

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Verona Township Council on Monday, March 11, 2024, beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building, 600 Bloomfield Avenue, Verona, New Jersey and via Zoom video conferencing platform.

Call to Order:

The Municipal Clerk reads the notice of Open Public Meetings Act.

Roll Call:

Mayor Christopher Tamburro, Deputy Mayor Jack McEvoy, Councilwoman Christine McGrath, Councilman Alex Roman and Councilwoman Cynthia Holland are present. Township Attorney Brian Aloia, Township Manager Joseph D'Arco, Municipal Clerk Jennifer Kiernan and Deputy Township Manager Kevin O'Sullivan are also present.

Mayor's Report:

Mayor Tamburro attended the State of the County address. He read to the 3rd graders at Forest Avenue School for Read Across America. He attended the Boy Scout Troop 2 pancake breakfast and the Irish American Heritage flag raising. He also reports that the State level elected officials of LD 40 have agreed to write a joint letter of support for the Township to submit with the application. He reminds the Council that in following parliamentary procedure all comments are to be direct to the presiding officer and to wait to be recognized by the chair.

The Mayor reads a proclamation proclaiming the Township's continued support to our National Guard and Servicemen.

Essex County Liaison J. Coltre reports that the annual Cherry Blossom Festival begins April 6th and the special events the County will hold in Branch Brook Park.

Manager's Report:

Mr. D'Arco provides updates on Everett Field, the status the new 501(c) 3, Friends of Verona Parks. He reports that the Emergency Services Complex is in the public information stage. Boswell has submitted the street pavement study. It will be published on the website after Council reviews it. The 2024 Municipal Budget is on the agenda for Introduction tonight and the draft inter-local service agreement with the Board of Education was sent to the Superintendent for comments and when those are received it will be sent to the Council.

Councilwoman McGrath states that she would like to talk about the Emergency Services Complex further in New Business regarding the procedure of this new complex and that she has questions and concerns as to where the entire council needs to make decisions in this process.

Deputy Manager Kevin O'Sullivan reports that Boswell may be at the March 25th meeting to present their findings of the WWTP and subsequent steps and capital projects. He has provided a memo and chart to the Council recommending residential and commercial zoning fees that will bring the Township in line with surrounding municipalities and the ordinance will be discussed under New Business during the March 25th meeting. The Fairview Well project is advancing and awarding the bid is anticipated to take place in July.

2024 Municipal Budget Introduction:

Chief Financial Officer Jennifer Muscara approaches the lectern to discuss the 2024 Municipal Budget for Introduction.

ORDINANCE No. 2024-014

**AN ORDINANCE TO EXCEED THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET
APPROPRIATION LIMITS AND TO ESTABLISH A CAP BANK
(N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.14)**

The Municipal Clerk reads Ordinance No. E-1a by title into record.

Motion to move Ordinance E-1a is moved by Councilman Roman; seconded by Deputy Mayor McEvoy.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, McGrath, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS:

Ordinance 2024-14 is introduced by a vote of 5-0. It will be published according to law and a public hearing will be held on March 25, 2024.

RESOLUTION No. 2024-053

A motion was made by Councilwoman McGrath; seconded by Councilman Roman that the following resolution be adopted:

**CERTIFYING THE TOWNSHIP OF VERONA'S
COMPLIANCE WITH N.J.S.A. 40A:4-5**

WHEREAS, *N.J.S.A. 40A:4-5* as amended by P.L. 2017, c.183 requires the governing body of each municipality and county to certify that their local unit's hiring practices comply with the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's "Enforcement Guidance on the Consideration of Arrest and Conviction Records in Employment Decisions Under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964," *as amended*, 42 U.S.C. § 2000 *et seq.*, (April 25, 2012) before submitting its approved annual budget to the Division of Local Government Services in the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs; and

WHEREAS, by affirmatively voting for the passage of this Resolution, the members of the Township Council are certifying that they have familiarized themselves with the contents of the above-referenced enforcement guidelines and with their local unit's hiring practices as they pertain to the consideration of an individual's criminal history.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Township Council of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, New Jersey, hereby states that it has complied with *N.J.S.A. 40A:4-5*, as amended by P.L. 2017, c.183, by certifying that the local unit's hiring practices comply with the above-referenced enforcement guidance.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this resolution evidencing said compliance shall be on file in the Office of the Municipal Clerk and available for inspection.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Council's certification shall be transmitted to the Director of the Division of Local Government Services in the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs within three days after approval, together with the approved budget.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, McGrath, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2024-054

A motion was made by Councilman Roman; seconded by Mayor Tamburro that the following resolution be adopted:

INTRODUCTION OF THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET

BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, New Jersey that the following statements of revenues and appropriations shall constitute the Municipal Budget of the Township of Verona for the 2024 calendar year.

General Appropriations:	<u>Year 2024</u>
1. Appropriations within "CAPS" (H-1 Sheet 19)	\$ 20,684,442.00

2. Appropriations excluded from "CAPS" (H-2 Sheet 28)	\$ 5,768,497.69
3. Reserve for Uncollected Taxes (M-Sheet 29)	<u>\$ 1,800,000.00</u>
4. Total General Appropriations (Item 9, Sheet 29)	\$ 28,252,939.69
5. Less: Anticipated Revenues Other than Current Property Tax (Item 5, Sheet 11)	\$ (9,428,850.04)
6. Less: Minimum Library Tax (Item 6(c), Sheet 11)	<u>\$ (1,048,530.00)</u>
7. Difference: Amount to be raised by Taxes for support of the Municipal Budget (as follows) (a) Local Tax for Municipal Purposes including Reserve for Uncollected Taxes (Item 6(a), Sheet 11)	\$ 17,775,559.65

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that said Budget will be published in the Monday, March 19, 2024 edition of the Star Ledger.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Township Council of the Township of Verona does hereby approve the preceding as the Budget for the 2024 year:

A Hearing on the Budget and Tax Resolution will be held both in-person and via a Zoom video conference on April 8, 2024 at 7 o'clock p.m. at which time and place discussions to said Budget and Tax Resolution for 2024 may be presented by taxpayers or other interested persons.

<https://zoom.us/j/95262662770>

Via telephone, please dial 1(312)626-6799 or 1(646)558-8656

Use Zoom Meeting ID: 952-6266-2770, when prompted for a Participant ID, press #

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that A copy of the 2024 Municipal Budget and tax resolution will be available at no cost during regular business hours by contacting the Municipal Clerk's Office at 973-857-4770 or visiting the Township's website at www.veronanj.org/budgetinfo for the members of the general public who shall request the same up to and including the time when the Township Council shall further consider this for final passage. All persons interested in the proposed budget will have an opportunity to address the Township Council during the aforementioned public hearing.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, McGrath, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS:

Manager's Report – continued...

Township Planner San Chavan of H2M is present and explains the process of the Redevelopment law as the governing body requested she prepare a report identifying the entire length of Bloomfield Avenue in Verona as an Area in Need of Rehabilitation. A resolution is on the meeting agenda where the Council approves the submitted report on the proposed Area which will then be sent to the Planning Board for review and then sent back to Council with recommendations, modifications or comments, if any. Mayor Tamburro requested that the administration coordinate with the Public Information Officer to put together a public statement on what this is and that there will be public comment periods at the Planning Board level for the public to share any concerns or ask questions. He also states that this designation is also the first step in reviewing the Zoning Ordinance to comply with the Master Plan.

Councilwoman McGrath asks that the exact timeline is on the Zoning recodification and directs her question to Mr. D'Arco asking if there is a project plan for making the necessary changes to the Zoning Code and how will that be approached.

Mayor Tamburro states that that has been communicated to the Township Planner and the phases the Council wanted to do.

Councilman Roman clarifies that while he is in favor of this, the Master Plan has a multitude of recommendations for different zones and that legislation needs to get in motion and the adoption of this report is part of that process.

Deputy Mayor McEvoy disclosed that he owns property within this zone and is not conflicted in any way because it does not benefit him personally. Along that point, he states that once they move towards the Zoning ordinance all five council members would have to recuse themselves from voting on the Zoning ordinance simply because all five of them live in town.

Councilmember's Reports:

Deputy Mayor McEvoy attended the Boy Scout Pancake Breakfast and the State of the County. The Environmental Commission and Sustainable Verona are presenting a recycling webinar on March 20th at 7pm. He wishes everyone Happy St. Patrick's Day and Ramadan Mubarak to those celebrating Ramadan.

Councilman Roman also attended the Boy Scout Pancake Breakfast and enjoyed interacting with the Scouts. He commends the County for all the work and projects they get done.

Councilwoman McGrath states that it is an honor to be recognized for the 2nd Women of Impact event along with Kristen Donohue, Kate Hartwyck, Sarina Rivera-Knoetig and Alison Mackey and thanks Councilwoman Cynthia Holland and Deputy Mayor Jack McEvoy for attending. The Shade Tree Commission met earlier tonight and the Neighborhood Traffic & Safety Advisory Committee is meeting tomorrow night.

Councilwoman Holland hopes everyone enjoyed the time with their families on Family Night and. She also read to the 4th grade classes at Forest Avenue School on Read Across America Day. She congratulates Councilwoman McGrath and the other panelists for participating in the Woman of Impact panel. The Councilwoman also states that given the numerous accolades for the Boy Scouts tonight, she reports that it is National Girl Scout Week and tomorrow is the 112th anniversary of the Girl Scout movement in America and stresses the importance of giving equal time to the Silver and Gold projects the Girls work on as with the Eagle Scouts. She attended the State of the County and was moved by the investment of recreation facilities throughout the County, especially the pickle ball courts in Verona Park. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee will meet next week. Tomorrow she will attend an EV seminar with the State Bar Association.

**ORDINANCE No. 2024-04
REPEALING CHAPTER 455 "STORMWATER MANAGEMENT" OF THE
CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP IN ITS ENTIRETY AND REPLACING WITH A
NEW ARTICLE XXV "STORMWATER MANAGEMENT CONTROLS AND
REQUIREMENTS" WITHIN CHAPTER 150 OF THE ZONING CODE OF
THE TOWNSHIP**

The Municipal Clerk reads Ordinance 2024-04 by title into record.

Motion to move Ordinance No. 2024-04 is moved by Mayor Tamburro; seconded by Deputy Mayor McEvoy.

Public Hearing:

None.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, McGrath, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS:

Ordinance No. 2024-04 is adopted by a vote of 5-0 and it will be published according to law.

ORDINANCE No. 2024-05

REPEALING CHAPTER 455 "STORMWATER MANAGEMENT" OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP IN ITS ENTIRETY AND CREATE ARTICLE I IN CHAPTER 455 ENTITLED "STORMWATER QUALITY" OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP

The Municipal Clerk reads Ordinance 2024-05 by title into record.

Motion to move Ordinance No. 2024-05 is moved by Deputy Mayor McEvoy; seconded by Councilman Roman.

Public Hearing:

None.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, McGrath, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS:

Ordinance No. 2024-05 is adopted by a vote of 5-0 and it will be published according to law.

ORDINANCE No. 2024-06

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER A565-1 SCHEDULE OF FEES OF THE TOWNSHIP CODE

The Municipal Clerk reads Ordinance 2024-06 by title into record.

Motion to move Ordinance No. 2024-06 is moved by Councilwoman McGrath; seconded by Councilman Roman.

Public Hearing:

None.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, McGrath, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS:

Ordinance No. 2024-06 is adopted by a vote of 5-0 and it will be published according to law.

ORDINANCE No. 2024-07

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 140 "VEHICLES & TRAFFIC" ARTICLE XIV "METERED/PERMIT PARKING" §140-68 "PARKING METER/PERMIT PARKING ZONES DESIGNATED" AND CHAPTER A565-1 "SCHEDULE OF FEES" OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF VERONA TO INCREASE THE METERED PARKING RATE TO \$0.25 PER TWENTY MINUTES AND TO ADD SATURDAY TO THE DAYS PARKING METER PAYMENTS ARE REQUIRED

The Municipal Clerk reads Ordinance 2024-07 by title into record.

Motion to move Ordinance No. 2024-07 is moved by Councilwoman Holland; seconded by Councilwoman McGrath.

Public Hearing:

None.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, McGrath, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS:

Ordinance No. 2024-07 is adopted by a vote of 5-0 and it will be published according to law.

ORDINANCE No. 2024-08

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER A565-1 "SCHEDULE OF FEES" OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF VERONA TO AMEND WATER AND SEWER RATES

The Municipal Clerk reads Ordinance 2024-08 by title into record.

Motion to move Ordinance No. 2024-08 is moved by Councilwoman Holland; seconded by Deputy Mayor McEvoy.

Public Hearing:

None.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, McGrath, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS:

Ordinance No. 2024-08 is adopted by a vote of 5-0 and it will be published according to law.

ORDINANCE No. 2024-09

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER A565-7(B) OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF VERONA - "POOL FEES- MEMBERSHIP TYPES"

The Municipal Clerk reads Ordinance 2024-09 by title into record.

Motion to move Ordinance No. 2024-09 is moved by Councilwoman McGrath; seconded by Councilman Roman.

Public Hearing:

None.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, McGrath, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS:

Ordinance No. 2024-09 is adopted by a vote of 5-0 and it will be published according to law.

ORDINANCE No. 2024-10

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER A565-7 OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF VERONA - "POOL FEES"

The Municipal Clerk reads Ordinance 2024-10 by title into record.

Motion to move Ordinance No. 2024-10 is moved by Councilman Roman; seconded by Mayor Tamburro.

Public Hearing:

None.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: McGrath, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS: Holland,

Ordinance No. 2024-10 is adopted by a vote of 4-1 and it will be published according to law.

Mayor Tamburro relinquishes the chair to Deputy Mayor McEvoy at 9:06pm and recuses himself from ordinance 2024-11.

ORDINANCE No. 2024-11

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER A565-7 OF THE CODE OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF VERONA - "POOL FEES"
FOR VOLUNTEER FIRE/RESCUE SQUAD MEMBERS**

The Municipal Clerk reads Ordinance 2024-11 by title into record.

Motion to move Ordinance No. 2024-11 is moved by Councilman Roman; seconded by Deputy Mayor McEvoy.

Public Hearing:
None.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: McGrath, Roman, McEvoy

NAYS: Holland

ABSTAIN (recusal): Tamburro

Ordinance No. 2024-11 is adopted by a vote of 3-1 and it will be published according to law.

The Deputy Mayor relinquishes the chair back to the Mayor.

ORDINANCE No. 2024-12

**FIXING THE SALARIES AND COMPENSATION OF THE PAID OFFICERS
AND EMPLOYEES OF THE TOWNSHIP FOR THE 2024 CALENDAR YEAR**

The Municipal Clerk reads Ordinance 2024-12 by title into record.

Motion to move Ordinance No. 2024-12 is moved by Councilman Roman; seconded by Deputy Mayor McEvoy.

Public Hearing:
None.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: McGrath, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS: Holland

Ordinance No. 2024-12 is adopted by a vote of 4-1 and it will be published according to law.

ORDINANCE No. 2024-13

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 18 "COMMITTEES,
COMMISSIONS AND BOARDS", ARTICLE V "PARKS AND RECREATION
ADVISORY COMMITTEE" OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP**

The Municipal Clerk reads Ordinance 2024-13 by title into record.

Motion to move Ordinance No. 2024-13 is moved by Councilwoman Holland; seconded by Councilwoman McGrath.

Public Hearing:
None.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, McGrath, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS:

Ordinance No. 2024-13 is adopted by a vote of 5-0 and it will be published according to law.

Mayor Tamburro relinquishes the chair to Deputy Mayor McEvoy and recuses himself from item H-1 on the meeting agenda.

ORDINANCE No. 2024-15

**CAPITAL ORDINANCE BY APPROPRIATING \$42,225 FROM THE
GENERAL CAPITAL RESERVE FOR FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS FOR THE
RESCUE SQUAD SPECIAL OPERATIONS VEHICLE THE TOWNSHIP OF
VERONA, IN THE COUNTY OF ESSEX, NEW JERSEY**

The Municipal Clerk reads Ordinance H-1 into the record.

Motion to move H-1 is made by Deputy Mayor McEvoy; seconded by Councilman Roman.

Councilwoman McGrath questions why this item is on the agenda when the Township has capital needs and safety issues. Mr. D'Arco states it was an administrative oversight in not moving the ordinance forward in 2023. Deputy Mayor McEvoy states there is \$100,000 worth of equipment that the Rescue Squad is currently using and would need to be replaced if the vehicle were to be returned. Councilwoman Holland comments that putting forth this capital ordinance when the Council has received requests from department heads on a number of other significant investments on capitals and that the established process is to discuss ordinances in New Business where the Squad could have an opportunity to address the Council. Mr. D'Arco states that this was a 2023 capital request. Councilman Roman states that this was discussed in 2023.

Deputy Mayor McEvoy relinquishes the chair back to the Mayor. Mayor Tamburro gives the chair back to the Deputy Mayor as a member of the Rescue Squad has walked into the room and should be allowed to speak.

Ricky Tempesta, Verona, New Jersey

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS: McGrath

ABSTAIN (recusal): Tamburro

Item H-1 is numbered Ordinance No. 2024-15. It will be published according to law and a public hearing will be held on March 25, 2024.

Deputy Mayor McEvoy relinquishes the chair back to the Mayor.

Consent Agenda:

The consent agenda is moved by Councilman Roman; seconded by Mayor Tamburro.

Public Comment on Consent Agenda:

Jessica Pearson, Verona, New Jersey

Kevin Ryan, Verona, New Jersey

Paul Petrangeli, Verona, New Jersey

Councilwoman McGrath requests that item K-3 be removed from the Consent Agenda and questions the dates on that resolution. After discussion the Township Attorney opines that the Council would send this resolution to the Planning Board for action and a separate resolution be drafted to refer that resolution to the Board.

Councilman Roman makes a motion to amend his original motion to move the Consent Agenda to include only the Minutes and Resolutions K-2 and K-4; seconded by Mayor Tamburro.

Councilman Roman then motions to refer the H2M study and draft resolution to the Planning Board; seconded by Mayor Tamburro.

Public Comment:

None.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, McGrath, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2024-055

A motion was made by Councilman Roman; seconded by Mayor Tamburro that the following resolution be adopted:

RESOLUTION No. 2024-055

A motion was made by Councilman Roman; seconded by Mayor Tamburro that the following resolution be adopted:

**GREEN ACRES APPLICATION - EVERETT FIELD
ENABLING RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Green Acres Program ("State"), provides grants and/or loans to municipal and county governments and grants to nonprofit organizations for assistance in the acquisition, development, and stewardship of lands for outdoor recreation and conservation purposes; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Verona desires to further the public interest by obtaining funding in the amount of \$912,150.00, in the form of a \$912,150.00 matching grant and, if available, a \$0 loan, from the State to fund the following project(s): Everett Field ADA Completely Inclusive Playground at a cost of \$1,216,200.00.

WHEREAS, the State shall determine if the application is complete and in conformance with the scope and intent of the Green Acres Program, and notify the applicant of the amount of the funding award; and

WHEREAS, the applicant is willing to use the State's funds in accordance with such rules, regulations, and applicable statutes, and is willing to enter into an agreement with the State for the above-named project;

NOW, THEREFORE, the governing body/board resolves that:

1. The Township Manager or his designee is hereby authorized to:
 - a. make application for such a loan and/or such a grant,
 - b. provide additional application information and furnish such documents as may be required, and
 - c. act as the authorized correspondent of the above-named applicant;
2. The applicant agrees to provide its matching share to the Green Acres funding request, if a match is required, in the amount of \$304,050.00;
3. In the event the State's funds are less than the total project cost specified above, the applicant has the balance of funding necessary to complete the project;
4. The applicant agrees to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations in its performance of the project; and
5. This resolution shall take effect immediately.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, McGrath, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS:

RESOLUTION No. 2024-056

A motion was made by Councilman Roman; seconded by Mayor Tamburro that the following resolution be adopted:

PERMITTING ITEMS TO BE DISCUSSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, Section 8 of the Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, permits the exclusion of the Public from a meeting in certain circumstances; and

WHEREAS, this public body is of the opinion that such circumstances presently exists.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, County of Essex, State of New Jersey, as follows:

The public shall be excluded from discussion of an action upon the hereinafter specified subject matter.

1. Purchase, Lease or Acquisition of Real Property pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 (5)*
2. Pending, Ongoing, or Anticipated Litigation and Contract Negotiations pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 10:4-12 (7)*

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, McGrath, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS:

**TOWNSHIP OF VERONA
COUNTY OF ESSEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

RESOLUTION No. 2024-057

A motion was made by Councilman Roman; seconded by Mayor Tamburro that the following resolution be adopted:

**DECLARING BLOOMFIELD AVENUE AS AN AREA IN NEED OF
REHABILITATION**

WHEREAS, the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1, et seq. (the "Redevelopment Law") provides a mechanism to empower and assist local governments to promote the advancement of community interests through programs of redevelopment for the expansion and improvement of commercial, industrial, residential, and civic facilities; and

WHEREAS, the Redevelopment Law empowers the Township of Verona ("Township"), by and through its Township Council (the "Governing Body"), to delineate an area within the Township as an area in need of rehabilitation if the area qualifies under one of the criteria enumerated under N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-14; and

WHEREAS, Township Manager directed the Township's planning firm, H2M Associates, Inc. ("H2M"), to conduct a preliminary investigation to determine if the Bloomfield Avenue corridor ("Study Area"), as described in the attached boundary map, and which is generally bounded by Sunset Avenue to the east, White Rock Road to the west and an irregular boundary along properties fronting on Bloomfield Avenue, qualifies as an area in need of rehabilitation pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A-12A-14; and

WHEREAS, H2M's findings, presented in a report entitled "Area in Need of Rehabilitation Study Bloomfield Avenue Corridor" dated February 14, 2024, attached herewith as Exhibit A ("H2M Report"); and

WHEREAS, the H2M report concludes that because (a) more than half of the housing stock were built before 1974 and, therefore, are at least 50 years old and (b) a majority of the water and sewer infrastructure in the delineated area is at least 50 years old and is in need of repair or substantial maintenance, the Study Area qualifies as an area in need of rehabilitation under the Redevelopment Law; and

WHEREAS, the Governing Body desires to refer the Study Report and the draft Resolution to the Planning Board for review and comment.

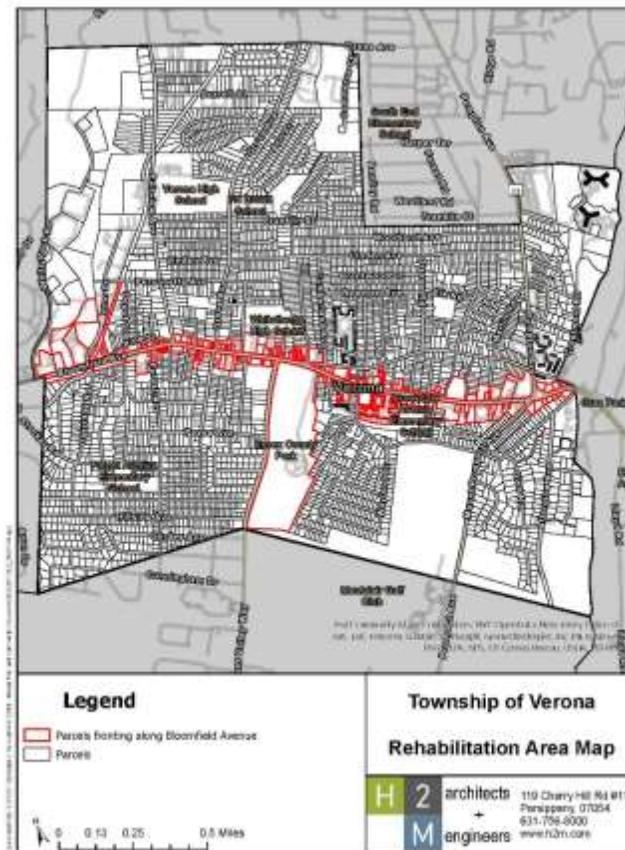
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Verona, County of Essex, and State of New Jersey, that the Township Clerk is directed to forward H2M's findings, presented in a report entitled "Area in Need of Rehabilitation Study Bloomfield Avenue Corridor" dated February 14, 2024, attached herewith as Exhibit A ("H2M Report") and

a draft copy of the draft Resolution that the Council plans on considering to the Planning Board for review and comment.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Holland, McGrath, Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS:



RESOLUTION No. 2024-058

A motion was made by Councilman Roman; seconded by Mayor Tamburro that the following resolution be adopted:

OPPOSING SENATE Bill S2347

WHEREAS, the intent of Senate Bill S2347 is to provide for the creation of accessory dwelling units in single-family and two-family residential zones to expand New Jersey’s rental housing stock in an alleged attempt to help meet current and future housing demand; and

WHEREAS, S2347 as drafted provides that no local zoning regulation shall restrict the ability of a property owner to develop an accessory dwelling unit consistent with the provisions of S2347; and

WHEREAS, S2347 fails to recognize that such a sweeping change to the Township’s Zoning will dramatically impact the Township’s ability to provide essential public services; and

WHEREAS, if S2347 is approved and is successful in increasing the density of single-family and two family residential zones in the Township the additional density will increase calls for service for police, fire, and first aid squads without providing the Township with additional revenue to hire the necessary additional staff to cover the increase in services; and

WHEREAS, the Township does not currently have adequate emergency services facilities, (police, fire or first aid) that would allow the Township to increase staffing to address the increase in calls for emergency services that will be created if S2347 is implemented; and

WHEREAS, S2347 fails to recognize that such a sweeping change to the Township’s Zoning will dramatically impact the Township’s ability to educational services to the additional school age children that will reside in the additional dwelling units S2347 is attempting to force

the Township to approve without providing additional revenue to pay for the additional educational services that would be necessary; and

WHEREAS, the Township's schools are already crowded and the additional school age children that will reside in the dwelling units S2347 is attempting to force the Township to approve without providing additional revenue may result in the Township being unable to safely and adequately provide educational services to all Township school aged children based upon current staffing and facility size; and

WHEREAS, if S2347 is approved and is successful in increasing the density of single-family and two family residential zones, the additional density will escalate parking issues by eliminating parking by allowing for garages to be converted to dwelling units without replacing the lost parking and by restricting the additional parking that can be required by the Township for residential lots that increase the number of dwelling units under S2347; and

WHEREAS, if S2347 is approved it will completely alter the character of single-family and two-family neighborhoods by dramatically increasing the density, increasing traffic, and escalating parking issues; and

WHEREAS, S2347 circumvents zoning codes carefully and deliberately adopted by municipal governing bodies who are accountable to their residents for legislating to maintain the desired character of the Township

WHEREAS, if approved S2347 will increase impervious coverage throughout the Township by requiring the Township to approve additional development and thus increase localized flooding in the Township; and

WHEREAS, if approved S2347 will increase the demand on local utilities including the Township operated water and sewerage plants that are already operating at or beyond their capacity thus the additional density that S2347 is seeking to create has the potential to create severe health, safety and environmental issues; and

WHEREAS, while S2347 has a laudable goal, S2347's attempt to create a one size fits all Statewide zoning amendment to address an alleged housing problem has the potential to create life-threatening public safety issues, educational services disruptions, local utility service disruptions, additional parking issues, an increase in localized flooding and other issues if approved and is successful in increasing the density of single-family and two family residential zones.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by Township Council of the Township of Verona, in the County of Essex, New Jersey that the Township hereby publically opposes S2347 for the reasons stated herein.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of the resolution be transmitted to all members of the New Jersey State Legislature, the Lieutenant Governor, and the Governor of the State of New Jersey.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Roman, McEvoy, Tamburro

NAYS: Holland, McGrath

New Business:

Discussion on the Emergency Service Complex.

Public Comment:

Kevin Ryan, Verona, New Jersey

Executive Session:

Council goes in to Executive Session at 10:24 p.m.

Adjournment:

Council returns to Public Session at 10:41 p.m. Motion to adjourn the meeting is made by Councilman Roman; seconded by Deputy Mayor McEvoy. Vote: 5 ayes. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Township Council is March 25, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Jennifer Kiernan
Municipal Clerk


Dr. Christopher Tamburro
Mayor

APPROVED: April 8, 2024