reviewing the snow removal ordinance.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

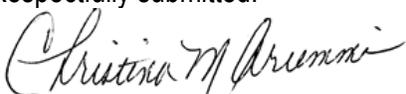
Is there anyone in the audience that wishes to address the mayor and council please step to the microphone, sign in, state your full name and address. Please limit your comments to three minutes.

Bill Nierstedt, 320 Hickory Avenue commented on the two Arbor Day events held in the borough. He mentioned a Tree City application and that process. He commented on the variance application forms and process.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:19 p.m. a motion to adjourn the workshop session was made by Councilwoman Todisco followed by a second from Councilman Petruzzelli

Respectfully submitted:



CHRISTINA M. ARIEMMA, Municipal Clerk
Borough of Garwood