

MINUTES OF THE VERONA PLANNING BOARD MEETING

Thursday, May 22, 2025

PRESENT:	
Chairperson Pearson	Mr. Lilley
Vice Chair Freschi	Mr. Katzeff
Mayor Tamburro	Mrs. Parker
Town Manager O'Sullivan	Mr. Mascera, Planning Board Attorney
Mr. Camuti	
Mr. Hyndman	Ms. Spatola, Acting Board Secretary
Absent from the meeting: Councilman Roman; Mr. DeOld;	
Also in Attendance: Planners: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sanyogita S. Chavan, AICP, PP - H2M Associates, Inc.• Dan Hauben, PP, AICP - DMR	

CALL TO ORDER - The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Chairperson Pearson.

ROLL CALL

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT - Read by Ms. Spatola, Acting Board Secretary

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – Chair Pearson asks if anyone from the public would like to make a statement or ask a question – seeing no members of the public in attendance the Chairperson closes general public participation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Pearson asks for a motion to approve minutes from the Regular meeting held on April 24, 2025 acknowledging that Resolutions memorialized that evening are attached.

Mr. Katzeff moves the minutes with edits; seconded by **Mr. Lilley**.

Chair Pearson asks for all in favor; Mr. Hyndman and Vice Chair Freschi abstain; all other commissioners in attendance voted in favor. **Minutes Pass.**

RESOLUTIONS

A. RESOLUTIONS

Chair Pearson recuses from Resolution 2025-09 and Vice Chair Freschi takes the lead over the Resolution vote and memorialization:

1. Memorialization of Resolution No. 2025-09 Authorizing the execution of a Settlement Agreement with DMH2 LLC. with regard to Docket No. ESX-L-4124-22
Mr. Hyndman makes a motion to approve as drafted; **Mr. Camuti** seconds

Roll Call Vote:

	AYES	NAYS	NOT ELIGIBLE	RECUSED	ABSENT
Mrs. Parker			X		
Mr. Katzeff	X				
Mr. Lilley	X				
Mr. Hyndman	X				
Mr. DeOld					X
Mr. Camuti	X				
Township Manager O’Sullivan			X		
Councilman Roman					X
Mayor Tamburro	X				
Vice Chair Freschi	X				
Chair Pearson				X	

Motion Passes

B. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

1. Master Plan Subcommittee Update

C. NEW BUSINESS

1. **PB Application 2025-02: 1 Wedgewood Drive; Block 1712, Lot 1:** Application Hearing for Tree Removal. Applicant has requested to **carry to the June 26, 2025** Planning Board Hearing where no new notice is required.
2. Presentation and discussion of the Township of Verona Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan.

Dan Hauben, PP, AICP – DMR gives presentation on the preliminary Fourth Round Housing Element and Fair Share Plan which needs to be adopted by June 30, 2025; Mr. Hauben provides the following:

- Brief History:
 - Mount Laurel Doctrine and the Fair Housing Act;
 - Prior Rounds;
- Fourth Round rules:
 - Fourth Round Affordable Housing Rules;
 - Fair Share Affordable Housing Obligations;
 - Vacant Land Adjustment;
- Meeting The Obligation:
 - Ways to Create Affordable Units;
 - Bonus Credits;
- Required Components of Housing Element & Fair Share Plan:
 - Demographic and Economic Data;
 - Compliance Plan;
 - Other Requirements;
- Draft Compliance Plan

- Next Steps:
 - Meetings to Adopt;
 - After Adoption;
 - Implementation.

Board Questions/Discussion:

- Mr. Katzeff asks what happens if the developers do not want to do the project; specifically, in the TCMU Overlay and the 885 Bloomfield Avenue property should they not get their permits from DEP
- Mr. Hauben explains that there is a mid-point review in July 2030 and if any component of the plan is not moving along, the town has to look at whether they have to increase the density or replace that Zone another option or explaining why the area continues to be viable.
- Ms. Chavan adds to the explanation; do we have a plan that provides realistic development opportunity and Verona does; solid plan;
- Mr. Katzeff does not believe the plan address risks;
- Mr. Lilley asks about the due dates and the land submitted for green acres;
- Mr. Hauben it will not be a factor and does not foresee it coming back as one;
- Mr. Hyndman asks about the process and the thought for timing on the drafts, specifically redevelopment plans; 885 Bloomfield Avenue – plan?
- Mr. Hauben whatever draft redevelopments plans and ordinance that are ready prior to the adoption will be included; designated without plans will need to document as much as possible and provide plans when ready; concerned if one of the developer drops out;
- Ms. Chavan speaks to timeline on redevelopment plans; 420 Bloomfield Avenue and 885 Bloomfield Avenue no one has seen draft plans is because we are still in the development, negotiation phase; reviews redevelopment and rehabilitation that in process; viable projects.
- Mr. Camuti asks for clarification on a special needs' bedroom; Mr. Hauben explains it is each bedroom in a group home; further discussion of special needs bedrooms with Ms. Chavan and determinations;
- Mr. Camuti asks about existing building; Mr. Hauben explains it could be done but most developments do not want to add affordable housing units; expanding into existing single family homes; Mr. Hauben explains that it could be done but would require a lot of money to be laid out by the Township;
- Ms. Chavan and Mr. Hauben explain that the draft plan matches the Verona Master Plan;
- Vice Chair Freschi wants to verify that developments would be subject to the relevant ordinances and zoning restrictions of the Township; do affordable housing units (AHU) only have to be rentals;
- Mr. Hauben explains that they will all be redevelopment plans and separate from regular Zoning;
- AHU do not all have to be rentals, the for sales are less profitable and out of reach for some lower income applicants; Ms. Chavan expands on the AHU owned units and the difficulties and struggles for the ownership;

- Chair Pearson asks about the renewing of the units in the developer agreement requiring at minimum one renewal; concern of resale in 30 years;
- Ms. Chavan states that it has been done and explains that in her experience you cannot mandate that they renew, but there are extensions; usually not written in the agreements; Board Attorney has never seen it done; explains the 95/5 rule or 95/5 deed restriction, is a mechanism used in some affordable housing programs, particularly in New Jersey, to ensure long-term affordability when selling a home. Essentially, when an affordable housing unit is sold at market value, the municipality retains 95% of the profit, while the homeowner keeps 5%. This ensures that a significant portion of the appreciation in value goes back into the affordable housing fund, allowing more people to benefit from affordable homeownership in the future.
- Board discusses what could be put in the redevelopment plans;
- Chair Pearson – requests a final Masterplan Subcommittee meeting during the week of June 2nd; to clean up the plan, map changes, number changes; and address any final comments; get committee the plan by May 30th and meeting on Monday, June 2nd to review, 3:30PM
- Grove Avenue reduction – Mr. Hauben explains;
- Chair Pearson expresses concern about 885 Bloomfield Avenue concern is that it is unfit for development and that the numbers are quite large; what is the schedule with firming up the numbers and getting to Mr. Hauben;
- Ms. Chavan states that it is still in negotiation and many questions have been asked of the developer i.e. fitting units, parking, character of neighborhood, etc.; timeline is dependent on concept plan with the developer
- Mr. Hauben discussed with Special Master Beth McManus what will be shown in the plan may not be the final number but will have a minimum number that will apply;
- Vice Chair Freschi asks if 885 Bloomfield could not contribute would the Township still be okay with the numbers? Mr. Hauben states that the Township would have to replace the project at least in part;
- Mr. Katzeff expresses that he still has concerns about the lack of risk mitigation highlighted in the plan and contingency plans;
- Board Attorney Mascera asks whether you could add more units to Grove Avenue development; Mr. Hauben explains determination;
- Board and Planners discuss senior units and option on Grove Avenue different use as an *addition to* on the same site;
- Mr. Hauben adds that all developments will need to come before the Board for approval;
- Ms. Chavan discusses redevelopment plans and adds that DEP regulations trump those plans;
- Chair Pearson asks if there are any further questions or comments – seeing none;
- Chair Pearson asks if the Board members have replied to the Board Secretary about their availability for a special June 19th meeting;

Vice Chair Freschi makes the motion to adjourn.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:54 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Miesch
Verona Township
Acting Secretary – Planning Board

PLEASE NOTE: Meeting minutes are a summation of the hearing. If you are interested in a verbatim transcript from this or any proceeding, please contact the Board Office at 973-857-4772