

MINUTES of the Agenda Conference of the Council of the Borough of North Plainfield held on Monday, **April 8, 2024** at 7:35 p.m. via Zoom.

PRESENT:

Council Members: Aimee Corzo, Council Vice President
Suzette Given (absent – excused)
Steven McIntyre
Everett Merrill
Keiona R. Miller
Wendy Schaefer
Frank “Skip” Stabile, Council President

Also Present: Lawrence La Ronde, Mayor
Phil George, Esq., Associate Borough Attorney
Michele Irby-Garry, Acting Borough Clerk

Ms. Garry read the following Notice of Compliance:

"This meeting is being held in compliance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq. Adequate notice of this meeting was provided by transmitting notice to the official newspapers of the Borough, The Courier News, the Alternative Press and also to the Star Ledger on December 11, 2023 and by posting a copy of this notice on the bulletin boards in the Municipal Building and the Memorial Library reserved for such purpose."

The Flag Salute was led by Council President Stabile.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Francine Gargano, 57 Willow Avenue, North Plainfield, commenting on the approaching warm weather, the speaker noted her concerns about the impending loud music played as a result of same. Responding to the speaker’s call for strict enforcement of the noise ordinance, Mayor La Ronde assured that he would stress the need for violators to be ticketed. The Mayor announced Chief Parenti’s proposed implementation of residential gathering permits for large parties or barbeques. Ms. Gargano spoke against permits as it would give the impression that the borough supports loud gatherings and parties.

Justin Kelley, 278 Brook Avenue, North Plainfield, voiced concerns about the speeding along Brook Avenue and the lack of visibility at the intersection of Brook Avenue and Farragut Road. Council President Stabile reported that the traffic safety subcommittee continues their discussions of traffic calming measures. Mayor La Ronde announced that all borough streets would be striped over the next two years. The police department has been instructed to ticket all speeding violators. Mr. Kelley proposed a four way stop at the intersection of Brook Avenue and Farragut Road to reduce potential traffic accidents.

Daniel Battista, 34 Regent Street, North Plainfield, voiced his disappointment that recreation would have no baseball season. The speaker also inquired after plans for the old Villa Maria property. Reporting on the decline in baseball and softball registrations, the Council President explained that consideration of a joint league with Green Brook was discussed, only to discover there were still not enough kids. Mayor La Ronde indicated he would conduct a town hall meeting about recreation matters, specifically the lack of volunteers for coaching. He proposed a look into a county-wide league for baseball and softball. Referencing the old Villa Maria property, the Mayor confirmed a portion of the acreage would be dedicated open space while 32 units would be constructed to fulfill our COAH obligations with the State.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Discussion of possible Upper Krausche Field Zoning Change** – L.L. Mayor La Ronde opened the floor to discussion on a request for a zoning change to Upper Krausche Field to allow for an electronic sign between the pine trees and the highway to accrue advertising revenue. All council members voiced their opposition.
2. **Amend Parks and Recreation Committee Ordinance** – L.L. Mayor La Ronde indicated the need to lower the Parks and Recreation Committee’s membership from thirteen to five. This will enable the committee to make quorum with just three members present. The committee would oversee the planning and execution of the Easter Egg Hunt, opening day sports events, the Fishing Derby, the Halloween Parade, and the Tree Lighting.
3. **Amend Special Event Committee Ordinance** – L.L. Mayor La Ronde segued into the need to reinstate the Mayor’s Special Events Committee to plan and execute events including the Summer Concert Series, the Fourth of July Parade and fireworks, the Hispanic Festival, and Santa Comes to Town. He also noted the need to decrease the membership to just five members.
4. **No Parking in the Right-of-Way Ordinance** – S.M. Mr. McIntyre explained that this ordinance would prohibit the stopping, standing and/or parking of vehicles anywhere other than the paved roadway parallel with the edge of said paved roadway within six inches of the curb. The ordinance would be enforceable by the police department or code enforcement.
5. **No Parking – Mountain Avenue and Watchung Avenue Ordinance** – L.L. Mayor La Ronde explained that Somerset County and the Police Department conducted a study and determined the need for sight increase at the intersection of Watchung Avenue and Jackson Avenue and the intersection of Mountain Avenue and Westervelt Avenue. The modified increase to sight distances along these intersections will increase vehicular safety and reduce the potential for accidents, he explained.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

REPORTS OF BOARDS, COMMITTEES & COMMISSIONS:

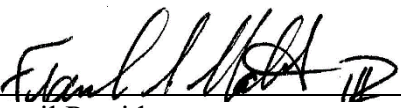
Referencing item “b” on the consent agenda, Ms. Schaefer shared her concerns with the cost for an update of the Master Plan when we have yet to implement the recommendations of the update twelve years ago. The councilwoman called attention to Somerset County’s request

for a traffic light at Mountain Avenue and Leland Avenue as well as multiple road markings at other intersections throughout the borough. She stressed the need to look into why these recommendations were ignored and what needs to be done to implement these changes.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Corzo, seconded by Mr. McIntyre and on voice vote carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.



Council President



Acting Borough Clerk