

REGULAR MEETING OF THE MONTVALE PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES
Tuesday, July 1, 2025
Municipal Complex 12 DePiero Drive, Montvale, NJ

Please note: A curfew of 11:15 PM is strictly adhered to by the Board. No new matter involving an applicant will be started after 10:30 PM. At 10PM the Chairman will make a determination and advise applicants whether they will be heard. If an applicant cannot be heard because of the lateness of the hour, the matter will be carried over to the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Chairman DePinto opened the meeting at 7:42 pm and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: John Culhane; Christopher Gruber; Councilmember Koelling; William Lintner; John Ryan, Mayor Designee; Frank Stefanelli; Sherwin Tsai; Joseph Puglisi; Anita Bagdat and Chairman DePinto

ALSO PRESENT: Robert Regan, Board Attorney; Darlene Green, Borough Planner; and Carl O'Brien, Borough Engineer and Jeanne Fondacaro, Interim Planning Board Secretary

ABSENT: Javid Huseynov; John Kurz, Fire Official

MISC. MATTERS RAISED BY BOARD MEMBERS/BOARD ATTORNEY/BOROUGH ENGINEER/BOROUGH PLANNER: None

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION LIAISON REPORT: None. The Chairman asked Mr. Tsai to reach out to the commission and Mr. Hanrahan in regards to the Site Plan Application reviewed earlier in the evening for recommendations of plants and foliage for the project.

SITE PLAN COMMITTEE REPORT: Mr. Lintner reported the committee reviewed one application. The application was for Grand Ridge Corner/Jeffer Company LLC, 106-118 Chestnut Ridge Road (Block 2602, Lot 6) for proposed parking lot improvements. The committee determined that they would not need to come before the board for the project, but that they would like the applicant to seek out the recommendations of the Environmental Commission in regards to types of plants and foliage to be incorporated into the area.

MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE REPORT: None

ZONING REPORT: None

CORRESPONDENCE: On back table

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. **June 3, 2025** - A motion to approve was made by Mr. Puglisi and seconded by Councilmember Koelling. There was no discussion. A roll call vote was taken with all eligible and present members stating aye. Mr. Stefanelli, Mr. Tsai and Ms. Bagdat abstained

USE PERMITS:

1. **Block 2602, Lot 5 – JNA Montvale LLC d/b/a JNA Fitness** – 120 Chestnut Ridge Road, Unit 2 (1,479 sq. ft.) – Andrew Bolson of Meyerson Fox and Conte represents the applicant, Joseph Branda of JNA Montvale LLC d/b/a JNA Fitness, who was sworn in by Mr. Regan. The Chairman read the application into the record. The space is to be used as a personal fitness training studio. There will be 2 employees occupying the space, the area will not be altered from 3 rooms, an outdoor sign will be required and an application will be filed upon the approval of the Use Permit, parking will be 2 employee spaces and all other is parking in common. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Ryan and seconded by Councilmember Koelling. A roll call vote was taken with all present stating aye.
2. **Block 403, Lot 3 – Bluepeak Management LLC** – 103 Summit Ave., Suites 301 & 303 (800 sq. ft.) – Andrew Bolson of Meyerson Fox and Conte represents the applicant, Hershi Werzberger of Bluepeak Management LLC, who was sworn in by Mr. Regan. The Chairman read the application into the record. The space will be used as a general business office for a healthcare management company. There will be 2 employees occupying the space, the area will not be altered from 2 rooms, an outdoor sign is not required, parking will be 2 employee spaces and all other is parking in common. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Stefanelli and seconded by Mr. Culhane. A roll call vote was taken with all present stating aye.
3. **Block 1001, Lot 1 – Divorce Logic LLC** – 135 Chestnut Ridge Road, Suite 260 (1,266 sq. ft.) – Andrew Bolson of Meyerson Fox and Conte represents the applicant, James Joseph Mota of Divorce Logic LLC, who was sworn in by Mr. Regan. The Chairman read the application into the record. The space will be used as a general business office for a company providing financial expertise specific to individuals navigating divorce. There will be 4 employees occupying the space, the area will be altered to 4 rooms, an outdoor sign is not required, parking will be 4 employee spaces and all other is parking in common. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Stefanelli and seconded by Mr. Culhane. A roll call vote was taken with all present stating aye.
4. **Block 2602, Lot 1 – Carbo Constructors Corp.** – 210 Summit Avenue (415 sq. ft.) – Michael Ochs of Trif & Modugno LLC represents the applicant, Nicholas Bradley of Carbo Constructors Corp., who was sworn in by Mr. Regan. The Chairman read the application into the record. The space will be used as a general administrative office associated with the NJTA construction project on the Garden State Parkway. There will be 3 employees occupying the space, the area will not be altered from 2 rooms, an

outdoor sign is not required, parking will be 3 employee spaces and all other is parking in common. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Ryan and seconded by Mr. Culhane. A roll call vote was taken with all present stating aye.

5. **Block 403, Lot 4 – Tamar Capital LLC** – 72 Summit Avenue, Suite 108 (326 sq. ft.) – Andrew Bolson of Meyerson Fox and Conte represents the applicant, Yehuda Praver of Tamar Capital LLC; who was unable to attend in person, but was on speaker phone; was sworn in and able to answer questions from the board. The Chairman read the application into the record. The space will be used as a general business office for a real estate management and development company. There will be 2 employees occupying the space, the area will not be altered from 2 rooms, an outdoor sign is not required, parking will be 2 employee spaces and all other is parking in common. A motion to approve was made by Councilmember Koelling and seconded by Mr. Stefanelli. A roll call vote was taken with all present stating aye.

PUBLIC HEARINGS (NEW): None

PUBLIC HEARINGS (CONT.):

1. **Block 1601, Lots 12, 13 and 14 – JTZ Holdings, LLC** – 22 Railroad Avenue – Amended Site Plan and Soil Movement Application
Brian Chewcaskie of Cleary, Giacobbe Alfieri, and Jacobs LLC stepped forward to represent the applicant. As with past meetings there are members who must recuse themselves from the hearing, with that Councilmember Koelling and Mr. Ryan recused themselves and left the dais. Mr. Chewcaskie inquired as to whether or not the members whom have missed past meetings had listened to missed meetings recordings and signed certification documents in order to be eligible to vote. Ms. Bagdat was the only member ineligible to vote, due to her missing June 3, 2025 and not having listen to the meeting recording, but the planning board retained 7 eligible members in order to vote on the application on this night.
Mr. Chewcaskie briefly reviewed the past meetings and testimony from previous meetings referring to the applicant’s engineer, architect and traffic consultant, as well as referring to the Borough’s Planner Review Letter, dated 6/17/25, which was marked as Exhibit B5.
The Chairman inquired with the Borough’s Engineer, Carl O’Brien about receiving updated revised plans but that he was not going to write a formal review letter and instead would be commenting on it at the meeting.
Mr. Chewcaskie stated that the applicant did receive the written will serve letter from the water company, Veolia and will supply the board with a copy of the letter.
Mr. Chewcaskie then requested to open to public comments and for the borough’s professional to ask any additional questions and comments.
The Chairman motioned to open the meeting to the public. A motion to open was made by Mr. Tsai and seconded by Mr. Culhane. All in favor stated Aye.

Ms. Anastasia Kartsev of 34 N. Kinderkamack Road stepped forward and was sworn in by Mr. Regan. Ms. Kartsev inquired about the traffic situation and the progress the applicant has made with Bergen County. Mr. Chewcaskie answered that they have had additional meetings with the county since the initial May 22, 2025 meeting and that discussions have gone forward, which have included the borough's engineer, Mr. O'Brien. Mr. Chewcaskie stated that they have confirmed with the County that the plans that they are proposing are acceptable before they file a formal application with Bergen County. The Chairman requested that Mr. O'Brien share with the residence his involvement in regards to the traffic and if he shares the same opinion of the applicant's professional. Mr. O'Brien stated that he met with Bergen County regarding the traffic studies and that they were aware of the concerns express by the Chief of the Montvale Police Department. Mr. O'Brien summarized the topics of discussion during that meeting and stated that he feels confident that all three entities; the developer, the town and the county; will be able to work together for a cohesive traffic plan. The Chairmen also explained to the resident that during the course of the many meetings the applicant had agreed to only seek Preliminary Site Plan approval and would come back at a later date for Final Site Plan approval specifically because of the traffic situation. The Chairman requested Mr. Regan explain that process further to the resident. Mr. Regan explained the process to the resident and why the applicant would seek these approvals separately.

Ms. Kathleen Calenda of 19 N. Kinderkamack Road stepped forward and was sworn in by Mr. Regan. Ms. Calenda expressed concerns regarding the volume of traffic already in the area and how the new development will affect and/or exacerbate the area. The Chairman stated that the fairly extensive traffic study by the applicant's traffic expert did support that the changes they proposed will help the area and not exacerbate an already congested area, but that because it is a county road the county will have the final say in the matter.

The Chairman at this time request the Borough Planner, Ms. Green, to summarize her review letter, dated 6/17/25 and previously marked as Exhibit B5. Ms. Green summarized her review letter and expressed her concerns as she walked the board thru her review. Mr. Chewcaskie stated that many of the concerns expressed in the planner review letter can be complied with by the applicant and can be addressed at the Final Site Plan approval meeting.

The Chairman asked the Board Secretary if the Environment Commission had received the landscaping plans and if they had responded with a review letter. The Board Secretary responded that the Environment Commission should have received those plans and that she had yet to receive a review letter at this time.

Ms. Green continued on with her summarization stating that many of the items in her review can be addressed at the Final Site Plan approval meetings.

The Chairman then invited the public to ask questions of Ms. Green, Mr. O'Brien, the Board or the applicant's counsel. No one from the public stepped forward.

The Chairman motioned to close the meeting to the public. A motion to close to the public was made by Mr. Culhane and seconded by Mr. Tsai. All in favor stated Aye. Mr. Chewcaskie then stepped forward for his closing summarization of the application and discussed the progression of the changes the applicant has implemented as different agencies, the board, and the professionals, made recommendations and expressed concerns on the project.

The Chairman proceeded to summarize and comment on the project mentioning specifically the difficulty in the density issues of the area and proposed project. The Chairman requested the board members to ask questions and make comments. The members reiterated the concerns of the density issues expressed by the Chairman, concerns about the traffic patterns and safety, concerns about the garbage disposal area for the residential and retail spaces, concerns about the lack of green space, concerns about the size of the overall building and the closeness of the build to the roadway, and concerns about the number of affordable housing units.

The Chairman and Mr. Regan confirmed that the board does have the required 7 members to vote for the voting process, needing 5 affirmative votes for the Preliminary Site Plan approval on the D5 Variance and Height Variance (D6).

The Chairman motioned to request Mr. Regan to prepared a Resolution of Approval setting forth the conditions as normally including in the Resolutions. The motion to approve was made by Mr. Gruber and seconded by Mr. Stefanelli. All voting members stated Nay. The Chairman then made a motion to deny, which was made by Mr. Lintner and seconded by Mr. Stefanelli. All in favor stated Aye.

RESOLUTIONS:

1. **Resolution Appointing Jeanne Fondacaro Planning Board Secretary –**

The motion to introduce was made by Mr. Puglisi and seconded by Ms. Bagdat. There was no discussion or changes to be made to the Resolution. All present members stated aye.

OTHER BUSINESS: None

OPEN MEETING TO THE PUBLIC: No one from the public came forward.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Bagdat and seconded by Mr. Culhane. All in favor stated aye.

Next Regular Scheduled Meeting: July 15, 2025

Respectively submitted:

Theresa Di Popolo,
Assistant to the Land Use Administrator