

**A REGULAR PUBLIC WORK SESSION OF THE VILLAGE COUNCIL OF THE VILLAGE OF RIDGEWOOD HELD IN THE SYDNEY V. STOLDT, JR. COURT ROOM OF THE RIDGEWOOD VILLAGE HALL, 131 NORTH MAPLE AVENUE, RIDGEWOOD, NEW JERSEY, ON MARCH 5, 2025 AT 7:30 P.M.**

**1. CALL TO ORDER – OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT – ROLL CALL – FLAG SALUTE**

Mayor Vagianos called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and read the Statement of Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. At roll call, the following were present: Councilmembers Mortimer, Perron, Weitz, Winograd, and Mayor Vagianos. Also present were Keith Kazmark, Village Manager; Heather Mailander, Village Clerk; and Matthew Rogers, Village Attorney.

Mayor Vagianos led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

**2. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF 2024 ANNUAL AWARDS TO FIRE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL**

Fire Chief John Judge congratulated the personnel of the Fire Department being sworn in this evening and the entire Fire Department staff for the awards they have received. The annual Fire Department Dinner was held in early January 2025, during which time eight awards were presented to the team for outstanding efforts and accomplishments in 2024. He stated that the courage and commitment demonstrated reflect the mission of the Ridgewood Fire Department. During the dinner, 16 firefighters were awarded four different CPR saves for their quick thinking and lifesaving actions. A CPR save means someone was brought back to life from cardiac arrest and was able to return to their family after leaving the hospital. In 2024, this occurred four times. These firefighters were also honored by saving an eagle in the river. Two additional lifesaving awards were presented to firefighters for saving lives in the field. Two firefighters received the Exceptional Service Award for their tireless work supporting the special needs community in Ridgewood. Chief Judge stated that each firefighter plays a critical role in ensuring the safety and well-being of Ridgewood residents. There was a resounding round of applause.

Mayor Vagianos stated that, just this morning, Ridgewood firefighters, along with members of the Sanitation Department, put out what could have been a potentially disastrous blaze that erupted in one of the Village's sanitation trucks. On behalf of the entire Village Council, Mayor Vagianos thanked the members of the Fire Department for the great work that they do every single day. He mentioned that volunteerism plummeted around the country after the Covid pandemic, and many municipalities struggled to provide ambulance services to their residents. Mayor Vagianos surmised that Ridgewood residents probably did not notice much of a change, since 38 of the Village's 44 firefighters are licensed Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) with 15 or more years of experience. There was another round of applause.

### **3. SWEARING-IN OF FIRE DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL**

#### **A. FIREFIGHTER MATTHEW BIAGI**

Mayor Vagianos asked Matthew Biagi to join him on the floor of the courtroom. Chief Judge stated that Ridgewood's newest firefighter, Matthew Biagi, may be new to the Fire Department, but he was no stranger to the Village. Mr. Biagi is a lifelong resident of Ridgewood and attended the Ridgewood school system. He later graduated from Montclair University with a Bachelor's degree in Public Health. For the past five years, Mr. Biagi has worked for the Village's Department of Public Works. He is currently attending the Bergen County Fire Academy and will continue his training at EMT school. When this is completed around the middle of June, 2025, he will continue his training in-house for the rest of the year.

Mayor Vagianos said how pleased he was to swear in Mr. Biagi this evening, since he has known him and his family for more than 25 years. He then swore in Firefighter Matthew Biagi, as his mother held the Bible and his family looked on. There was a resounding round of applause.

#### **B. FIRE LIEUTENANT DAVID KELLY**

Mayor Vagianos asked David Kelly to join him on the floor of the courtroom. Chief Judge stated that Mr. Kelly has been a dedicated public safety professional for over 20 years. He began his career over 22 years ago, working for Ridgewood Emergency Services. Mr. Kelly has worked as an EMT, Public Safety Dispatcher, Fire Inspector, and volunteer firefighter, and has been a career firefighter with the Ridgewood Fire Department for the past 11 years. He holds numerous certifications, including Fire Instructor, Fire Official and Fire Investigator, and has received many awards during his career. Chief Judge said that Mr. Kelly is committed and driven, and cares deeply for the Fire Department and the residents of Ridgewood. He congratulated Mr. Kelly on his promotion to Fire Lieutenant. There was a round of applause.

Mayor Vagianos then swore in Fire Lieutenant David Kelly, as his daughter held the Bible and his family looked on. There was a resounding round of applause.

#### **C. FIRE CAPTAIN JORDAN PAPIETRO-ZALES**

Mayor Vagianos asked Jordan Papietro-Zales to join him on the floor of the courtroom. Chief Judge stated that Mr. Papietro-Zales is a dedicated public safety professional with over 20 years of experience. He has worked as a Special Police Officer, Dispatcher, and as a volunteer firefighter with a neighboring department, where he rose to the rank of Chief. He also earned his Child Seat Technician Certification, which allowed the Ridgewood Fire Department to introduce a new program providing free child seat inspections, installations and education to Village residents and visitors. As a New Jersey Fire Instructor, certified EMT, and Supervisor of

Apparatus, Hose and Rapid Intervention Committees, Mr. Papietro-Zales' determination and drive are endless. Chief Judge congratulated Mr. Papietro-Zales on his promotion to Fire Captain. There was a round of applause.

Mayor Vagianos then swore in Fire Captain Jordan Papietro-Zales, as his daughter held the Bible and his family looked on. There was another resounding round of applause.

**4. PRESENTATION – REPORT ON SCHEDLER PROPERTY TESTING –  
MATRIX NEW WORLD ENGINEERING, LAND SURVEYING AND  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS, P.C.**

Mayor Vagianos stated that the following presentation has been listed on the agenda before public comments this evening, so that members of the public can comment on the findings presented by Matrix New World Engineering.

Melissa Feury, Senior Environmental Scientist and Project Manager, and Chris Pittarese, Senior Project Manager, from Matrix New World Engineering were present to give their presentation regarding the soil testing results at the Schedler property.

Ms. Feury stated that in May of 2024, Matrix collected soil samples from the berm at the Schedler property. In June 2024, additional soil samples were collected from the remainder of the property. Exceedances of contaminants in the soil were discovered from that soil testing. In November 2024, Matrix went back to the Schedler property to investigate those exceedances through delineation testing. During this investigation, Matrix concluded that three of the grids – 16, 18, and 26 – have been fully delineated, horizontally and vertically, of the compounds that exceeded the standards set by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). Matrix is recommending that the soil in those three grid sample areas be excavated and disposed of properly.

Mayor Vagianos asked Ms. Feury to explain what she means by “fully delineated.” Ms. Feury said that this means that they found the extent of where the impacts were identified. When questioned by Mayor Vagianos, Ms. Feury confirmed that no additional delineation testing needs to be conducted at those three locations (grids 16, 18 and 26).

Ms. Feury stated that they have identified Grids 4, 10, 11, 20, 21, 28, 31 and 34 as needing further investigation and testing. When asked by Mayor Vagianos what needs to be done in these grids, Ms. Feury replied that those grids need to be further delineated with additional sampling procedures to identify the extent (perimeter) of the contamination in those grids. Ms. Feury anticipates that this further testing can be performed by Matrix within a month from today. Matrix notified the NJDEP of their findings to date, on the same day as the Village was notified. Ms. Feury stated that Matrix has been in contact with the NJDEP to update them on their progress, in anticipation of the remedial and corrective action that needs to be taken on the soil at the Schedler property.

Mayor Vagianos asked Ms. Feury if the NJDEP needs to approve the further testing that is recommended by Matrix, and Ms. Feury replied in the affirmative. Next week, Matrix will be sending a work plan for review and approval by the NJDEP, before any additional work is commenced. She anticipates that it will take a week for the NJDEP to review and conditionally approve the work plan, at which point Matrix will start the additional soil testing.

Mayor Vagianos said that it was his understanding that Matrix performed testing on the berm on the Schedler property and contaminated soil was found on the berm. He asked what Ms. Feury's recommendation would be regarding this issue. Ms. Feury said that it is recommended by Matrix that the entire berm be removed.

Mr. Kazmark informed Ms. Feury that the Village is currently in the process of developing the Capital Budget for 2025. A recommendation has been made to the Village Council to consider appropriating the amount of \$1.5 million in the 2025 Capital Budget for remediation of the Schedler property. Based upon the further soil delineation testing that needs to be done, Mr. Kazmark asked Ms. Feury if she was comfortable with the \$1.5 million being appropriated in the 2025 Capital Budget for this additional work, and Ms. Feury replied in the affirmative.

Mayor Vagianos said that this is the third time Matrix representatives have appeared before the Village Council, and that Matrix works for different municipalities. This was confirmed by Ms. Feury. Mayor Vagianos asked Ms. Feury if Matrix normally appears before governing bodies to testify as to their findings on a particular project, and Ms. Feury replied that they never do so. Mayor Vagianos indicated that he has had Matrix representatives appear before the Village Council so that the public is aware of what is going on with the work at the Schedler property.

Mr. Kazmark pointed out the last paragraph of the report rendered by Matrix, dated February 27, 2025, wherein it states that, "Based on the NJDEP's *Groundwater Technical Guidance: Site Investigation, Remedial, and Remedial Action Performance Monitoring*, the results of the soil sampling completed as part of this RI do not trigger a groundwater investigation." Mr. Kazmark asked Mr. Pittarese to elaborate on these findings, considering the concerns expressed by Schedler neighbors in the past, about the soil contamination affecting the condition of the groundwater.

Mr. Pittarese said that the NJDEP recommends that groundwater investigation be performed when certain things exist at a site. He said that the results of soil sampling completed at the Schedler property do not trigger a groundwater investigation. The compounds they are investigating are fairly immobile, and they are not located within a reasonable distance to groundwater. Matrix bore down to ten feet and did not encounter groundwater. Mr. Pittarese said that one typically would explore a distance of two feet between the contaminated soil and the water table. The maximum depth at which soil contamination was found on the Schedler property was 2½ to 3 feet. He said that there was a buffer of at least seven feet between soil contamination and the water table.

Mr. Kazmark stated that responses to the third round of questions, about the soil contamination at the Schedler property, submitted by eight individuals, have been posted earlier this evening on the Village website. An email will be sent out tomorrow to all interested parties to advise them of same.

Mayor Vagianos asked Ms. Feury how long she and other staff have spent answering the submitted questions (approximately 200 of them). Ms. Feury said that she has spent about 25 hours preparing responses to those questions, and Mr. Pittarese replied that he has spent between 50 to 80 hours preparing responses. Mayor Vagianos asked what their billable hourly rate is, and Ms. Feury said that her hourly rate is \$185.00. Mr. Pittarese replied that his hourly rate is \$215.00. Mayor Vagianos said that 75 to 100 hours have been spent making sure that the public's questions were answered, and this was confirmed by Ms. Feury and Mr. Pittarese. Mr. Kazmark said that this does not include the hours spent by Village staff in answering these questions. He said that at least seven staff members, including Mr. Kazmark, Mr. Rooney, staff at Ridgewood Water and the Engineering Department, and communications personnel, have also spent time making sure that answers were accurate.

Mayor Vagianos asked if this extra question-and-answer process was followed by other municipalities, and Ms. Feury replied that traditionally, it is not. She stated that Matrix adheres to the public notification guidelines set by the NJDEP, which encompasses the posting of a sign on contaminated property or sending letters to neighbors living within a certain radius of the contaminated property.

Mayor Vagianos asked Mr. Pittarese if the ultimate decision to perform a groundwater investigation lies with the NJDEP, and Mr. Pittarese replied in the affirmative. Mr. Pittarese explained that the NJDEP provides guidelines and regulations, but it is his personal interpretation and professional judgment on whether or not a groundwater investigation is triggered by the results of soil sampling. Mayor Vagianos asked whether the NJDEP would ask for a groundwater investigation if they disagreed with his interpretation, and Mr. Pittarese replied that they would.

Councilmember Winograd thanked Ms. Feury and Mr. Pittarese for appearing before the Village Council to give an update of their findings. She mentioned that the full report rendered by Matrix was contained in the Sunshine (Transparency) Binder for the public's perusal. Councilmember Winograd asked if any of the grids requiring further delineation were adjacent to the residential properties bordering the Schedler site. Mr. Feury replied that grid 28 is the grid that is furthest north (northwest corner of the Schedler property), and this grid needs further investigation.

Councilmember Winograd stated that there are approximately 105 live trees remaining on the berm, and she asked whether those trees can be replanted or if they would "go away" with the remediation. Mr. Pittarese stated that from a remediation standpoint, there is no reason why the trees could not be replanted elsewhere on the property. Whoever performs this task must be careful about not moving the contaminated soil along with the trees.

Councilmember Winograd asked if the disposal fees are higher for the contaminated soil on the Schedler property, as opposed to soil that is not contaminated. She also asked whether or not the soil contained in the “hot spots” would be disposed of first, followed by the soil on the berm. Mr. Feury stated that based upon waste characterization sampling, soil goes to specific facilities for disposal. Soil that is more contaminated goes to a facility that may cost more. Contaminated soil can be removed and disposed of properly, without contaminating adjacent uncontaminated soil.

Councilmember Winograd asked how long it takes for the sign to be removed after the site has been remediated. Ms. Feury replied that the sign will be removed once Mr. Pittarese, who is a Licensed Site Remediation Professional, issues his Remedial Action Outcome document. The Remedial Action Outcome document is usually issued soon after remediation is completed.

Councilmember Weitz thanked Ms. Feury and Mr. Pittarese for being so clear and concise while giving their update. After the berm and specific areas of the Schedler property are remediated, Councilmember Weitz asked Mr. Pittarese if he has any concerns about the public using the Schedler property as a park. Mr. Pittarese said that he has no concerns about the public accessing the property, once the remediation is completed.

Deputy Mayor Perron asked when they anticipate that the remediation can occur. Ms. Feury anticipates that the remediation can occur during the summer of this year.

Mr. Kazmark said that based upon the report recently submitted by Matrix, eight more grids must undergo delineation testing, which should take place within a month. Six to eight weeks after that time, results should be received regarding this additional testing. This was confirmed by Ms. Feury. Mr. Kazmark stated that funds are still available from an appropriation (not the bond) regarding the prior proposal, that was approved by Matrix. He stated that this additional work is a continuation of the authorization for the last scope of work that was approved by the Village Council. An additional resolution or contract amendment is not required. Matrix will commence the additional work, once approval is received from the NJDEP.

## **5. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Michael Noe, a resident of Ridgewood, said that he does not live anywhere near the Schedler property, but he does care about the people who live in that area. He cares about the residents with well water who live close by, as well as the health and safety of the children and adults who will play on the Schedler Park athletic field in the future. Mr. Noe stated that he cares about the long-term environmental issues of artificial turf fields. He said that a Village Councilmember stated that a report from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) said that turf fields were safe. Mr. Noe wondered whether this was the same USEPA that said, after the 9-11 attack on the World Trade Center, that the air was safe and people should return to work. However, there are now people with serious medical issues from breathing that air.



Mr. Noe said that the public has heard comments from turf marketing geniuses and advertising gurus that there is now a new eco-friendly turf. He said that he cannot imagine any turf being eco-friendly. He stated that he agreed with the comments made by a resident that buying the seven acres at the Schedler property, and using one acre for the berm, did not make any sense. Mr. Noe indicated that this same resident rightfully commented that the house, although historic, would cost a lot of money to rehabilitate. Mr. Noe said that a lot of taxpayer money has been spent on the Zabriskie-Schedler house. He suggested that perhaps the house could be sold to an historic group or moved to another location, such as to Habernickel Park, so that the Village could “cut its losses.”

Mr. Noe said that the berm on the Schedler property is composed of contaminated soil and must be removed. He expressed the hope that some other type of safety wall could be constructed along Route 17, so that less of the Schedler property is used. Mr. Noe also expressed the hope that the revised plans include a very high fence, similar to what is found on golf courses, to keep sports balls from ending up on the highway.

Mr. Noe said that he previously spoke before the Village Council about possibly looking at some type of indoor commercial property that could be used year round for sports groups, similar to the Superdome in Waldwick. He said that he was confident any realtor in Ridgewood could find the perfect place to at least rent out on a trial basis, to see how it works, even if the location is in a neighboring town.

Anne Loving, a resident of Ridgewood, said that it is unfortunate that Ms. Feury and Mr. Pittarese left the meeting before residents spoke at public comments this evening. She asked how deep Matrix will have to excavate the contaminated areas at the Schedler property. She feels that such excavation will kill a lot of the remaining trees on the property. She said that there was discussion at the last budget meeting about possibly transplanting the live trees on the berm to other locations in the Village. Ms. Loving said that Mr. Pittarese said that these trees could be replanted on the Schedler property, but he cautioned that the soil around the roots of these trees could be contaminated. She doubted that someone could dig up a tree and wash off its roots, then replant it and hope that it lives.

Cynthia O’Keefe, a resident of Ridgewood, said that she has not yet reviewed the report rendered by Matrix. However, she said that it appears that another toxic compound was found in the soil at the Schedler property.

Ms. O’Keefe noted that there is an item on the agenda this evening to award a contract to Suburban Engineering. She feels that it is a conflict of interest that Suburban Engineering is working on the Village’s application for the Schedler property to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), while also conducting a wetlands assessment on the Schedler property. She recalled that Councilmember Winograd stated that the Letter of Intent (LOI) came before toxic chemicals were found on the Schedler property. However, Ms. O’Keefe stated that Suburban Engineering was

contracted to perform the wetlands assessment, and Matrix submitted everything that they had to Suburban Engineering on August 8, 2024. On August 26, 2024, Schedler residents received a public notice from Suburban Engineering of an LOI application. The LOI was submitted on August 28, 2024, and a box was checked on it stating that there were no hazards found on the Schedler property. Ms. O’Keefe said that the Village paid Suburban Engineering a lot of money to perform the wetlands assessment, yet Suburban Engineering stated that no hazards were found on the Schedler property, despite the fact that they had the Matrix reports indicating that toxic chemicals and compounds were identified in the soil on the Schedler property. Ms. O’Keefe said that this concerns her, and invalidates the work performed by Suburban Engineering.

Ms. O’Keefe said that Mr. Halaby commented last week at a Village Council meeting that residents had a meeting with representatives of Ridgewood Water, and Ms. O’Keefe asked how Mr. Halaby obtained this information. She wondered if Mr. Halaby obtained this information via an OPRA request or whether this information was shared by one of the Village Councilmembers.

Ellie Gruber, a resident of Ridgewood, said that Ridgewood has a great Fire Department. She has lived in the Village since 1968, and feels that the Ridgewood Fire Department is the best she has ever seen. Fire Department personnel have assisted her family in the past and have been very helpful and caring.

Ms. Gruber said that the Village has already tried hiring an Historic Preservation Consultant (Peter Primavera) regarding the Schedler property, which turned out to be a “disaster.” She noted that the Village is planning to hire another Historic Preservation Consultant to find a way to remove the historic designation from the Schedler property, which she feels is disingenuous on the part of the Village Councilmembers. Ms. Gruber said that she is not questioning the credentials of the new Historic Preservation Consultant, but she said that the Village’s goal is to find a way to remove the historic designation from the property so that a larger athletic field can be constructed. She feels that this is very disrespectful and insulting to residents who live in the Schedler neighborhood.

Amy McCambridge, a resident of Ridgewood, said that she was disappointed that the Matrix representatives did not stay at the meeting, so that residents could ask them questions. She feels that Matrix’s update this evening was a “show” depicting how amazing the Village Council is to bring in Matrix for full transparency. Ms. McCambridge stated that there has been zero accountability on the part of the Village Councilmembers. She said that the only reason that the Village Council is being transparent now is because Village residents were ignored at first, when they suspected that the soil at the Schedler property was contaminated. Ms. McCambridge said that the residents themselves called the NJDEP and filed a complaint, and that is the only reason why Matrix examined the Schedler property in the first place. She said that the Schedler property has already been contaminated, yet the Village Council plans to re-contaminate the property with an artificial turf field, after the remediation is completed. Ms. McCambridge feels that Ridgewood residents are being lied to and that the children are being exposed to health risks. She stated that the residents will



continue to fight for what they feel is right, and that the actions of the Village Council are shady and corrupt.

Rurik Halaby, a resident of Ridgewood, said that he challenges anyone to prove to him the historical significance of the Zabriskie-Schedler house. He asked why so much money was spent restoring the house in the past, and why more money is being spent at the current time. He said that he would like to see the Schedler property turned into a beautiful park that can be enjoyed by Ridgewood residents. Mr. Halaby said that he takes umbrage with the accusations made against the Village Councilmembers. He feels that the Village Councilmembers are individuals with the highest integrity, who have inherited a horrible situation from a previous administration. From the beginning, Mr. Halaby fought against the construction of the berm on the Schedler property, which used up one acre of the seven-acre property. He said that the property has been used as a dump, and he is against spending any more money on the house. Mr. Halaby thanked Mr. Kazmark and the Village Councilmembers for their hard work. He stated that they are honorable people who do the right thing for Village residents.

Mr. Halaby said that while the berm is being removed at the Schedler property, the Village Councilmembers should consider commencing discussions with SHPO about getting approval for the full-sized artificial turf field. An artificial turf field will get more use in the future, than a grass field would.

Denise Lima, a resident of Ridgewood, asked when the Sunshine Binders would be posted on the Village website, since residents accessing the Village Council meetings remotely cannot review the relevant documents being discussed. She asked the Village Councilmembers to modernize the process by posting the paperwork in the Sunshine Binders online.

Ms. Lima said that there are historic red river rocks in the berm, which were installed in the berm to fill it. She said that the red river rocks are historic because they cannot be found just anywhere, and it would be great if these rocks could be preserved, when the berm is removed on the Schedler property. Ms. Lima asked what amenities Ridgewood residents will enjoy in Schedler Park, other than the proposed gigantic field. She said that passive recreation should be afforded in the park, other than just a walking path.

Ms. Lima said that she missed watching the budget meetings, but asked if any funds were set aside to install more picnic tables in Village parks. She also asked if funds were set aside to allow hybrid access for Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment meetings.

There were no further comments from the public.

Addressing Ms. O'Keefe's remarks, Mr. Kazmark stated in no uncertain terms that Suburban Consulting Engineers does not have a conflict of interest. The LOI is a requirement for the

SHPO application, so Suburban Engineering has worked on the SHPO application and the LOI. He has researched the issue which has arisen regarding the LOI with Suburban Consulting Engineers and Matrix New World Engineering. The box that was checked off on the LOI application, regarding whether or not there were any hazards on the Schedler property, is needed by the NJDEP to determine if there are any hazards for their staff when they do an onsite inspection, to determine if they concur with Suburban's opinion, on whether or not there are wetlands on the Schedler property. Mr. Kazmark said that the question does not ask if there is any contamination on the property, but rather asks if there is any hazard that would prevent NJDEP staff from conducting the site inspection. He said that any attempt to translate the checked box into some sort of mis-intent by Suburban is completely unfounded. Mr. Kazmark said that residents need to refrain from attacking the Village's professional service providers. He has had a few instances where vendors do not want to do work in the Village, because they do not want their reputation to be impugned.

Addressing Ms. Gruber's comments, Mr. Kazmark said that he took charge of reaching out to Historic Preservation Consultants for the upcoming work on the Schedler property. He vehemently stated that at no time did he ever have a discussion with a potential Historic Preservation Consultant about removing the historical designation from the Schedler property. He said that Ms. Gruber's accusations are unfounded and unwarranted. Mr. Kazmark reiterated that there is no plan by the Village to remove the historical designation from the Schedler property.

Mr. Kazmark stated that Kelly Ruffel, Cultural Resource Consultant, has the experience and understanding of the challenges that the Village faces regarding the Schedler property. She worked on the historic designation of Goffle Brook Park, where the County of Passaic eventually constructed a turf field. There was opposition from the neighbors and Ms. Ruffel helped to mitigate some of that opposition. The Borough of Hawthorne, as a government entity, opposed some of the development that the County was proposing, and Ms. Ruffel worked through these challenges as well.

Addressing Ms. Lima's comments, Mr. Kazmark stated that he has engaged in discussions with Nancy Bigos, Director of the Parks and Recreation Department, about the need for picnic tables in Village parks, but there is no specific request in the Capital Budget for picnic tables this year. Mr. Kazmark stated that, unfortunately, there are not enough funds in the budget this year to establish hybrid access for Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment meetings. He said that it is not only a funding issue, but also a staffing issue. There are only three people who work in the I.T. Department, and they would have to be at each meeting operating the control room. Given the number of budget meetings and Village Council meetings that have already been held this year, it is difficult to ask the I.T. staff to also attend Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment meetings. However, Mr. Kazmark said that hybrid access will be revisited in the future for these meetings.

Councilmember Weitz said that the first time he heard anything about removing the historical designation for the Zabriskie-Schedler house was when Ms. Gruber mentioned it this evening. He said that this comment was speculative and inflammatory. He challenged those residents who fought to save the Zabriskie-Schedler house to help the Village Councilmembers find a use for the house, considering the fact that \$2.6 million was spent to renovate the house.

Councilmember Weitz said that he was disappointed when Ms. McCambridge commented that the Village Councilmembers were shady and lacked transparency. He feels that this comment is unbecoming and inappropriate. The Village has spent over \$15,000.00 just responding to questions posed by the public regarding the Schedler property, which the Village is not required to do, but instructed Matrix to comply. Councilmember Weitz stated that just because the Village Councilmembers arrive at decisions that residents do not agree with, this does not mean that there is a lack of transparency. It merely means that there are differences of opinion.

Addressing Ms. Gruber's remarks, Deputy Mayor Perron said that she is no fan of this whole plan to install artificial turf on the Schedler property. However, she feels that the accusation by Ms. Gruber that the Village is hiring an Historic Preservation Consultant in order to remove the historical designation of the Schedler property is completely "out of thin air."

Addressing Ms. McCambridge's remarks, Deputy Mayor Perron said that she takes umbrage at her accusation that there is corruption on the Village Council. She stated that she was with the U.S. Attorney's Office for over 30 years, and she knows what corruption looks like. Deputy Mayor Perron stated that if Ms. McCambridge can show her the "elements" on which she forms her corruption accusation, she will review them. However, she stated that there was no corruption on the Village Council. Deputy Mayor Perron asked Ms. McCambridge to be respectful of the governing body that serves the residents of Ridgewood.

Addressing Mr. Noe's comment, Councilmember Winograd stated that, unfortunately, there has been very little interest in the Zabriskie-Schedler house, even though \$2.6 million was spent to renovate it. She said that ten years ago, people were clamoring to save the house, and today, these same people are silent. Councilmember Winograd has been striving to find tenants for the house, to no avail. There were some discussions a couple of years ago about possibly relocating the house, but it was decided that this was not feasible, due to some structural elements of the house. She said that the Schedler property has been declared historic because of the house. Councilmember Winograd said that there was no historical event that took place on the property or any important figure who lived on the land. Regarding a fence or netting to prevent sports balls from hitting cars, Councilmember Winograd said that there are plans to install fencing or netting on the West Saddle River Road side of the Schedler property, by the softball field. She said that the Village Councilmembers are also interested in installing such fencing or netting on the Route 17 side of the property.

Addressing Ms. Loving's comments, Councilmember Winograd said that remediation is "incredibly intense." Options for remediation are to cap the soil, such as was done by Orchard School, or to excavate the contaminated soil. Councilmember Winograd stated that the entire berm on the Schedler property and the "floor" or flat section of the property will need to be remediated to a great extent (excavating several feet down). She said that the excavation will definitely disrupt the ecosystem at the Schedler property. She echoed Mr. Kazmark's comments that Suburban Consulting Engineers has been wonderful to work with. Councilmember Winograd said that the wetlands assessment and archaeological study should have been done by the prior Village Council, before the renovations were performed on the house.

Councilmember Winograd assured Ms. Gruber that there is no effort on the part of the Village Council to remove the historical designation from the Schedler property. She said that she cannot understand why Ms. Gruber and others who petitioned to save the house will not help the Village find a use for the Zabriskie-Schedler house. The house cannot be opened to the disabled population until the park is developed. She said that the Village must hire a historical expert to help the Village navigate the SHPO process. Councilmember Winograd said that it is unfair and irresponsible for people to say that the Village Council is attempting to remove the historical designation from either the house or the property.

Addressing Ms. Lima's request, Councilmember Winograd stated that the Village has no plans to digitize the Sunshine Binder, due to staff limitations. However, she feels that this would be a good step to take in future years, when there is adequate staffing and funding.

Mr. Kazmark said that if people want to talk about "shady" behavior, his predecessor and the Village's professional staff had no idea that actions had been taken to designate the Schedler property as historic. He said that he would define these actions as shady behavior.

## **6. VILLAGE MANAGER'S REPORT**

Mr. Kazmark began his Village Manager's report by thanking the staff of the Sanitation Department and the Fire Department for their quick actions in dousing a fire that originated in the packer section of a garbage truck. He said that the sanitation crew were able to bring the garbage truck to the Graydon Pool parking lot, so that there would be room for the Fire Department to extinguish the fire. He quoted from an email from Fire Chief John Judge which read in part, "After interviewing and speaking with multiple individuals this morning, it is clear that both the individual and the staff driving the garbage truck, along with the Fire Department response, was textbook. Everybody did what they were supposed to do. The driver thought enough to get to a large open area at Graydon Pool, no cars, no people, no wires, and there were no injuries, with minimal damage to the garbage truck. It was a great job done by all." Mr. Kazmark said that he could not echo Chief Judge's sentiments enough.

Mr. Kazmark announced that West Glen Avenue will be closed in both directions, from Oak Street to North Monroe Street, from Thursday, March 6<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 p.m. through March 7<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. Ridgewood Water will be installing the booster station to increase water pressure in the Intermediate Zone (top of West Glen Avenue in Midland Park). The first step is to connect the existing water main and extend two eight-inch water mains, across West Glen Avenue. This work is anticipated to complete this phase of the project. Detours will be implemented, and notification of this road closure was sent out via email this afternoon. Police officers will be onsite to assist drivers. Mr. Kazmark thanked residents for their patience and cooperation while this work is being performed.

Last weekend, Mr. Kazmark and Mayor Vagianos attended the Northwest Bergen Mayors meeting, during which they hosted administrators and managers. Topics of discussion included controlling the deer population. Ridgewood will be part of a deer population survey that will be conducted this fall, in conjunction with the remaining Northwest Bergen municipalities. They also discussed how the dispatch services performed by Northwest Bergen Central Dispatch can be offered to other municipalities. Additional shared services opportunities were also discussed.

Mr. Kazmark reiterated that the latest round of questions and answers regarding the soil testing at the Schedler property was posted to the Village website this evening. Notification will be sent tomorrow to all interested parties.

Mr. Kazmark thanked Dawn Cetrulo, Director of the Health Department, and her staff for organizing an incredibly successful Blood Drive last Friday. Over 75 residents and employees participated in the drive.

On Friday morning, Mr. Kazmark attended a Bergen County meeting with Ms. Mailander. He announced that the State Legislature passed a bill, which Governor Murphy signed into law, moving the Primary Election from June 3 to June 10, 2025, due to a holiday occurring on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Other changes to legislation alter the amount of signatures necessary for an individual to be nominated for various offices. The State Legislature added three additional days of early voting, with six days of early voting before the June Primary Election. There are currently nine days of early voting allowed before the General Election.

Council Chat will be held on March 8, 2025 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., in the Caucus Room on level four of Village Hall. Interested individuals should call the Village Clerk's Office for reservations. Mr. Kazmark indicated that walk-ins are welcome, but those with reservations will receive priority.

A Seasonal Summer Job Fair will be held by the Parks and Recreation Department on March 12, 2025, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the Community Center at Village Hall. Young adults aged 16 and older are encouraged to attend the fair, to explore full-time and part-time employment

opportunities, over the summer, with the Parks and Recreation Department. Further information can be obtained by calling 201-670-5560.

On March 18, 2025, at 2:30 p.m., the Ridgewood Tax Department has invited representatives from the New Jersey Division of Taxation to discuss the new Stay NJ program. The representatives will be able to answer any questions from attendees at the meeting. Interested individuals must register with the Finance Office by March 11, 2025, in order to participate in this program.

Upcoming Village Council meetings are as follows: Work Session on March 26, 2025 at 7:30 p.m.; Public Meeting on March 12, 2025 at 7:30 p.m.; and Final Budget Meeting on April 1, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.

## **7. VILLAGE COUNCIL REPORTS**

Councilmember Mortimer said that he had nothing new to report.

Councilmember Winograd said that she attended a meeting of the Fields Committee yesterday, during which they spoke about road closures that would restrict access to the Glen School. These closures will affect sports and the recreational pickleball program, but there will be alternate routes. She encouraged all residents to read the traffic alerts contained in the Village's E-notices and on social media. Opening day for baseball and softball will be April 26, 2025. Ridgewood Lacrosse Day will be held on April 27, 2025, and the Maroons will host a Father's Day Tournament.

This coming spring, Councilmember Winograd said that the field at Orchard School will be playable. Members of the Fields Committee discussed rotating the orientation of the goalposts on Orchard Field to prevent wear in any one grassy area. Some students from Ridgewood High School have written to the Village Councilmembers expressing concern that there are no recycling bins by Veterans Field. These students will give a presentation before both the Fields Committee and Village Council in April. Councilmember Winograd thanked Mr. Luo, Biology teacher at Ridgewood High School, for motivating these environmentally minded students. Councilmember Winograd thanked Yolanda McCollom, Environmental Engineer for Ridgewood Water, for attending the entire Fields Committee meeting and answering any questions from those in attendance regarding the necessity for the road closures.

Councilmember Winograd announced that the St. Patrick's Day celebration hosted by the ACCESS Committee will be held on March 24, 2024 at MacMurphy's. She encouraged everyone to attend. She thanked Jaimie Davis for her efforts in this regard.



The Ridgewood Library is hosting its annual Author Luncheon on Wednesday, April 9, 2025 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., at The Terrace on Paramus Road in Paramus. Marie Benedict, a *New York Times* bestselling author, will discuss her latest book, “The Queens of Crime.”

Councilmember Weitz stated that his committees have not met since the last Village Council meeting. He attended the Oscar Party hosted by the Ridgewood Guild, which he described as a lovely event. He echoed Mr. Kazmark’s comments thanking the Sanitation Department and Fire Department for their quick actions to extinguish the fire, which originated in one of the department’s garbage trucks. Councilmember Weitz congratulated the three Fire Department personnel who were sworn in this evening. He wished those who celebrate a pleasant Ramadan.

Deputy Mayor Perron stated that Super Science Saturday was held this past Saturday at Ridgewood High School. Green Ridgewood had a table there and they spoke with a lot of people. She said that everyone was very inspired by all of the different scientific projects that were displayed. For the first time this year, Deputy Mayor Perron observed an electric go-kart. Green Ridgewood’s next meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. in the Senior Lounge this Thursday, March 6, 2025. Deputy Mayor Perron is working alongside Carol Bialkowski, Director of Communications and Special Events, and Millennium Strategies, on a technical assistance grant regarding energy conservation. She said that this will pair nicely with the energy planning grant that has already been received.

Deputy Mayor Perron stated that the AM Rotary Club is going to be helping the Ridgewood Signal Division to paint the red fireboxes located throughout Ridgewood on June 7, 2025. Any individual interested in assisting in this endeavor should contact the AM Rotary Club or Deputy Mayor Perron. Fire Chief Judge has indicated that using these fireboxes is the fastest way that residents can alert the Fire Department of a fire emergency.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that the Special Improvement District (SID) Steering Committee will make a presentation before commercial property owners in Ridgewood and other merchants on Monday, March 10, 2025, in order to obtain feedback.

Deputy Mayor Perron had nothing to report regarding the Planning Board, since they did not meet this week. The Central Business District Advisory Committee (CBDAC) will meet via Zoom on March 13, 2025 at 8:30 a.m.

Mayor Vagianos said that he went with Councilmember Weitz to the Ridgewood Guild Oscar Party, which he stated gets bigger and better every year. He thanked Tony Damiano, founder of the Ridgewood Guild, and his Board of Directors for hosting such a wonderful event.

Regarding Ramadan, Mayor Vagianos said that there will be an iftar held this Sunday, March 9, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. at the YMCA. He explained that during the 40-day fast of Ramadan, Muslims

do not eat during daylight hours. They only eat after sundown, and the breaking of the fast each night is called an iftar. Deputy Mayor Vagianos encouraged those who have never attended an iftar to do so on March 9<sup>th</sup>. He stated that Muslims are extremely happy when non-Muslims attend an iftar, so that they can learn about some Muslim customs. He added that the food is unbelievably good as well. Deputy Mayor Perron thanked Ramon Hache, Executive Director of the YMCA, for hosting this event.

## **8. DISCUSSION**

### **A. RIDGEWOOD WATER**

#### **1. LEAD SERVICE LINE REPLACEMENT UPON SALE OF HOME**

Richard Calbi, Director of Ridgewood Water, could not attend the meeting this evening, so Yolanda McCollom, Environmental Engineer with Ridgewood Water, spoke about this matter, involving requiring lead service line replacements upon the sale of a home.

Ms. McCollom said that the proposed ordinance requiring replacement of lead service lines, upon the sale of a home or transfer of ownership, was recommended by the consultant who assisted in developing the lead service line replacement (LSLR) program. Since this program is voluntary on the part of homeowners, Ms. McCollom said that this ordinance can be used as a tool to require more participation in the LSLR program. This program allows homeowners to finance the cost of lead service line replacements over 30 years. She has spoken with Bill Gilsenan and other realtors, who use the service material lookup tool whenever a property is being sold. Ms. McCollom stated that Mr. Gilsenan fully supported this program, since homeowners have an option to join, and are not required to pay everything immediately. He feels that the real estate community would also be supportive of this program. Ms. McCollom said that a lot of homeowners replace their lead service lines on their own volition. Similar ordinances are being developed for the other municipalities serviced by Ridgewood Water (Glen Rock, Wyckoff and Midland Park).

Mr. Kazmark said that replacement of lead service lines, prior to the sale of a home, is akin to the requirement in some municipalities of removing or sealing up any underground septic tanks before selling a home.

A discussion ensued between Councilmember Mortimer and Ms. McCollom about how this requirement can be worked out via an agreement between buyers and sellers. Councilmember Mortimer noted that all lead service lines must be replaced by the year 2031. Ms. McCollom indicated that, to date, they do not have a good mechanism by which they can force homeowners to replace their lead service lines, but this proposed ordinance will help. She mentioned that the

other municipalities in the Ridgewood Water service area are looking to Ridgewood to develop a pertinent ordinance first. Mayor Vagianos thanked Ms. McCollom for her work on this project.

**B. BUDGET**

**1. AWARD SOLE SOURCE CONTRACT – UPGRADES TO SCADA SYSTEM – WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITY**

Mr. Kazmark explained that this matter pertains to the award of a Sole Source contract to upgrade the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system at the Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF). This system, which is used to operate the wastewater treatment plant, is almost 20 years old and is failing. Emerson Process Management is a Sole Source vendor for supplying SCADA components. Ridgewood Water also uses Emerson equipment, so their staff can assist the WPCF staff when they have a question. It is recommended by Christopher Rutishauser, Village Engineer, that this contract be awarded to Emerson Process Management Power and Water Solutions, Inc., of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in an amount not to exceed \$25,803.80. Funding is available in various open Capital Accounts.

**2. AWARD CONTRACT UNDER STATE CONTRACT – SELF-CONTAINED BREATHING APPARATUS (SCBA) – FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter pertains to the award of a contract, under State Contract, for the purchase of Self-Contained Breathing Apparatuses (SCBAs) for the Fire Department. These SCBAs are the air packs used by firefighters to provide breathable air in environments that are filled with smoke, are toxic, or lacking oxygen. The SCBAs now used by the Fire Department are reaching their end of life. The Fire Department has received an Assistance to Firefighters Grant in the amount of \$263,725.45, which funds will be used to purchase new SCBAs, with the balance of the purchase being made with funds remaining in two Capital Accounts already designated for this purchase. It is recommended by Chief Judge that this contract be awarded to New Jersey Fire Equipment, of Green Brook, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$344,991.29. Mayor Vagianos thanked Fire Chief Judge for applying for this grant, since it saved taxpayers over a quarter of a million dollars.

**3. AWARD CONTRACT UNDER SOURCEWELL COOPERATIVE PURCHASING – LEASING AND MAINTENANCE OF POLICE VEHICLES**

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter pertains to the award of a contract, under the Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing Program, for the extension of the leasing/maintenance contract with Enterprise to lease six vehicles (administration, detective, and traffic van vehicles and patrol

cars) for the Ridgewood Police Department. This year, the Police Department will also be leasing four other patrol cars from Enterprise (three Ford PPVs and one Ford Expedition). Some vehicles will be traded in to Enterprise, and it is estimated that the Village will receive over \$50,000.00 as a credit towards these new cars. It is recommended by Police Lieutenant John Chuck that this contract be awarded to Enterprise Fleet Management, Inc., of Wayne, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$200,000.00 per year.

4. **AWARD CONTRACT UNDER SOURCEWELL COOPERATIVE PURCHASING – LEASING OF VEHICLE FOR HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter pertains to the award of a Sourcewell Cooperative Purchasing contract for the leasing of a 2021 Ford Explorer through Enterprise for the Health Department. This car is shared by five staff members. This is the fifth year of a five-year lease. The monthly cost of the lease is \$584.02, for an annual total of \$7,008.24. The Health Department is awaiting the replacement of the Explorer with a hybrid Ford Focus, which will bring the monthly payments down to \$471.00 per month. It is recommended by Ms. Cetrulo that the fifth year of this leasing contract be awarded to Enterprise Fleet Management of Wayne, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$7,500.00.

Councilmember Mortimer stated that since there is a Shared Services Agreement between the Ridgewood Health Department and Mahwah Health Department, he asked if Mahwah would share the cost of the mileage for this vehicle. Mr. Kazmark said that this is built into the Shared Services Agreement.

5. **AWARD PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT – SPECIAL COUNSEL – SCHEDLER PROPERTY – SHPO APPLICATION**

Mr. Kazmark explained that this matter involves an award of a professional services contract for Special Legal Counsel regarding the SHPO application for the Schedler property. These individuals were interviewed this evening, during Closed Session. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to William C. Sullivan, Jr., Esq., of Scarinci | Hollenbeck, Attorneys at Law, in an amount not to exceed \$40,000.00. Mr. Kazmark stated that Mr. Sullivan's experience includes serving as the Legal Counsel to the Historic Preservation Commission in South Orange and Bloomfield.

**6. AWARD PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT – HISTORIC PRESERVATION CONSULTANT – SCHEDLER PROPERTY – SHPO APPLICATION**

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter deals with the award of a professional services contract for hiring an Historic Preservation Consultant regarding the SHPO application for the Schedler property. It is recommended that this contract be awarded to Kelly C. Ruffel, Cultural Resource Consultant, of Lodi, New Jersey, in an amount not to exceed \$10,000.00. Mr. Kazmark reiterated that Ms. Ruffel has worked on a number of projects, and she was personally involved with the SHPO application for the Goffle Brook Park development and improvements. She has served in a few professional positions with Passaic County and served as the Executive Director for Preservation New Jersey.

**7. AWARD PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT – ENGINEERING AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES – SCHEDLER PROPERTY – SHPO APPLICATION**

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter deals with the award of a professional services contract for engineering and landscape architectural services regarding the SHPO application for the Schedler property. It is recommended that this contract be award to Suburban Consulting Engineers, Inc., of Flanders, New Jersey. Suburban Consulting Engineers, Inc., has been requested by the Village to take leave of the services they are currently performing for the Schedler property, so that they may begin to attend weekly meetings to further amend the SHPO application, based upon the results presented by Matrix.

**8. AUTHORIZE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT – HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES – OVERSIGHT OF CONSTRUCTION OF SANITARY SEWER LATERAL FROM ZABRISKIE-SCHEDLER HOUSE TO SANITARY SEWER LATERAL IN WEST SADDLE RIVER ROAD**

Mr. Kazmark explained that this item pertains to the award of a professional services contract for historical architectural services, regarding oversight of construction of a sanitary sewer lateral from the Zabriskie-Schedler house to the sanitary sewer lateral in West Saddle River Road. Connolly and Hickey Historical Architects performed the oversight of the sanitary sewer project. This work was done while the interior of the Zabriskie-Schedler house was being renovated. Since the contractor doing the renovation work was unable to install the sanitary lateral, the Traffic and Signal Division performed the excavation, laid the pipes, connected to the main, and installed backfill. Since there were concerns that there might be historic artifacts on the Schedler property, Connolly and Hickey had a sub-consultant (Hunter Research) oversee all of the excavation work. These bills from Connolly and Hickey are from 2022 and 2023, which were

misplaced in their office. It is recommended by Mr. Rutishauser that the amount of \$8,485.00 be paid to Connolly and Hickey for their oversight of the sanitary sewer lateral installation.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that she was uncomfortable with the use of the present tense in the proposed resolution, since the work has already been completed. Mr. Kazmark asked Ms. Mailander if she would re-word the resolution to indicate that it is a retroactive payment to Connolly and Hickey. When Councilmember Mortimer asked where the funding would come from, Mr. Kazmark stated that there are still open capital funds for the Schedler property.

### **C. POLICY**

#### **1. AMEND CHAPTER 145 – FEES – HEALTH DEPARTMENT ANNUAL FEES FOR TEMPORARY EVENTS AND AMEND CHAPTER 156 – FOOD AND FOOD HANDLING ESTABLISHMENTS – ESTABLISH DEFINITION OF TEMPORARY EVENTS**

Mr. Kazmark said that this matter deals with amending Chapter 145, Fees, regarding Health Department annual fees for temporary events, and amending Chapter 156, Food and Food Handling Establishments, to establish a definition of temporary events. The Health Department is proposing an annual temporary event food vendor license fee of \$150.00 for the year. This will reduce paperwork and inspections for staff members in the Health Department. Ms. Cetrulo stated in her memorandum that over the past few years, food truck festivals and temporary events have increased, with some food vendors holding up to five events per year.

Ms. Cetrulo has drawn up a proposed amendment to Chapter 156, Food and Food Handling Establishments, which further clarifies the definition of “temporary event.” It reads, “Events where food vendors operate at a fixed location for a temporary period of time in connection with a Ridgewood-sponsored event or an event approved by the Village of Ridgewood, to include, but not be limited to, fairs, carnivals, public exhibitions, parades, fireworks, farmers markets, or similar temporary or transitory gatherings or events whereby food is served, handled or provided to the public, with or without charge for the food.”

Deputy Mayor Perron said that she has a problem with the word “fixed,” and Mr. Kazmark indicated that it would be different than a food truck, which travels from place to place selling food. Deputy Mayor Perron asked what it would be, if not a food truck. Matthew Rogers, Village Attorney, stated that at certain events, such as the street fair, people are assigned certain spaces or “fixed” locations. It could also be a food truck set at a particular place. Deputy Mayor Perron felt that the word “variable” should be used rather than “fixed.” Mr. Rogers said that use of the word “variable” would mean that they could move from place to place. Mr. Kazmark added that requests have been received by vendors asking if they can operate their food trucks on a mobile



basis, such as on East Ridgewood Avenue, and he believes it is Ms. Cetrulo's intention to avoid this, by using the wording "fixed location" in the proposed amendment to the ordinance. Deputy Mayor Perron suggested that the wording "assigned location" be used rather than "fixed location." Mr. Rogers suggested "at a specifically assigned location," and everyone was in agreement with this wording.

## **2. AMEND CHAPTER 260 – TREE PROTECTION, REMOVAL, AND REPLACEMENT**

Mr. Kazmark explained that this item pertains to amending Chapter 260, Tree Protection, Removal, and Replacement. This proposed ordinance is being reintroduced, with revisions having been made to same by Mr. Rogers, Mr. Rutishauser, and Nancy Bigos, Director of the Parks and Recreation Department, since they deal with the enforcement, oversight, and implementation of this ordinance in large part.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that she has already pointed out some typos in the proposed ordinance to Ms. Mailander and grammatical errors that are not substantive. She asked about Section 160-3C which reads in part, "For locating trees that may be within the public right-of-way, all measurements for determining their location in relation to the limits of the public right-of-way shall be taken at DBH (diameter at breast height) of the tree by authorized representatives of the Engineering Division of the Department of Public Works." Deputy Mayor Perron said that it appears the purpose of this paragraph is to determine whether a tree lies within a public right-of-way or on private property. She said that the wording "for locating trees" sounds like one is trying to find a tree, rather than trying to "site" the tree.

Mr. Rogers said that this wording came from the Engineering Department, since they deal a lot with trees uprooting sidewalks in the Village. Councilmember Winograd explained that DBH is used for measurement, since many trees lean and tilt. She stated that many of the Village's shade trees are 40% located on private property. A problem arises when a tree is leaning over the canopy of the street, but the base is 60% on private property. That is the reason for the sentence that reads, "If it is determined that the tree base at ground level is greater than 50% within the public right-of-way, such tree shall be the responsibility of the Village." Deputy Mayor Perron said that she is fine with the wording as it stands, if Councilmember Winograd is comfortable with it.

Deputy Mayor Perron also asked about Section 260-8, Exemptions from permit requirements. She questioned the last sentence of the opening paragraph which states, "Any and all trees directed to be removed by the Village of Ridgewood, the County of Bergen, and the State of New Jersey authorities pursuant to the law." She pointed out that this sentence fragment should be part of the list which follows the opening paragraph. Mr. Rogers and Councilmember Winograd agreed that this sentence should be Item A. on the following list, which currently

indicates (Reserved) next to it. Mr. Kazmark stated that this list in the prior ordinance goes from A to H and the proposed amended ordinance goes from A to G. Once the last sentence in the opening paragraph is moved to the Item A spot, then the list will be the same as in the prior ordinance. Mr. Vagianos thanked Deputy Mayor Perron for paying such excellent attention to detail.

Councilmember Mortimer pointed out the definition of “Invasive Species” in Section 260-2, which states, “An invasive species is one that is non-native to the local ecosystem and whose introduction causes or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health.” He asked how invasive species of trees can cause harm to human health. Councilmember Winograd said that an invasive species does not have to fall into all three categories. Mr. Rogers said that invasive species take over and eventually obliterate native species, and one of the goals of this ordinance is to preserve the natural tree canopy in the Village by limiting the number of invasive species. Councilmember Mortimer said that he understands that, but he thinks the definition is heavy-handed. Councilmember Winograd feels that the wording should remain, since it was in the prior ordinance. She said that a tree that has become brittle would fit into all three categories. Deputy Mayor Perron said that if an invasive species of tree causes harm to human health, it is very indirect.

Councilmember Mortimer asked how invasive trees are any more harmful than native trees. A person is going to be hurt if an invasive tree or a native tree falls on them. Mayor Vagianos said that he did not know enough about trees to state an opinion, but he felt that it would not cause any harm to keep the language as written in the proposed ordinance. Councilmember Mortimer said that he was happy that the Tree of Heaven species was listed, since this invasive tree is a magnet for the Spotted Lantern Fly.

### **3. AMEND CHAPTER 241 – REGULATING SKATEBOARDS, SCOOTERS AND MICROMOBILITY DEVICES IN THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT**

Mr. Kazmark stated that this item pertains to an amendment to Chapter 241, regulating skateboards, scooters and micromobility devices in the Central Business District (CBD). This amendment would add definitions for electric or motorized skateboards, electric personal assistive mobility devices, low-speed electric bicycles, micromobility vehicles or devices, motorized bicycles, motorized wheelchairs, and skateboards. Mr. Kazmark said that the Village Councilmembers were concerned mostly about the E-bikes. Mr. Rogers worked closely with Police Captain Ender and the Traffic Division of the Police Department to develop this ordinance amendment.

Mr. Rogers said that this amendment was developed to try to identify the different types of motorized devices that can be operated on the sidewalks in the CBD. Such devices would have to

be walked or pushed. Particularly with E-bikes, the police have seen these bikes coming up on people from behind, while they are walking on the sidewalk, and people don't always hear them approaching. While he and Captain Ender thought they had included every type of electric vehicle, they saw an ad for an electric, single-wheeled motorcycle. This amended ordinance supplants the existing ordinance, since the existing ordinance only limited skateboards in the CBD. Mr. Rogers said that the amended ordinance exempts certain types of devices, such as motorized wheelchairs and four-wheel assistive mobility scooters, for people who need them due to ambulatory issues.

Mayor Vagianos said that he was very grateful to the Police Department for their assistance in developing this amended ordinance. He has witnessed many young people in the CBD operating such devices on the sidewalk, creating hazardous conditions for people who are not expecting something coming along at 25 or 30 miles per hour on a crowded sidewalk. Mayor Vagianos said that the Village is commencing a public outreach campaign to educate the public, especially younger people, about how dangerous these devices can be.

Mr. Rogers reviewed the various devices which this ordinance covers, and stated that scooters should be included in the definition section, such as "electric or motorized skateboards or scooters." He said that he can make this revision before the ordinance is introduced next week. Mayor Vagianos concurred.

Councilmember Winograd agreed that these motorized devices can be very dangerous. She asked why the ordinance only pertained to the CBD and not anywhere else. She also asked if the Board of Education has been furnished with a copy of this proposed ordinance, in case they want to include an area around the high school. Mr. Rogers said that the ordinance only applied to the CBD and that he has not furnished a copy to the Board of Education. Mayor Vagianos stated that the prohibited areas are in the CBD because the sidewalks in the CBD are much more crowded than in residential neighborhoods.

Councilmember Winograd said that certain E-bikes have a "governor" that controls the speed of the device, and this governor is removed by kids so that they can go faster on the bikes. She said that she does not want to stand in the way of introducing the ordinance, but she feels that the Board of Education would be interested in seeing a copy of the proposed ordinance, since it is a serious problem around the high school. Mr. Rogers said that the different types of E-bikes are defined in the amended ordinance. Mayor Vagianos said that they decided not to include the property around the schools in Ridgewood because children use E-bikes to get to and from school. Councilmember Weitz said that he and Mayor Vagianos will be attending a Board of Education meeting this coming Friday, so they will discuss this matter at that time.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that the definition of motorized bicycle states in part, "A pedal bicycle having a helper motor characterized in that the maximum piston displacement is less than

50 cc or said motor is rated at no more than 1.5 brake horsepower or is powered by an electric drive motor and said bicycle is capable of a maximum speed of no more than 25 miles per hour on a flat surface or a pedal bicycle having an electric motor that is capable of propelling the bicycle in excess of 20 miles per hour with a maximum motor-powered speed of no more than 28 miles per hour on a flat surface.” She asked if this sentence could be broken down into a list (A, B, C and D). She said that she doesn’t understand the paragraph and it is such a long, run-on sentence. Mr. Rogers said that this is a law enforcement definition, but it can be broken down to make it more readable.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that most people know what the CBD is, but she has never seen a definition of it in the Code. Mr. Rogers said that there is a definition and a map in the Code, and a detailed description of the restricted areas will be attached to the ordinance as Schedule A. Deputy Mayor Perron stated that the description on Schedule A is not what most people think comprises the CBD. In addition, the area described in A (4) mentions South Hudson Street, and there is no such street. Councilmember Winograd clarified that it states the south side of Hudson Street. Deputy Mayor Perron said that the restricted areas include Dayton Street. She said that there have been heated discussions at meetings of the Special Improvement District Steering Committee about whether or not Dayton Street is part of the CBD. The same discussions occur when the CBD is about to be decorated for the holidays and people do not want to decorate Dayton Street, due to the expense.

Mr. Rogers said that the CBD is a general designation for an area that is “uptown” between Maple Avenue and Broad Street, and on the west side of Ridgewood by Garber Square. From a traffic standpoint, and from a standpoint regarding the prohibition of motorized devices on sidewalks to ensure pedestrian safety, Mr. Rogers said that the defined areas attached to this revised ordinance as Schedule A is the same document that is currently included in the Code of the Village of Ridgewood. He suggested that representatives from the Police Department appear before the Village Council, in order to obtain their feedback regarding any changes to the defined areas of prohibition.

Deputy Mayor Perron said that since the areas of prohibition are clearly defined in Schedule A, these areas do not have to be called the CBD. She said that the CBD should be defined in its own Code section. She feels that calling the areas on Schedule A as encompassing the entire CBD will create issues in some other context. The lot and block numbers, as well as the directional boundaries, are described in Schedule A, and Deputy Mayor Perron feels that these areas do not have to be called the CBD. She pointed out that the existing ordinance, which has Schedule A annexed to it, does not mention anything about the CBD.

Mayor Vagianos pointed out that the existing ordinance describes, in Section 241-2, that “the area of prohibition is described on Schedule A attached hereto and made a part hereof.” The revised ordinance states, “The area of prohibition is identified as the Central Business District in

the Village of Ridgewood and more specifically described on Schedule A attached hereto and made a part hereof.” Mayor Vagianos suggested that this sentence be modified to read “The area of prohibition is more specifically described on Schedule A attached hereto and made a part hereof.” Deputy Mayor Perron agreed with this suggestion. Councilmember Mortimer stated that calling the area the Central Business District will be more familiar to residents, and he feels that the wording in the revised ordinance should remain. Mayor Vagianos concurred with Councilmember Mortimer.

Mr. Rogers said that using the wording “Central Business District” helps young people understand where motorized devices are prohibited. After further discussion, it was agreed that the sentence would read, “For purposes of this ordinance, the area of prohibition is identified in the Central Business District in the Village of Ridgewood, more specifically described on Schedule A attached hereto and made a part hereof.” After further discussion, it was agreed that the revised ordinance would be introduced and later modified, if necessary.

**4. NAME CHANGE FOR PROJECT PRIDE TO RIDGEWOOD  
BEAUTIFICATION TEAM**

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this item pertains to changing the name of the Project Pride Committee to the Ridgewood Beautification Team (RBT). Councilmember Winograd spoke about the duality of the word “pride” in the Project Pride Committee and Pride Day which is celebrated every year in Ridgewood, and the confusion this has caused in the past, which is why Project Pride is changing its name.

**D. OPERATIONS**

**1. AUTHORIZE APPLICATION FOR AND ACCEPT GRANT  
FUNDING FROM BERGEN COUNTY MUNICIPAL ALLIANCE  
GRANT**

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter pertains to the authorization of an application for, and the acceptance of grant funding from, a Bergen County Municipal Alliance Grant. The Governor’s Council on Substance Use Disorder has co-sponsored Village programs for over 20 years. The amount of the 2025-2026 Municipal Alliance Grant is \$4,507.18, and it supplies recreational, social and educational programs regarding alcohol/drug abuse. This amount will be reflected in the budget preparation for the Recreation Division.

**2. ACCEPT DONATION – PROJECT PRIDE (RIDGEWOOD BEAUTIFICATION TEAM)**

Mr. Kazmark indicated that this matter deals with acceptance of a donation from Councilmember Winograd and her family to the Ridgewood Beautification Team (formerly Project Pride). Councilmember Winograd stated that she is Village Council Liaison to the RBT and she is donating part of her Village Council stipend to the RBT. She asked anyone interested in helping the RBT, either financially or logistically, to let her know.

Councilmember Weitz asked if these types of stipend donations always have to be heard by the Village Council. Mr. Kazmark explained that stipend donations must be heard before the Village Council, only if the stipends are donated back to the Village Operating Account. Councilmember Weitz said that his stipend is donated to the Cub Scouts.

**3. ACCEPT DONATION – FURNITURE FOR ZABRISKIE-SCHEDLER HOUSE**

Mr. Kazmark explained that this item pertains to the acceptance of a donation of era-appropriate furniture for the Zabriskie-Schedler house. Councilmember Winograd stated that the Zabriskie-Schedler house is in need of furniture. She said that individuals should contact her if they have any ideas for donations of furniture, artwork or funds for decorating and furnishing this historic house. Mayor Vagianos thanked Councilmember Winograd for “adopting” the house and striving to find a tenant for it.

Councilmember Winograd said that it will be better for the Village and for the Schedler neighbors if the house is occupied and does not remain vacant. The longer the property sits vacant, the more derelict it will become. She stated that some illegal activity has taken place there.

**9. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Cynthia O’Keefe, a resident of Ridgewood, stated that she is not going to apologize for asking questions, which she stated was her right and privilege. She said that she was not accusing Suburban Consulting Engineers or any other contractor of anything. Ms. O’Keefe said that her comments about Suburban probably did not sway Mr. Kazmark’s decision to use them on Village projects. However, Ms. O’Keefe recalled residents’ questions and concerns regarding the prior Historic Preservation Consultant who was hired by the Village, stating that he had a questionable background and qualifications. It had been hoped by residents that due diligence would have been conducted by the Village, by performing a background check on this individual. Ms. O’Keefe said that, as a Schedler area resident, she is always concerned about what transpires on the property. She said that \$10,500.00 was paid to Suburban to perform the



LOI, when this could have been performed for free by the NJDEP. She said that Mr. Kazmark could be offended by her comments, but she said that he should not “get his hackles up” and take it personally.

Ms. O’Keefe said that none of the Village Councilmembers live in the Schedler community. The neighbors who do live in this area are passionate about their neighborhood, where three children have been hit by cars to date. These neighbors are concerned about safety. When the Open House was held at the Zabriskie-Schedler house, Ms. O’Keefe said that people were doing U-turns in the middle of Terhune Road.

Ms. O’Keefe added that Goffle Brook Park consists of 103 acres, and the Schedler property consists of only seven acres, and that comparing both properties was akin to “comparing apples to oranges.” She expressed the hope that SHPO will not approve the artificial turf field planned for the Schedler property. She asked that the Village Councilmembers give their empathy and compassion to the Schedler neighbors.

Anne Loving, a resident of Ridgewood, said that she appreciates the fact that the AM Rotary Club is going to paint all of the fireboxes in the Village. She said that Roger Weigand was Ms. Loving’s husband’s best friend, and Mr. Weigand used to paint the fireboxes himself. Mr. Weigand died in 2014, so she is pleased that the Rotary Club is following in Mr. Weigand’s footsteps.

Ms. Loving stated that there are approximately 80 chairs on the floor of the courtroom, and most people seem to be able to sit in them for an entire Village Council meeting. She said that the chairs on the dais must be very uncomfortable, because the Village Councilmembers are regularly standing up during meetings. Ms. Loving suggested that some of the chairs on the floor of the courtroom be used up on the dais, because it was unsettling to her to see how uncomfortable the Village Councilmembers must be during meetings.

Ms. Loving said that she wanted to talk about the word “corruption.” She stated that despite repeated protests and objections of various Village residents, the Village ignored the public and hired somebody that had a criminal record as an Historic Preservation Consultant. When a member of the public called this individual a “shyster,” Deputy Mayor Perron pointed out that this name-calling was bordering on slander. When a member of the public recently stated that there was corruption on the Village Council, Ms. Loving said that the Village Councilmembers “got their shorts in a twist.” She stated that Village residents are very skeptical about what is going on at the Schedler property. She said that if someone uses the word “corruption,” the Village Councilmembers should not get so upset about it. Ms. Loving said that the “shyster” has recently been imprisoned.

Boyd A. Loving, a resident of Ridgewood, said that it was his understanding that the Village Councilmembers had a Closed Session meeting this evening, prior to the regularly scheduled Work Session. Mr. Loving said that the agenda for the Closed Session meeting was not posted online and was not on the table in the courtroom, but it was posted on the bulletin board in the Village Hall lobby. Even though the Village fulfilled its legal obligations to post the Closed Session agenda on the bulletin board, Mr. Loving said that not posting same online would lead to people being suspicious about what the Village Council is doing, particularly because most of the agenda items at the Closed Session concerned the Schedler property. Even though the Closed Session has ended, Mr. Loving suggested that the meeting agenda for same be posted online for the benefit of the public. He reiterated that the absence of transparency by not posting the Closed Session meeting agenda online, or putting a copy on the courtroom table, may lead to suspicions by the public.

Mr. Loving recalled some discussion at the last Village Council meeting about proposed changes to the ordinance concerning the feeding of wildlife and bird feeders. He said that the Village Councilmembers decided that bird feeders must be at least six feet high, but he noticed that there is currently pending legislation in the State of New Jersey that is going to require that bird feeders be at least ten feet high, to deter bears. Mr. Loving said that if the Village Councilmembers designate six feet in the ordinance, it may have to be changed in June to coincide with the State legislation, since State law supersedes local law.

Ellie Gruber, a resident of Ridgewood, said that the Village hired someone to remove the conservation easement surrounding the Zabriskie-Schedler house, which is basically removing the historic designation from the Schedler property, so that a larger field could be built there. She insisted that she was not wrong about these facts. Regarding a tenant for the Zabriskie-Schedler house, Ms. Gruber said that the Village had a serious offer from the Bergen County Historical Society, which presented a written proposal to the Village. This would have prevented the house from staying vacant and it could have been enjoyed by the community as a cultural resource. She thanked Councilmember Winograd for trying to find a tenant for the house. However, Ms. Gruber said that when the Newcomers Club said that they wanted to occupy the entire house, the Bergen County Historical Society had to remove their offer. Ms. Gruber said that the Bergen County Historical Society has wanted to use the house for decades.

Ms. Gruber said that she does not mind being criticized, but she does not want to be told she is wrong, when in fact she is right about certain things. Ms. Gruber is confident that the new Historic Preservation Consultant has excellent references. However, she is not happy that this new consultant was able to get an artificial turf field constructed in Goffle Brook Park.

Cynthia Halaby, a resident of Ridgewood, said that she was very pleased to hear the discussion this evening about the prohibition of motorized devices on sidewalks. She walks a lot in the CBD, and noted that East Ridgewood Avenue slopes down to Maple Avenue. She said that

motorized vehicles can gain quite a bit of speed going down this slope. Ms. Halaby asked how these new regulations will be enforced. She expressed the hope that the Ridgewood Police will have more foot patrols in the CBD to regulate users of motorized devices, since there is currently no enforcement as far as she can tell.

Rurik Halaby, a resident of Ridgewood, said that he wanted to talk about the Zabriskie-Schedler house and the Bergen County Historical Society. He said that he is a big believer in preserving documents and artifacts from the past. Mr. Halaby said that he cannot imagine why the society would want to be a tenant in the Zabriskie-Schedler house. He said that they would have to move in some very heavy filing cabinets and he is not confident that the house is strong enough to support such weight, especially not on the second floor. In addition, Mr. Halaby assumed that historical documents and artifacts have to be in a fireproof house, which the Zabriskie-Schedler house is not, since there are no fire sprinklers in the house. He wondered whether the Bergen County Historical Society ever made an offer to the Village, and also whether the house was suitable for them in the first place.

Scott Muller, a resident of Ridgewood, thanked the Village Councilmembers for continuing their efforts regarding the Schedler property. He said that thousands of children will benefit from the use of the proposed athletic field. He stated that a lot of work needs to be done at Veterans Field to bring it up to “spring sports level.” He again thanked the Village Councilmembers and said he admired the way they stay “cool under fire.” He said that he was sure the sports parents in Ridgewood thanked them, as well.

Amy McCambridge, a resident of Ridgewood, stated that the fact that the Village Council did not test the soil or water at the Schedler property after it was acquired by the Village over ten years ago is “shady.” She spoke about the upheaval in the Federal government and about how many people are being fired across the board, including personnel in the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). Ms. McCambridge said that there is a famous professional soccer player from Washington State who performed a study with 300 players who played soccer on artificial turf. She said that over half of these players (167 of them) have blood disorders (non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma). Ms. McCambridge said that it is the responsibility of the older generation to leave the world a better place for the next generation, and the Village is not doing so by installing an artificial turf field at the Schedler property. She is a soccer coach and loves her players, but she said that she would never subject them to something that could be dangerous. She said that sports parents should think about children, other than their own, who are forced to play on artificial turf fields. Ms. McCambridge said that Ridgewood students who played on artificial turf fields in Ridgewood, and are now attending college, are angry that they never knew how dangerous it was to be exposed to artificial turf.

There were no further comments from the public.

Addressing Ms. Loving, Mayor Vagianos said that Councilmember Winograd's comments about how far down Matrix will need to dig during the soil remediation at the Schedler property were correct. Matrix representatives told Mayor Vagianos that they will have to excavate approximately 18 inches in most areas and up to four feet in a couple of areas. Regarding Ms. Loving's comments about the chairs on the dais, Mayor Vagianos said that most of the members sitting on the dais have been there since 6:30 p.m., way before the Village Council meeting started at 7:30 p.m., and that is the reason why they stand up occasionally during meetings. He said that he appreciated Ms. Loving's concern.

Mayor Vagianos said that there is a good reason why the Village Councilmembers bristle when people use the term "corruption." He explained that the Village Councilmembers are essentially volunteers and, while they do not mind being criticized, he said that this term should not be bandied about unless one has definitive proof or evidence of corruption.

Addressing Mr. Loving, Mayor Vagianos said that he was correct in stating that the Closed Session agenda should have been posted online, and he is going to request that it be posted after this evening's meeting. He thanked Mr. Loving for bringing this oversight to his attention.

Addressing Mr. Loving's comments about the bird feeders, Councilmember Mortimer said that when he spoke to the owner of the store, Wild Birds Unlimited, he also brought up the fact that the State is considering legislation that requires bird feeders be at least ten feet high, so that bears are not attracted to the feeders. The owner of Wild Birds Unlimited belongs to a group that has a lobbyist who works in Trenton, and this lobbyist was able to cut that requirement out of the legislation, particularly due to the need for ADA compliance.

Addressing Ms. O'Keefe, Councilmember Winograd stated that she takes all of her questions and comments very seriously and is following up on them. She has communicated with Suburban Consulting Engineers to seek clarification on one of Ms. O'Keefe's questions. Councilmember Winograd said that sometimes when bids are sent out by the Village, there are no bids received or only one bid is received. She has heard repeated comments from professionals that Ridgewood is a tough place in which to do business, and the Village Councilmembers are sensitive to how outside vendors are perceived by the public.

Regarding the Schedler property, Councilmember Winograd said that parking is a big problem. She said that the Village owns a \$2.6 million asset (the Zabriskie-Schedler house) and there is inadequate parking around the Schedler property. She described the Community Development Block Grant received by the Village to make the house ADA compliant. She said that until the development plans for the Schedler property are approved by SHPO, there will be parking on the street adjacent to the property whenever a meeting or event is held in the house.

Regarding the chairs at the dais, Councilmember Winograd said that the chairs are terrible, but she would not want to spend taxpayer money to buy new chairs. She said that she has a lower back issue and has been in meetings since 8:00 a.m. today. She said that immobility is bad for people, and she needs to stand every so often, during meetings.

Councilmember Winograd stated that all of the matters discussed in Closed Session today were discussed during the Work Session this evening, with additional details. She apologized that the agenda for the Closed Session was not posted online.

Addressing Ms. Gruber's remarks, Councilmember Winograd said that she can keep saying that the Village hired the former Historic Preservation Consultant to remove the historic designation from the Schedler property, but saying so does not make it true. This consultant and other professionals were hired by the Village in an effort to move the Schedler development project forward.

Regarding the tenancy of the Zabriskie-Schedler house by the Bergen County Historical Society, Councilmember Winograd said that an application was received from Peggy Norris, of the Bergen County Historical Society, and there was also interest by the Newcomers Club. Both groups did an onsite visit at the house with Councilmember Winograd, Mr. Kazmark, and others. It was hoped that the Bergen County Historical Society could use the upstairs of the house and a room downstairs by the kitchen, and that the Newcomers Club could use part of the downstairs. The problem was that the room the Bergen County Historical Society wanted to use downstairs essentially blocked off access to the kitchen. The next day, Councilmember Winograd received word that the Bergen County Historical Society was no longer interested in occupying the house. Councilmember Winograd said that she could not have a tenant using a room in the house that would block the kitchen off from use, since a significant amount of taxpayer money was spent to renovate the fully equipped kitchen.

Mr. Kazmark stated that Ms. O'Keefe was 100% correct when she said she had the right to ask any question she feels is necessary before the Village Council, as any member of the public does. He said that he has complimented the constituency in Ridgewood many times, about their level of engagement. Mr. Kazmark said that he gets frustrated when he is forced to combat misinformation. He said that there are certain topics that are manufactured into issues, such as the box checked off on the LOI by Suburban Consulting Engineers, indicating that there were no hazards for a NJDEP representative to inspect the Schedler property. Mr. Kazmark was frustrated that a member of the public insinuated that one of the Village's professionals did not properly answer a question, lied, and gave out misinformation. He apologized for sometimes getting frustrated, but he said that he has to set the record straight quite often, especially when it pertains to the Schedler property. Mr. Kazmark acknowledged that the NJDEP could have done the LOI; however, there was a 12- to 18-month wait time. For the sake of expediency, Suburban

was engaged by the Village to do the LOI. The NJDEP still has to visit the Schedler property, do an inspection and investigation, and substantiate the report from Suburban.

In addition, Mr. Kazmark acknowledged that Goffle Brook Park is a lot larger than the Schedler property. His reason for stating Ms. Ruffel's qualifications this evening was due to the fact that there were a lot of questions from the public regarding the qualifications of the prior Historic Preservation Consultant.

Addressing Ms. Gruber's comments, Mr. Kazmark said that he needs to be cautious when talking about the conservation easement that Bergen County has on the Schedler property, because the Village has received a letter from legal counsel representing the Schedler neighbors. He stated that there has been no attempt by the Village to remove either the State or Federal historical designation of the Schedler property since he became Village Manager of Ridgewood. Similarly, there is no effort to remove the conservation easement, which is a signed document between the County of Bergen and the Village of Ridgewood, when the Village accepted money from Bergen County, to make historical improvements on the Schedler property. Mr. Kazmark said that it is clear that after speaking with representatives from Bergen County, and after Mr. Rogers reviewed the easement language in the Schedler deed, there is no prohibition from developing the Schedler property for recreational purposes.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Village Council, on a motion by Councilmember Mortimer, seconded by Deputy Mayor Perron, and carried unanimously by voice vote, the Village Council's Regular Public Work Session was adjourned at 10:12 p.m.

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Paul Vagianos  
Mayor

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Heather A. Mailander  
Village Clerk