

Borough of Norwood  
Work Session Minutes  
September 27, 2017

The Work/Executive Session of the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Norwood was held on the above date.

Mayor Barsa called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Mayor Barsa stated:

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Law, P.L.1975, Ch. 231, setting forth the time, date, place and purpose of this Public Meeting through a legal notice published in The Record and Star Ledger.

Present at Roll Call:

Mayor	James Barsa
Councilman	Frank Marino
Councilwoman	Marianne Orecchio
Councilman	Thomas Brizzolara
Councilman	John Rooney
Council President	Barry Scott

Also Present:

Borough Attorney	Michael Wachtel
Borough Engineer	Evan Jacobs

Absent:

Councilman	Joseph Ascolese
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Mayor Barsa pointed out the fire exits.

Before proceeding with the agenda items, Mayor Barsa thanked Lorraine McMackin, the staff, Council Members and Alan Rapaport for the help they extended on Norwood Day. He reported it was the tenth anniversary of this event describing it as a huge success and enjoyed by all. He reminded that this day is made possible solely by generous donations from residents as well as the Borough professionals and businesses.

Mr. Brizzolara noted the involvement by members of the emergency services and the annual cooking of hot dogs by the Fire Department that are enjoyed by all free-of-charge. He also thanked Mrs. McMackin for her fine tuning of the event and making it better with each passing year.

**Items for Discussion:**

Master Plan Update by Planning Board Chairman Craig Jacobs – Mr. Jacobs distributed hand-outs and explained meeting with the Mayor, Michael Neglia, Evan Jacobs and Richard Price who has been hired to prepare the Master Plan. He reported that he tried to get input from the Borough's boards and commissions. Mr. Jacobs advised that he is attempting to have Mr. Price prepare a draft copy for review by the governing body before a final version is presented for acceptance by the first of the year. He noted that enforcement is a major problem with the Master Plan and Borough codes and cited some of the areas being closely examined:

- Permitted uses in the residential zone – home-based businesses without staff
- Accessory uses with major issue being enforcement
- Mixed use prohibited in commercial and business district
- Parks and recreation will not change
- Although Environmental Commission voiced concern regarding streams, they are covered under State of New Jersey rules and regulations
- Industrial zone will be changed to permit more business uses with the exception of tractor/trailer use that will be prohibited. It was noted that 70% of the industrial park is occupied.
- Establishment of a municipal parking lot on a piece of Borough-owned property to house vehicles and equipment that cannot be stored on residential property.
- No overnight parking except in certain zones.

Mr. Jacobs advised that although Mr. Price gave a power point presentation, at least 70% did not pertain to Norwood. He noted that the zoning map is inadequate, that it is in the process of being updated and displayed an interim one.

The governing body thanked Mr. Jacobs for his attendance this evening and his efforts in producing a new Master Plan.

Update from Mr. Gino Tessaro, Construction Official regarding progress at 525 Livingston Street  
Mr. Tessaro reported that the only thing being awaited for building 2 is the location of the shaft for the elevator. After this is resolved, they can start installing sheet rock. He continued that work on the larger building was delayed since they hit water on each side of the building. The columns are up and they are working on the deck. Mr. Brizzolara voiced objection to the approval of this mixed use project as it brings in more people requiring more services. He continued that commercial uses should have been pursued.

At this time Mr. Tessaro explained that he has instituted the use of new forms for zoning and property maintenance and distributed them to the governing body. The one for property maintenance details a complaint and contains information pertaining to the Building Department's follow-up. In response to Mr. Marino's question, Mr. Tessara informed that the name of the

complaining individual is never revealed and in some cases, is unknown. The form for zoning enforcement deals with CCO's and zoning compliance for resales. It is his intention to begin using it for new construction as well since it is an inventory of what is in a home as listed by the homeowner. He is of the opinion that this information would be valuable for the Police and Fire Departments as well.

The governing body thanked Mr. Tessaro for his input.

Discuss possible grant applications for Bergen County Community Development Block Grants – Mrs. McMackin asked that this item be adjourned to the October 25, 2017 Work Session to afford her the opportunity to investigate possible permitted grant applications.

Review of NJ DOT FY 2018 Grant application for sidewalks on McClellan – Approval of Resolution 17:152 – Mr. Jacobs explained that McClellan Street is a one-half mile long street with no houses. He advised that what is being proposed is a 5' wide sidewalk from Broadway to the end of the street by the nursing home facility with ADA ramps and crosswalks at the entrance to D'Ercole Court, the nursing home facility and the rehabilitation facility. Included in the application is a bike lane on both sides of the street in the roadway. Mr. Evan spoke with the DPW Superintendent and it was recommended that there be a green strip between the curb and the sidewalk.

During discussion, it was the consensus of the Council that this is an excellent application. Motion to approve Resolution No. 17:152, authorizing the submission of a grant application and execution of a grant contract with the New Jersey Department of Transportation for the McClellan Street Sidewalk Improvements Project was made by Mr. Brizzolara and seconded by Mr. Rooney. All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

At this time, Mr. Brizzolara noted that he reminded Tom Connolly, Superintendent of Bergen County roads that Orange and Rockland's service update project would involve Broadway, Blanche Avenue and Broad Street in Norwood. Mr. Connolly informed that he would expedite the installation of the ADA ramps in Norwood in light of this project. Mr. Jacobs advised that the Administrator/Clerk prepared the Purchase Order for the contractor who would be installing the ramps and offered to follow up with Mr. Connolly regarding their installation.

Borough Engineer Report – Mr. Jacobs referred to his Engineer's Report (Attachment "A") and noted the following: the paving along Tappan Road for the D'Ercole Farm Subdivision is complete; surveying and engineering work for the vacation of Mohawk Avenue will begin; cost for electric car charging stations is being awaited from Glen Rock; obtaining the easements necessary for the reconstruction of Oak Street is still in progress. Mayor Barsa asked that Oak Street be an item for discussion at the October 25, 2017 Work Session and that Mr. Michael Neglia be in attendance.

Borough Attorney Report – Michael Wachtel advised that there was nothing to report on Mr. Fede's behalf.

Administrator's Report – Mrs. McMackin reported as follows:

**Borough Website:** Changes have been made to the first design submitted. Most of the information is ready to be downloaded. She asked that the Council Members submit their bios via e-mail to her as soon as possible in word form. Borough forms will be changed to pdf for ease of completion by the public. The public will be able to ask a question and file a complaint. There will be links to twitter and Facebook as well as to EMS, the Fire Department and sports programs. Mrs. McMackin voiced her opinion that it is very user friendly and explained she and her staff will be able to upload information so that the website is kept current.

**Best Practices:** Mrs. McMackin prepared a resolution to be reviewed by the Borough Attorney for action at the October 11, 2017 Public Meeting regarding the requirement for the Tax Assessor to submit to the governing body and CFO a list of all tax appeals by June 1<sup>st</sup> of the year. This would put the Borough in compliance with the Best Practices mandate.

**Resolution Opposing Senate Bills Nos. 1045 and 1046 that would amend the Open Public Meetings Act and the Open Public Records Act:** Mrs. McMackin highlighted some of the changes that would be imposed on a municipality and municipal clerk:

- Under OPRA there would no longer be an exemption for alarm systems and surveillance cameras for public buildings.
- The municipality could enter into an agreement with the Fire Department for the Municipal Clerk to be the records custodian. Since the Fire Department is independent having their own headquarters, leadership, policies and procedures, the Clerk would not be able to ascertain if a record exists or have access to it.
- Subcommittees of the governing body and boards and commissions would have to prepare quarterly reports to the governing body that would have to be made available to the public and notice their meetings if the public is invited.
- The definition of a public record is expanded; i.e. if a requestor asks for a document that cannot be located, under the new law if it is one that is required to be maintained, the sitting Municipal Clerk could be found in violation of OPRA.
- A Municipal Clerk who is fined would personally be responsible for payment; the municipality could not pay on her behalf.
- 48-hour meeting notice would prohibit a change to the agenda after this time without consent of the governing body.
- Meeting minutes would have to be available and released 15 days after the next meeting of the governing body.

Mrs. McMackin noted that the Municipal Clerks' Association of New Jersey and the NJ League of Municipalities are in strong disagreement with these amendments. With the governing body's approval, a resolution opposing these senate bills will be prepared for the October 11, 2017 Public Meeting.

Resolution Opposing Proposed Local Finance Board Rule Regarding Employee Compensation Disclosure: Mrs. McMackin explained that the new rule will require governing bodies to hold two hearings before hiring personnel and ratifying labor contracts. This is another rule change proposed by the Local Finance Board. She noted that a portion of it is in favor of municipalities in that banked sick days would be paid at the rate of pay for the year in which they were earned and not at the current rate of pay. She added that this would require additional bookkeeping on the part of the CFO.

Following a brief discussion it was the consensus of the Council that a resolution in opposition to this new Local Finance Board ruling also be prepared for the October 11, 2017 Public Meeting.

**Public Comment:**

Motion to open the meeting to the public was made by Mr. Brizzolara, seconded by Mr. Rooney and declared carried upon the affirmative vote of all Council Members present.

Alan Rapaport, 844 Hemlock Court, stressed the need to appoint professionals on the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment. He voiced his opinion that of the two boards, the Planning Board has exceptional counsel. Mr. Rapaport cautioned that with the decision to permit mixed usage in the commercial zone, other similar applications will probably be forthcoming. He noted that when tax appeals are successful, the county and borough lose but the school does not realize the reduction. Mr. Rapaport described Norwood Day as an “amazing” day and congratulated the Fire Department on the new truck that was displayed.

At this time, Mayor Barsa suggested that for 2018 it be investigated whether it would be advantageous for the 5K Run to be on the same day as Norwood Day. He thanked the cheerleaders for starting the program and noted that 52 children enrolled in the basketball program during Norwood Day.

No one else wishing to be heard, motion to close the meeting to the public was made by Mr. Brizzolara, seconded by Mr. Rooney and declared carried upon the affirmative vote of all Council Members present.

**Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn at 8:52 PM was made by Mr. Brizzolara and seconded by Mr. Scott. All Council Members present voted in favor of the motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorraine L. McMackin, RMC, CMC  
Administrator/Clerk