

Ridgewood Planning Board
Regular Public Meeting
April 1, 2025
Page 1

The following minutes are a summary of the Planning Board meeting of April 1, 2025. Interested parties may request an audio recording of the meeting from the Board Secretary for a fee.

Call to Order & Statement of Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act - Mr. Joel called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

Administration of Oath of Office to New Member – Mayor Vagianos administered the Oath of Office to Class IV Member Reese Campbell.

Roll Call – The following members were present: John Young, Deputy Mayor Perron, Richard Joel, Fran Barto, Michael Stern, Jim Van Goor, Reese Campbell, Elizabet Timofeeva and Sammy Thomas. Rob Willis and David Refkin were absent. Also present were Chris Martin, Board Attorney; John Barree, Village Planner; Christopher Rutishauser, Village Engineer, and Jane Wondergem, Board Secretary.

Adoption of Resolution Appointing The Mecca Law Firm as legal counsel for the Planning Board – The resolution appointing the Mecca Law Firm as legal counsel for the Planning Board was memorialized.

Public Comments on Topics not Pending Before the Board – There were no comments at this time.

Committee/Commission/Professional Updates for Non Agenda Topics:

Deputy Mayor Perron gave a Council update.

Mr. Van Goor gave an update from the Open Space Committee.

Robert Erani – An application for Minor Site Plan approval for an addition to the back of the existing commercial building located at 245 East Ridgewood Avenue, Block 3703, Lot 10 in a B1 Zone –

Mr. Martin explained that the Applicant was not required to notice for the hearing as there are no variances being requested.

Rami Bitar was sworn and his credentials as a licensed architect accepted. Mr. Bitar testified regarding the plans he prepared, explaining that the existing building will be a restaurant. Mr. Bitar stated that the addition at the rear of the building will not increase the improvement coverage as there is already concrete in the location of the addition. Building coverage and floor area ratio will be in compliance with the ordinance. Mr. Bitar showed a photo of the existing conditions, which was marked as Exhibit A-1, and a rendering of what is proposed, which was marked as Exhibit A-2. The proposed addition will square off the rear of the building.

Board members asked if the addition would affect parking. Mr. Bitar said it would not.

Ridgewood Planning Board
Regular Public Meeting
April 1, 2025
Page 2

Mr. Barree asked about the wheelchair access in the back and access within the building. Mr. Bitar explained the floor plan. Mr. Barree asked about the lighting and landscape. Mr. Bitar said there would be no change.

Mr. Barree commented that the parking spaces closest to the building had an area for a vehicle to turn around which is now going to be filled in and the applicant is providing an ADA space which will reduce the parking by one space and said it may create a need for a parking variance.

Robert Erani, property owner, was sworn. Mr. Erani joined the discussion regarding the parking and said there is no room to increase parking. Mr. Martin said that if a variance is needed, they would need to notice for a public hearing.

Mr. Rutishauser said the applicant would need to pay a sewer connection fee for the square footage being added to the building. Mr. Rutishauser commented that if the applicant were to provide an Electric Vehicle make-ready space that may negate the need for a parking variance. Mr. Erani said he would provide an Electric Vehicle make-ready space.

Following Board deliberation Mr. Stern made a motion to approve the application, Mr. Young seconded and the application was approved.

8:33 p.m. - **Executive Session** - The Board adjourned to executive session in connection with pending or anticipated litigation.

9:23 p.m. - The Board returned from executive session and reconvened the public session.

The Board returned to the regular meeting.

Adoption of Minutes: The minutes from January 21, 2025 and February 18, 2025 were approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Wondergem
Board Secretary

Date Approved: May 6, 2025