

**Borough of Garwood Workshop Meeting of
The Mayor and Council
WORKSHOP
MINUTES
April 30, 2019**

Start time: 7:00 p.m.

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided to the Westfield Leader, advertised on January 3, 2019, 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).

Mayor Todisco	P		
Councilman Benoit	Excused	Councilman Ince	P
Councilwoman Blumenstock	P	Councilman McCormack	P
Councilman Graham	P	Council President Lazarow	P

Also present Borough Administrator/Municipal Clerk Christina M. Ariemma and Borough Attorney Thomas C. Jardim, Esq. and Borough Engineer Michael Disko.

Mayor Todisco acknowledged the Historical Essay Contest winners:

1st Place: Samantha VanderGroef

2nd Place: - Isabel Cortese

3rd Place: - Lily Ficarra

Borough Engineer Michael Disko: Lengthy discussion regarding the 2019 Union County Infrastructure Grant took place. All agreed to bond for both projects and Ms. Ariemma was directed to prepare the bond. Mr. Disko updated council on projects and about utility work. Mr. Disko left the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

Borough Attorney Thomas C. Jardim: Commented on the ordinances on the agenda. Brief discussion regarding the sidewalk café ordinance took place.

Administrator/Clerk Christina M Ariemma – **No Report**

Mayor Todisco's Report:

Moment of Silence Dedicated to Angelo Alimonti - On Easter Sunday of this year, Garwood lost one of its true greats, Angelo Alimonti, and I ask that everyone remembers him in our moment of silence tonight. I am fortunate to have known Angelo my entire life as he was a dear friend of my grandfather and a dedicated member of the Garwood Lions Club. While he was unable to attend many Council meetings recently, when he was present he always shared his voice of reason and passion for Garwood. Angelo wanted our departments, particularly the DPW, taken care of with the proper equipment and wanted our children to have quality parks to play. He even served on this Borough Council himself, filling an unexpired term. Just this past January 2nd, we were all so fortunate to have him at our Re-Organization meeting. He called upon each of us to work together, making sure partisanship did not come in the way of governing this town we all love. I believe we are doing just that and I am confident we will continue to do so. May we all remember Angelo's service to our community and his words of wisdom. My deepest condolences to the Alimonti family.

1. Fire Department Rescue Platform Ladder Truck Informal Town Hall - Last night, we had the first of two informational sessions with the Garwood Fire Department about their request for a rescue platform ladder truck. The next one will be one week from tonight, May 7th, beginning at 7pm at Lincoln School. I thank our volunteer Chief Allan Tweedle for his very thorough presentation, which took much time and preparation. I would like our Fire Commissioner to speak more about it tonight.

2. Next Russo Informal Town Hall - On Tuesday, May 14, 2019 at 7:00 PM at Lincoln School, Garwood, New Jersey, representatives of Redeveloper, South Avenue Urban Renewal LLC will conduct an informal town hall public information session to provide interested parties with an update of the redevelopment of Phase I of the South Avenue Transit Oriented Redevelopment Area (former Casale and Petro sites), providing a status of the site's remediation and anticipated construction of the Project.

3. Mayor's Wellness Campaign Walk - After the rain forced us to reschedule our April Mayor's Wellness Campaign Walk, we had a good time out there this past Saturday. I want to thank our Police Chief Jim Wright for being our guest walker. The next walk will be May 11th beginning at 10am at the East Street entrance to Unami Park and the guest will be Lincoln School Principal Mary Emmons. I hope you can join us for the walk! It's also a great opportunity to get the kids out of the house and moving!

4. Breakfast with the Mayor - The next Breakfast with the Mayor event will be on May 18th from 9:30am to 11:30am. I'm happy that I will be joined by our school Superintendent Dr. Quigley and Board of Education President Christine Guerriero, which we will be held at Lincoln School, so that young families will be able to take a tour of the school, if they are interested. Residents of all ages are welcome to attend this breakfast.

5. Comcast Newsmakers - A couple of weeks ago, I was invited by Comcast to sit for a two interviews to talk about what I love to talk about--Garwood--as part of their Newsmakers series. We spoke about redevelopment in one and community spirit in the other. I will post the video clips on my Mayor's Facebook page, so you can see it, even if you don't have Comcast. I must have done alright, since they invited me back for August. I can't wait, since I think it's important for us to brag about all things Garwood as we all know what a great place this is to live.

6. Revaluation Update - Earlier today, I received an update on the revaluation process from the firm retained to conduct it, Realty Appraisal. The process is moving along smoothly and I have heard positive feedback from residents who have had their property inspected so far. To date, 938 residential properties have been measured and inspected, which means there are about 400 left to go.

7. Planning Board - Last Wednesday, the Planning/Zoning Board met to discuss two applications. The first was for 2 North Avenue, commonly known as Dittrick's, and since it would require a D-1/Use variance, Councilman McCormack and I had to recuse ourselves. The applicant's property includes both the current liquor store and limo facility and the applicant was seeking approval to redevelop the site into one structure with space for a larger Dittrick's Liquors on the first floor along with a second retail space with a total of 4 apartments above it on the second floor. The apartments would include 3 one-bedroom units and one studio. The building would include an elevator as well as an outdoor, common space courtyard for the tenants.

After testimony from the Architect, Engineer, Traffic Engineer and Planner, Board questions and answers, and public questions and input, spanning almost three hours, the Board voted in favor of the application with conditions, including additional landscape buffer to the adjacent residential neighbor, a three-foot setback on a side which previously had a 0 foot setback, and other site improvements.

I'm sure Councilman McCormack will agree with me when I say being a part of the Planning Board and watching Zoning Board applications like this one is a real eye opening experience. Some may think why would the town allow apartments at a location where it is not currently permitted, but when you learn about how the State land use laws work, you learn how it can meet certain proofs to show why it should be permitted, such as promotes the general welfare, will not substantially impair the intent of the zoning ordinance, and more. In particular, the purpose of the 106-96 General Business District states that it is intended for the zone to function as a transition zone between residential and industrial uses. A mixed-use project which is comprised of a commercial use on the first floor and 4 apartments on the second floor could be interpreted as functioning as a "transition area."

Next, the Board continued hearing the testimony for a subdivision at 604-608 Willow Avenue, which no longer needed a D-4 variance for Floor Area Ratio by decreasing the overall footprint of the dwellings, therefore, Councilman McCormack and I were able to sit for the subdivision and site plan.

The applicant made adjustments based on feedback from the Zoning Board at their last hearing and now they are proposing two 2-family side by side homes, so essentially four units, each with two bedrooms. This reflects an adjustment from the four units of 3-bedrooms each first proposed as well as a change from down sloping driveways in front of each unit's garage to flat, at grade driveways. The Planning Board will continue to hear this application at its next meeting on May 22nd.

Councilman McCormack commented on the Mayor's report.

Comments or matters for discussion from members of Council:

Councilman Benoit: ABSENT

Councilwoman Blumenstock: I'd just like to thank the Garwood Police Department for putting on the Coffee with a Cop last week on April 20th. I had a chance to stop by with my daughters and some of the officers, as well as Chief Wright, were there. It was just a nice morning, watching the officers interacting with the residents and my kids. They had lots of little goodies to give out and it was just a great way to spend a morning. And a big thanks to the owner and staff at &Grain.

Councilman Graham: Thanked Chief Tweedle for an excellent presentation last evening concerning the purchase of a ladder truck

Councilman Ince: No Report

Councilman McCormack: Thanked the Historical and Celebrations Committees for the recent events. He commented on the Little League parade and the wonderful festivities. He commented on the position of being the Fire Commissioner. He commented on Chief Tweedle's presentation last night. He commented on the public's comments about him that were posted on Facebook.

Council President Lazarow: Thanked Fire Chief Tweedle, Fire Commissioner McCormack and Mayor for the presentation last night. He mentioned that tonight is the adoption of the 2019 Municipal Budget.

Board of Chosen Freeholders Liaison Report: No Report

PUBLIC COMMENT:

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

Krystal Zawoysky, 208 Myrtle Avenue thanked council for installing the rumble strips throughout the town. She commented on the essay contest event. She commented on the fire meeting last night. She also expressed to her Father, Councilman Rich McCormack that he is doing a good job and to stay on his path, regardless of the comments made about him on Facebook posts.

Vincent Kearny, 306 Oak Street mirrored Krystal's comments concerning comments made on Facebook. He commented on the fire truck presentation and expressed his support.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Blumenstock, seconded by Council President Lazarow to close public comments session. All in favor.

Mayor Todisco thanked everyone for their comments this evening.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 8:04 p.m., a motion was made by Council President Lazarow, and seconded by Councilman Graham to adjourn the workshop session. All agreed.

Respectfully submitted:



CHRISTINA M. ARIEMMA, Municipal Clerk
Borough of Garwood