

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL
WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 2, 2021, at 6:30 P.M.**

SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Work Session of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Fort Lee was held on the above date in the 2nd Floor Conference Room and the Council Chambers Room, Memorial Municipal Building, 309 Main Street, Fort Lee, New Jersey.

PRESENT: Mayor Sokolich, Council Members Sohmer, Yoon, Suh,
Sargenti, Kasofsky, Cervieri

ALSO PRESENT : Alfred Restaino, Borough Administrator
Evelyn Rosario, Borough Clerk
Brian Chewcaskie, Borough Attorney

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT

In accordance with Chapter 231, P.L. 1975 adequate notice informing the public of the time and place of this meeting was duly published in the Record issue of December 22, 2020 and the Jersey Journal and Star Ledger issues of December 24, 2020. Said notice was also posted on the Borough Hall bulletin board and Borough website.

RESOLUTION FOR CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS:

On motion by Councilman Cervieri, seconded by Councilwoman Kasofsky and approved **unanimously**, the meeting moved into closed session.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Fort Lee that:

This body shall hereafter discuss in closed session, pursuant to Section 7B of the Open Public Meetings Act, certain items which may generally be described as follows:

1. **Personnel:**
 - a. Administration
 - b. Building Department
 - c. Fire Prevention
 - d. Recreation
 - e. Tax Assessor's Office

2. **Legal:**
 - a. 505 North Road

The minutes of the discussion in closed session may be disclosed to the public when the Mayor and Council has determined that the need for confidentiality has been satisfied.

The open portion of the work session will resume upon completion of the closed portion.

The closed portion of the meeting ended at 7:45 P.M. The open portion of the work session began at 7:45 P.M.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

Lease Agreement: Plaza Diner 2045 Lemoine Avenue

Administrator Restaino spoke of the lease agreement between the Borough and Plaza Diner which expired on December 31, 2017. Plaza Diner has expressed their desire to continue with the lease agreement and has requested the Borough consider renewing for an additional 4 years under the same terms and conditions. It was the consensus of the Governing Body to authorize the renewal which shall commence when they actually have a need for the use of the property as their business is currently not operating due to a fire that occurred last year. A clause shall also be included in the lease that indicates that the spaces cannot be rented or leased to a different entity.

Developer's Agreement Between the Borough and Redco Construction 216-218 Columbia Avenue

The Fort Lee Zoning Board granted approvals to Redco Corporation for the construction new units and on property known as 216-218 Columbia Avenue.

An authorizing resolution will be placed on the September 23rd regular session agenda.

Authorize Change Order No.1 Net Change \$6,090.00 For Project Known as 2021 CDBG Road Resurfacing Program 11th Street

Boswell Engineering has reviewed the proposed change order as submitted by D.L.S. Contracting. The change consists of a reduction to the contract in the amount of \$11,700 and an increase of \$5,610.00 for a net change to the contract in the amount of (\$6,090.00.)

An authorizing resolution will be placed on the September 23rd proposed consent agenda.

Award of Contract to Boswell Engineering for the Provision of Environmental Engineering Services for Project Known as Vehicle Exhaust Extraction System Fort Lee Department of Public Works, Not to Exceed \$5,000.00

Administrator Restaino reviewed the proposal submitted by Boswell Engineering regarding the above captioned project. The scope of the work consists of site visits and preparation of plans and specifications at a cost not to exceed \$5,000.00

An authorizing resolution will be placed on the September 23rd proposed consent agenda.

Authorize the Purchasing Agent to Obtain Bid Specifications and Advertise for Project Known as On Call Milling and Paving Services

A resolution authorizing the Purchasing Agent to a

Shared Services Between the Borough and the Fort Lee Board of Education for the Purchase of Gasoline/Diesel Fuel

Administrator Restaino stated that the Fort Lee Board of Education is seeking to enter into an agreement with the Borough for the purchase of gasoline/diesel fuel.

A resolution entering into shared services with the Board of Education will be placed on the September 23rd proposed consent agenda.

Safe Routes to School Grant Program

Administrator Restaino stated that the Safe Routes to School grant applications are open and being accepted by the New Jersey Department of Transportation.

Authorizing Chapter 159 's:

a. Distracted Driver Crackdown	\$10,500.00
b. Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over	\$ 6,000.00
c. HTS Mobilization/Municipal Alliance	\$ 5,754.10

Resolutions regarding the above captioned insertion of budget items will be placed on the September 23rd regular session agenda.

Support for State and Local Tax Deduction (SALT)

It was the consensus of the Governing Body to pass a resolution urging policymakers to include significant state and local tax deduction relief in upcoming legislation to support the economic recovery.

A resolution will be placed on the September 23rd proposed consent agenda.

Authorize the Transfer a Person-to-Person Liquor License No. 0219-33-010-008 From: Sunbichon Restaurant, Inc. To: Park Shim Family, LLC

Clerk Rosario stated that the applicant has met all the requirements for the transfer of the above captioned liquor license except for the affidavit of publication, upon receipt of same the Governing Body can authorize the transfer as submitted.

An authorizing resolution will be placed on a future regular session agenda.

Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Report

Administrator Restaino reviewed the report as prepared by the Chief Financial Officer regarding the American Rescue Plan outlining the reasons and expenses related to the use of the funds.

Proclamation: Korean Hanbok Day

No discussion held.

Afghan Relief Drop Box

Administrator Restaino stated that Mr. Peter Lupo has requested to place a drop box at the Borough's Senior center to benefit Afghan refugees.

A resolution will be placed on the September 23rd proposed consent agenda.

Authorizing Verizon Wireless to Place 19 Small Wireless Facilities on Existing Poles at Various Locations

No discussion held. Deferred to the next meeting.

Authorizing Issuance of Requests for Qualifications for 2022 Professional Services or Extraordinary Unspecifiable Services to the Borough of Fort Lee

A resolution authorizing the issuance of Request for Qualifications for the Borough's 2022 professional services will be placed on the September 23rd proposed consent agenda.

Horizon House Presentation

Steven Kratchman, Architect, PC

Mr. Steven Kratchman, Architect was present along with representatives Mr. Fred Rodriguez and Mr. Gregory Hess.

Mr. Kratchman spoke of the phasing diagram provided to the Governing Body and the current conditions of the area. He reviewed potential modifications to the roadway, entrance and exit points, curb cuts and signage.

The following members of the public came forward and spoke regarding the proposed plans:

1. Christine, Horizon House - Suggested that one line be painted instead of at the stop sign. Commented that this project is a waste of money.
2. Susan, Horizon House Building 6 - Stated that Horizon House does not need aesthetics, they have maintenance issues. She commented that if they are going to be responsible for paying the architect, they don't want this as they are unable to pay for anymore projects.
3. Kathryn H., Horizon House - Spoke of the circle and the possibility of a retail store being included in the plans and taking away green space. She commented that what is being presented is just the tip of the iceberg.
4. Debbie, Horizon House - She spoke of the stop signs and stated that this preliminary and should not be used as a forum to air dirty laundry in public.
5. Tom, Horizon House - Stated that this was presented in a package in the last election cycle proposing a master plan depicting an environmentally friendly area, solar panels. He stated that this presentation is negative and feels they should not move forward.

Mayor Sokolich addressed the public and stated that he is a huge supporter of having the town look beautiful and that he is a proponent of aesthetic improvements.

Councilman Cervieri asked if anyone reached out to the Police Department and Planning Board for their review, comments, etc. on the proposed plan.

6. Bonnie, Horizon House Building 4 - Stated that there are so many projects that are essential and that board at Horizon House should reach out to the owners for their suggestions.

Councilmembers Sargenti and Cervieri spoke of the parking spaces.

7. Speaker no name given, Chairman - Spoke of the circle at Horizon House.
8. Sharon, Horizon House - Spoke of the elimination of the bottle neck jam.

Councilman Yoon stated that this a private matter between the Horizon House board and the owners.

In closing, Mayor Sokolich stated that this also appears that it may involve the County Planning Board. He also indicated that he will be providing this information to the Borough's Traffic Consultants and the Traffic Officer for the Fort Lee Police Department for their review and comments.

PROCLAMATION

Joseph J. Surace Day

Councilman Suh read the following proclamation into the record:

WHEREAS, on Wednesday February 17, 2021, a great voice was silenced.

WHEREAS, Mr. Joseph J. Surace, was born May 4, 1942, in Englewood N.J. to the late Vincent and Louise (nee Marrone), was a lifetime resident of Fort Lee and the beloved husband of 50 years to Beverly Surace (nee Baranello).

WHEREAS, he was the devoted and loving father to daughter Louise Surace (Edward Meller) and son Vincent Surace (Elizabeth Stearns) and Joe is also survived by his brother Louis Surace, his nieces Lisa Waxman (Steve Waxman) and Tara Denicolo (Llyod Denicolo). Great Uncle to Rachel & Eric Waxman, Jenna & Luke Denicolo, and his aunt Dominica Panetta (nee Surace).

WHEREAS, Joe graduated from Holy Cross High School in 1960 and went on to proudly serve his country in the United States Army from 1964-1966. After leaving the Army with an honorable discharge Joe became a manager for Food Fair.

WHEREAS, in 1968 Joe found his first love and true passion when he went to work for Van Epps, Shipman & Heyliger CPA, where he worked as an officer manager. He went back to school and graduated from St. Peter's College in Jersey City in 1971 earning a BS in Accounting and in 1974 he opened his own accounting firm "Joseph J. Surace Public Accounting".

WHEREAS, his other greatest love in life was the Fort Lee Jr. Bridgemen Football Program where he made friends that he considered family. Forty-three years ago, Joe went to help a friend run the program and remained president of the Jr. Bridgeman for 42 years.

WHEREAS, his commitment of time and his love for his community did not end there, he served on the Fort Lee Rent Leveling Board (1981), the Fort Lee Planning Board (1982-1993) and was chairman for the last two years of his term, the Fort Lee Housing Authority (1994-2018) and was chairman (1998-2000), the Fort Lee Board of Education (2003-2018) serving as President in 2007 & 2009. He was also involved in Bi-County Jr. Scholastic Football as an officer from 1994 until his death and served as President from 2002-2005 and coached Fort Lee Little League Baseball (1984-1990).

WHEREAS, Joe was a parishioner of Holy Trinity Church in Fort Lee where he served as an usher for over 50 years. He was a member of New Jersey Association of Public Accountants Chapter - VP, National Society of Public Accountants, Pellegrina E. Cermida MAS - President 1975, Saint Rocco MAS - Honorary Member, UNICO charter member Fort Lee Chapter, VFW -Life Member, American Legion, Elk's member for 30 years, & Fort Lee Chamber of Commerce - Outstanding Volunteer 2006.

WHEREAS, the Borough of Fort Lee Board of Education, will be holding a ceremony on September 18, 2021, to honor his legacy and name the Club House at the Dr. Alan W. Sugarman Sports Complex after Joe, in recognition of his many years of service.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Mark J. Sokolich, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor, do hereby proclaim September 2, 2021, as
JOSEPH J. SURACE DAY

Dated this 2nd day of September 2021.

 Mayor Mark J. Sokolich

RESOLUTIONS

R-1 AUTHORIZING THE PLACEMENT OF AN INTERN MR. DAVID SCHADER IN THE FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 3, 2021

Council	Motion	Second	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Sohmer					X	
Yoon			X			
Suh		X	X			
Sargenti			X			
Kasofsky			X			
Cervieri	X		X			

September 2, 2021 Work Session Meeting Resolution # R-1 Carried: <u>X</u> Defeated:___ Tabled:___ Approved on Consent Agenda:___
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RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF FORT LEE AUTHORIZING THE PLACEMENT OF AN INTERN FOR THE FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU

WHEREAS, Mr. Steve Curry, Fire Official, has made a request to the Governing Body for permission to participate in the Felician University Internship Program; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that **Mr. David Schader** will serve as an unpaid intern through this Program under the supervision of Mr. Curry, effective September 3, 2021.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

On motion by Councilman Suh, seconded by Councilwoman Kasofsky and carried unanimously, the meeting was opened to the public for discussion.

1. Mr. Michael R., N. Central Road - Spoke of proposed project known as Pallsades Interstate Park and expressed concerns regarding the walking paths, nature, removal of trees.

Mayor Sokolich stated that there are other options such as possibly proposing a smaller version of the plan and public hearings could be forthcoming to ascertain the sentiment of the public.

2. Member of the public name not given - Spoke of preserving the area and the importance of green space.

In closing, Mayor Sokolich stated that in a few months from now, there will be option B.

There being no further discussions the meeting was adjourned on motion by Councilman Suh, seconded by Councilman Cervieri, at 9:40 PM

Evelyn Rosario, RMC, CMC
Municipal Clerk