

A REGULAR PUBLIC WORK SESSION OF THE VILLAGE COUNCIL OF THE VILLAGE OF RIDGEWOOD HELD IN THE SYDNEY V. STOLDT, JR. COURT ROOM OF THE RIDGEWOOD VILLAGE HALL, 131 NORTH MAPLE AVENUE, RIDGEWOOD, NEW JERSEY, ON JANUARY 31, 2024 AT 7:30 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER – OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT – ROLL CALL – FLAG SALUTE

Deputy Mayor Perron called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. and read the Statement of Compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. At roll call, the following were present: Deputy Mayor Perron, Councilmembers: Reynolds, Weitz, and Winograd. Also present were Keith Kazmark, Village Manager, Heather Mailander, Village Clerk and Matthew Rogers, Village Attorney. Mayor Vagianos was absent from the meeting.

Deputy Mayor Perron led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. Deputy Mayor Perron stated that before the Public Comment session begins, Mayor Vagianos requested that his prepared statement regarding the closing of the Bow Tie Cinema be read. It stated: As most of you have heard by now, yesterday marked the final performance of our beloved Warner Theater in downtown Ridgewood. Losing this moving theater is truly one of the saddest days our Central Business District has ever experienced. We all know the reasons behind it. With the advent of streaming services, attendance has dwindled to a trickle. Consequently, it has become almost impossible for small movie theaters to survive in the digital age. The company that owns the theater had at one time seventy movie theater locations across the country; today they have only two theaters remaining. The Warner Theater opened in 1932 with a screening of “The Dark Horse”, a Betty Davis movie. At that time, the Warner, was a grand and beautiful single auditorium movie theater. When my children were small, we made a pact, that we would come to this theater to watch all the new James Bond movies when they came out, and for many years we did. The closing of this movie theater is truly the end of an era for us all, that will create a void for our community that will be difficult to fill. I have had several discussions with the movie theater owners during the course of last week, who have been incredibly forthcoming with the status of the theater going forward. Here is what we know: Deputy Mayor Pamela Perron, and I met with representatives of the theater this past Friday, along with Construction and Fire Officials from the Village, to discuss taking down the partitioning walls that converted it into a four screen theater, decades ago. They will also be removing all of the seating in the theater and anything that is not part of the original 1932 theater. There will be no construction or installation of new seating, stages or anything that would make it a functioning theater at this point. They anticipate beginning this work within the month and expect the project to take about three to four weeks. Once this demolition work is accomplished, the Warner Theater will be a single auditorium theater once again. The hope of the theater owners is to ultimately return the theater to its original grandeur by converting it into a Performing Arts Center that will be both

financially viable and of benefit to our community. And while they have already begun investigating this possibility, returning the theater to a single auditorium theater is the first step. Since the announcement of Warners closing last week, I have had hundreds of calls, texts, and emails from residents of our community, offering to support the establishment of a Performing Arts Center, as well as those who hope there is a way to save the movie theater. Let me begin by saying that we are less than a week into the process and it is far too soon to know what the Warner will look like going forward. Just as importantly, it is important to understand that while the theater belongs to our community in so many ways, this is a privately owned business on private property. To that end, we will continue to work with the Warner to assist them in turning this theater, that is such a central part of our community, into a theater that will serve our Village for another 100 years. Stay tuned... Paul Vagianos, Mayor of the Village of Ridgewood.

Deputy Mayor Perron stated that today, well over ten communications were received from Reynen Court residents about parking on their street. She further stated that Village Council was unaware of a change in parking. The summary provided outlined that a recent parking violation was challenged in Municipal Court and it resulted in the determination there is no codified ordinance providing for parking restrictions on the South and West sides of Reynen Court. The signage had to be removed, which then allowed for increased parking.

All Village Councilmembers have been polled individually as to their position regarding parking on Reynen Court. The Village Council supports the restoration of parking restrictions on Reynen Court on both sides. The restrictions would prohibit parking September 1 through June 30, Monday through Friday, from 8:00-9:30 AM and 1:00-2:30 PM. Deputy Mayor Perron asked when action would take place on the ordinance. It was announced February 14, 2024. She expressed her desire to expedite the process, as it has created a disruption to the neighborhood. She asked Ms. Mailander if the ordinance can be introduced at a Special Public Meeting on February 7, 2024. Ms. Mailander responded that the ordinance can be introduced on February 7, 2024 and the ordinance can then be considered for adoption on February 29, 2024. Ms. Mailander asked if the Village Councilmembers will be in attendance for both sessions.

Councilmember Weitz requested Mr. Kazmark to have the Signal Department ready to re-install the signage immediately following the adoption of the ordinance. Mr. Kazmark stated that with consensus of the Village Council, he can have the Signal Department ready to install the signage after the adoption of the ordinance. Ms. Mailander stated that the effective date of the ordinance is twenty days after the adoption, which is March 20, 2024. Mr. Kazmark stated that the signage will be installed when allowable under the statute.

Councilmember Weitz thanked the residents of Reynen Court for their communication and stated that the Village Council will move this item through as allowable by law. Deputy Mayor Perron apologized for the disruption to the neighborhood this issue caused.

2. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Estelle Shimpfky and Sophie Zrelak, students at George Washington Middle School spoke about the closing of the Warner Movie Theater. They stated that although they understand the theater is private property, they would request a portion of the space be kept for a theater. They stated they have a petition with three hundred signatures in favor of the reopening and restoration of the movie theater. They stated that if the financial viability of the movie theater is no longer possible, they propose that one floor remain a movie theater and the other floor can be redeveloped. They suggested fundraising could be achieved through rentals of the rooms of the theater, which can be provided to the owners, to offset costs of operating the movie theater. They stated the theater is part of the Village's history and should remain as such. They stated that the students in town would like to play a role in this project. The petition was submitted to Ms. Mailander.

Savina Bakian, a student at George Washington Middle School, spoke about the closing of the Warner Movie Theater. She commented that watching a movie recently at the theater with her friends was one of the best memories of the year. She stated she is hopeful that some of the screens at the movie theater can remain. She stated the screens can be used to watch movies, host film festivals and other events that can provide enjoyment for members of the community.

A 7th grade student at George Washington Middle School stated that she is hopeful that the movie theater can be saved. She commented on family memories spent at the theater.

Jaime Di Maulo, a student at George Washington Middle School, echoed the previous statements about saving the movie theater. He commented about his recent night at the movie theater with friends, and stated that it would be sad to see it closed.

Ditia Pamaluri, a student at George Washington Middle School, recounted happy memories at the theater with family and friends. She stated that she preferred going to movies at the Warner Theater rather than the chain AMC theaters, and emphasized that the theater is an important part of downtown Ridgewood.

Stephen Del Percio, commented about the closing the movie theater and offered his fond memory to the Village Council. He stated he was speaking on behalf of his role as Chairperson of the Central Business District Advisory Committee (CBDAC). He stated the closing of the theater is going to be an important topic at upcoming meetings. He referenced the "White Paper" recommendations submitted by the CBDAC to the Village Council on January 24, 2024. He stated the significant recommendations are as follows: 1) no road closures in the Central Business District for the 2024 summer season, although promoting downtown Ridgewood as a destination should continue once funding can be identified; 2) the location for "Destination Ridgewood" programming should be in and around Van Neste Square; 3) dates for the dining corrals should be established and possibly

extending them into Spring and Fall seasons, to allow for additional support to local restaurants. 4) enhancements to the aesthetics of the corrals; and 5) foster continued partnerships with the Ridgewood Guild, the Ridgewood Chamber of Commerce, and all stakeholders for input on current and prospective strategies for the Central Business District. Mr. Del Percio stated that the “White Paper” recommendations will be updated at the conclusion of the 2024 season, to provide key points to the Village Council for the 2025 season.

Dana Glazer, 61 Clinton Avenue, is a film professor and he thanked all attendees for speaking this evening to support the continued operations of the Warner Theater. He stated the traffic on Clinton Avenue in the morning, during school drop off times, is exceptionally busy and complicated. He spoke against the installation of sidewalks. He stated that when he moved to Clinton Avenue in 2008, the street was closed for vehicular traffic from 8:00 AM to 3:45 PM. He explained that upon the introduction of full day Kindergarten in 2012, the parking restriction was changed to a period in the morning and a period in the afternoon. He stated that residents of Clinton Avenue are concerned with the street being opened permanently, if sidewalks are installed. He stated that the residents of Clinton Avenue are deeply concerned with safety. He stated there was a decision in 2017 to not install sidewalks. He encouraged the Village Council to consider all aspects of impact when discussing the installation of sidewalks on Clinton Avenue. He stated Clinton Avenue should remain without sidewalks.

Bob Fuhrman, 49 Clinton Avenue, complimented Mayor Vagianos on his recent State of the Village Address. Specifically, Mr. Fuhrman highlighted quotes from the address: “Transparency is a word people use, communication puts transparency into action by actually getting people the information they need, and in the past year, we began a process of getting information to our residents that has never been done before”. Mr. Fuhrman recounted a previous issue that was discussed at length by the Village Council last year, which allowed for appropriate communication. Mr. Fuhrman stated that he is aware of a Councilmember that participated in numerous meetings concerning Clinton Avenue, and the residents of Clinton Avenue were not made aware of these meetings.

Rurik Halaby, 1 Franklin Avenue, thanked the Signal Department for installing blinking lights for the pedestrian crossing on West Glen Avenue and Oak Street. He commented the lights are noticeable and should hopefully slow down traffic. He suggested two solar powered radar speed signs also be installed on West Glen Avenue heading east; one at Heights Road and one closer to the train trestle as a traffic calming measure. He suggested a pedestrian safety report be conducted by the Police Department and Engineering Department. He stated he recently wrote to the Village Manager, Police Chief and Engineer for a proactive, preemptive strategic study of various traffic crossings in the Village. He outlined various sites including Glen Avenue and Maple Avenue; Franklin Avenue and Maple Avenue; and Franklin Avenue and North Broad Street. He suggested improved lighting at these intersections. He stated he was pleased to see the three broken street lights he reported in the Central Business District have been fixed, although

there is still one not working at North Broad Street and Franklin Avenue. Mr. Halaby also commended the young students who attended the meeting and spoke about the closing of the Warner Theater.

Leon Yagudayev, 32 Chelsea Place, commented he has been a resident of Ridgewood for seven years. He stated that the condition of West Saddle River Road needs repair, due to many potholes. He stated that he reached out to the Village Engineer numerous times and has not received a response. He inquired if West Saddle River Road is scheduled to be repaved or repaired. He commented that there is also a safety issue, due to speeding with travelers from Route 17. He stated there are no sidewalks, which also contributes to the safety issues.

Matthew Nistor, 120 Highland Avenue, spoke on the Clinton Avenue sidewalk and traffic issues. He provided an overview on the location of Clinton Avenue, and commented on the posted signage. He stated that the plastic barriers are a deterrent and do not provide for a sense of safety. He stated commercial “bog box” trucks are using Clinton Avenue as a cut through. He explained that the signage and plastic barriers are not enforceable under local ordinance, which allow these types of vehicles to drive through the street. He is hopeful that a solution will be identified. He stated that sidewalks would provide for enhanced pedestrian safety. He commented that the unenforceable signage is actually making Clinton Avenue more dangerous to pedestrians.

The Village Council extended Public Comment beyond the forty-minute session to allow for the remote and in-person speakers remaining to speak.

Cynthia O’Keefe, 542 West Saddle River Road, commented that she also has fond memories of the Warner Theater. She commends the speakers that are passionate about preserving the theater, which is similar to her position on the Schedler property. She commented that a recent news article was issued on the dangers of PFAS. She stated the neighbors of the Schedler property are against the installation of artificial turf and Eco turf, which is being proposed for the multi-purpose field on the Schedler property. She stated the neighbors support the Schedler property to remain as an open space. She requested the Village Council consider the usage of artificial turf and the size of the field in the proposal. She stated she is interested in the results of soil testing on the Schedler site, as well as the usage of the Zabriskie Schedler house on the property.

Suzanne Ruane, 705 Kingsbridge Lane, thanked the Village Council for discussing and approving repairs to West Glen Avenue and Kingsbridge Lane as stated in the recent budget meeting. She supported the young speakers who addressed the closing of the movie theater. She agreed with earlier comments about the repaving of West Saddle River Road, and suggested that a speed bump be installed to slow down traffic. She emphasized the need for a maintenance schedule to be created to address the Village waterways. She stated that similar to the joint agency cooperation needed for

road paving programs, the waterway maintenance will also need the same cooperation amongst various agencies.

Stanley Kukulka, 500 East Saddle River Road, spoke regarding the portal that was created to upload flooding pictures. He asked how the information is being transmitted to the NJDEP. He commented there is a discrepancy on the tax map relating to an easement on his property. He invited Village officials to visit his property when flooding occurs. He asked for assistance from the Village, as the frequency of the flooding events is increasing.

Luis Lopez, 494 East Saddle River Road, offered support to the neighbors of East Saddle River Road that sustain flooding damage. He stated the neighbors look forward to a meeting with the Village Manager to see if solutions can be identified.

Kristina Milian, 530 West Saddle River Road, stated on September 28 2023 she was on email correspondence with the Village Manager, Councilmember Winograd and the Village Attorney regarding how residents can be included in the discussions about the future usage of the Zabriskie-Schedler house. Ms. Milian indicated she was informed that a Certificate of Occupancy would need to be issued to allow for future discussions concerning the property. She asked if the Certificate of Occupancy was issued and if tonight's presentation is consistent with what neighbors were told.

Christine Fleischmann, 518 East Saddle River Road, offered support to the students that spoke about preserving the Warner theater. She thanked Mr. Kazmark for visiting properties affected by recent flooding of the Saddle River. She stated that approximately fourteen families are on a group email correspondence with Mr. Kazmark and his assistance is appreciated. She stated she is personally speaking with environmental engineers in an effort to identify a solution. She stated that in the last twenty-seven years living along the Saddle River, there have been three floods and six water events in the last three months. She stated that foundation damage is a common issue with recurring floods and repetitive flood areas. She expressed two suggestions to address this issue: a water basin and underground drainage. She stated that she is hopeful the Village is seeking additional remediation, along with any recommendations made by the Army Corps of Engineers, after they conclude their investigation.

Sandy Bartlett, 338 Queens Court, commented that West Saddle River Road was last paved over thirty years ago. She commented that the soil removed for the construction of various apartment buildings in the Village was stored on the Schedler property. She is concerned with the possible contamination of the soil.

Councilmember Winograd congratulated the George Washington students for speaking this evening in support of the Warner theater. She stated that although the movie theater is currently closed, she encouraged people to utilize the Public Library. She stated the Public Library can be rented to show

movies, as they have media capability. This can be a unique opportunity to create a new partnership with the Public Library. She expressed the Village Council's commitment in honoring the Warner Theater as a local landmark and looks forward to working with the owners of the property. She recognized the CBDAC's recommendations. She requested the CBDAC be listed on an upcoming agenda so the "White Paper" recommendations can be further discussed. Councilmember Winograd encouraged residents to report lighting outages on Village streets to the Village Engineering Department.

Councilmember Weitz thanked all the students that spoke this evening regarding the theater. This is a great example of civic engagement, which creates a stronger community. He stated that the input from the public about the movie theater will help guide future discussion with the property owners.

Councilmember Reynolds thanked the students for speaking and acknowledged how difficult it is to come and speak at a meeting. She remarked on everyone's connection to the theater. She asked if attendees can all write down the first movie they saw at the theater and she looks forward to reading them.

Mr. Kazmark stated that in response to the paving inquiry of West Saddle River Road, the roadway is slated to be resurfaced in the 2024 Road Paving Program. He stated Ms. Ruane would have to speak to Police Chief Lyons regarding the request for speed bumps as it would necessitate a traffic study to be performed. He announced that various Village departments are continuously clearing debris in the waterways, in an effort to reduce flood damage to the residents. Mr. Kazmark stated that the information regarding the Blue Acre Program is available to residents and there has been a response by interested property owners. In addition, he announced that this Saturday, he will be visiting affected homeowners in the Saddle River neighborhood, who have signed up, in order to discuss their personal stories about flooding in their neighborhood.

Mr. Kazmark stated that a Certificate of Occupancy has not been issued for the Zabriskie-Schedler house. The pending items are with the NJ State Historic Preservation Office. The requests include permission to use the existing gravel as a temporary parking area, until the future of the property is decided. In addition, the request includes the installation of a stone dust pathway between the parking area and the ADA accessible ramp. He stated both of these initiatives need to be approved by the NJ State Historic Preservation Office. The Construction Official, Tony Merlino, can issue the Certificate of Occupancy for the Zabriskie-Schedler house once these two projects are completed. Mr. Kazmark explained for clarity that no one has been inside of the house, including representatives from The Ridgewood Club, to inspect the space because the Certificate of Occupancy has not yet been issued.

Mr. Kazmark responded to the soil testing. He confirmed that soil testing was performed from four different locations prior to trucking in the soil, between 2016 and 2021. The relocation of the soil

was done under a prior administration and it was tested. At the present time, the NJDEP is requiring additional testing which will be discussed by the Village Council, later on tonight's agenda.

There were no further public comments.

3. VILLAGE MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Kazmark stated he was pleased to report that S&P Global, has sustained the Village's AAA bond rating. He congratulated Bob Rooney, Chief Financial Officer, and the Finance team for their continued work in making sure that the long-term financial outlook for the Village is strong. He reported that Richard Calbi, Director of Operations and Director of Ridgewood Water, has recently sent out letters to residents in the Schedler neighborhood who have private wells. The Village is encouraging anyone who desires to abandon their private well and be connected to Ridgewood Water to contact Mr. Calbi.

Mr. Kazmark announced that the portal for flooding information has been launched. He thanked Neil Gallone and the GIS Division within Ridgewood Water, who put together the portal in partnership with the Village IT Department. Mr. Kazmark encouraged all residents that are impacted by residential flooding to submit pictures, descriptions, and information about their sustained damage. For each flooding event, residents can upload up to five pictures and one video. All data will be shared with the Army Corps of Engineers. He stated that as more submissions are entered, it will strengthen the Village's case to obtain State and Federal intervention for flood prevention solutions.

Mr. Kazmark announced that information was issued this week regarding the continuance of the Veterans Banner Program. He stated if anyone is interested in sponsoring a banner to be hung in the Central Business District from Memorial Day through Veterans Day, to visit the Village website to download the forms.

He reported that the 2024 Village Calendar has been delivered to residential homes. It is also available on the website for viewing and can be downloaded to print a hard copy. Mr. Kazmark reported that 2024 Budget Meeting hearings began this past Monday, and will continue into February.

Mr. Kazmark thanked Sean Hamlin and the team in the Village Sanitation Department for coordinating the acceptance of the two leased sanitation vehicles. Registration and insurance protocols are being completed, and they will be used for sanitation pickups shortly.

Mr. Kazmark reported that he held a meeting with residents of Clinton Avenue recently concerning pedestrian safety and another meeting is scheduled for February 8, 2024 to continue

the conversation. Mr. Kazmark reminded residents that garbage pickup during snow and ice events have to be placed at curbside with a clear path to the garbage cans, to ensure the safety of Village employees.

Mr. Kazmark announced Jamboree performances will be held on February 8, 9, and 10, 2024. This year's show is entitled "Smooth Sailing". He congratulated Jamboree on their 78th year of performing. He announced February as American Heart Month, and encouraged residents to join the Valley Health System, the Ridgewood Health Department and the Parks and Recreation Departments for a conversation on Women's Health on February 15, 2024 at 10:30 AM. at Village Hall.

Mr. Kazmark announced Village offices and departments will be closed on February 12, 2024 and February 19, 2024 in observance of Lincoln's Birthday and Presidents' Day. There will be no garbage or recycling collection. The Recycling Center will be closed on both days. He highlighted that garbage and recycling collection will change, during the weeks with the holidays, and encouraged residents to consult the Village calendar or sign up for the Recycle Coach app.

He announced upcoming Village Council meeting inclusive of Work Sessions to be held on February 7, 2024 and February 28, 2024 and the Public Meeting to be held on February 14, 2024. Mr. Kazmark reiterated the Clinton Avenue meeting will be held on February 8, 2024 at 7:00 PM in the Senior Lounge at Village Hall.

4. VILLAGE COUNCIL REPORTS

Councilmember Weitz thanked the Village Manager, the Chief Financial Officer, and the Department Heads for a great start to the budget process. He stated he is looking forward to the next session and encourages residents to attend the Budget Sessions. Councilmember Weitz acknowledged the re-affirmance of the AAA Bond Rating. It is in integral part of the Village's ability to receive favorable results in long- and short-term financing.

Councilmember Weitz announced the Ridgewood Arts Council will be sponsoring a cookie decorating contest at Paris Baguette on February 10, 2024 from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM.

Councilmember Winograd reported that last Friday the Village met with the Ridgewood ACCESS Committee and welcomed guest Paul Aronson, who works with the State of New Jersey, advocating for those with disabilities. It was announced that the Police and Fire Departments will be invited to the next meeting. Two Fire Department members have taken specific training for assisting individuals with Autism.

Councilmember Winograd thanked Jaimie Davis who hosted the third sensory friendly dinner. The dinners are always positively received and very successful. The next dinner will be announced shortly. Councilmember Winograd stated that as a result of a meeting with the Village Manager and the Board of Education, the end of the school year celebrations for fifth and eighth graders at Graydon Pool are being restored. She expressed appreciation and stated this was a collaborative effort between the Village Manager's Office, the HSA, the Parks and Recreation Conservation Board and the Board of Education. Councilmember Winograd announced the Pride Day Committee is gearing up for this year's celebration, and Pride Day will be held on June 1, 2024.

Councilmember Winograd announced that the Village is the recipient of the Daniel M. Gasalberti, Excellence in Recreation Programming Award, given by the NJ Parks and Recreation Association. Acknowledgements were issued to the HealthBarn for their donations, as well as Reverend Miller, of Old Paramus Reformed Church, the Village Recreation Department and Age Friendly Ridgewood. The award was given for the strides in providing the Elder Dinner Program for Village seniors who have limited access to a celebratory meal for Thanksgiving.

Councilmember Winograd displayed a sample street sign and announced that a fundraising effort is being initiated to offset the cost of replacement street signs. Unfortunately, the Village sustains a great deal of signage theft which in turn costs the taxpayers' money to replace. The Village is partnering with the High School to make the signs and they will be available to purchase shortly. The signs will have a demarcation on the sign to distinguish fundraising signage from official signage.

Councilmember Reynolds reported the Citizen's Safety Advisory Committee held a meeting on January 18, 2024. She stated that three more homes have come into compliance after receiving the "site obstruction notice" from the Village. This notice was sent to residents who have plantings in their yards that obscure the vision of drivers at an intersection. Councilmember Reynolds reported that PSE&G has repaired the street light outages that were reported in September and she would look into the street light outage that was mentioned this evening. She explained that the CBDAC requested softer lighting in the downtown for aesthetics; however, the Citizens Safety Advisory Committee supports Sergeant John Ward's recommendation for brighter lighting. The safety of pedestrians is paramount over the ambiance of the area, so therefore the brighter lighting will continue. Councilmember Reynolds announced that the Village Engineering department will be moving the stop line at Garber Square and West Ridgewood Avenue five feet back, to allow for better visibility of pedestrians crossing. She stated she will follow up on possible solutions for Oak Street and Glen Avenue and will report back. Councilmember Reynolds reminded everyone to remove ice and snow from their sidewalks, in compliance with Village ordinances. She announced the next meeting of the Citizens Safety Advisory Committee is February 15, 2024.

Councilmember Reynolds spoke about the Clinton Avenue pedestrian safety issue. She provided an overview of the meeting that was held on January 23, 2024. The Police Department provided a detailed analysis and recommended that sidewalks are the safest option for Clinton Avenue. The Engineering Department concurred with these findings, as it is consistent with the Village Safe Routes to school and Complete Streets programs. Resident participants asked the Village to provide visual materials that depict all of the recommendations that were suggested that evening. This includes painted sidewalk lanes, physical sidewalks on one side of the street and sidewalks on both sides of the street. There is a follow up meeting scheduled for February 8, 2024 in the Senior Lounge at Village Hall. The Village Police Department requested the residents of Clinton Avenue to provide supporting documentation of any other municipality in New Jersey that has painted sidewalk lanes, as opposed to physical sidewalks. The Village Attorney was requested to provide clarity to existing signage. Councilmember Reynolds encouraged residents to attend the budget sessions to keep informed of the taxpayer spend.

Deputy Mayor Perron announced the renovations to the Public Library are nearly complete. She announced the Special Improvement District Steering Committee has met and is exploring their goals and objectives. Green Ridgewood met last night. Facilitators attended to provide a “Climate Fresk”. This is a collaborative workshop which was set up as a game, that provides a foundational understanding of the climate challenge and empowers participants to take constructive action. It was announced that the Open Space Committee met recently and finalized dates for the park walks that will be conducted in the spring, summer, and fall.

Deputy Mayor Perron stated the Parks, Recreation and Conservation Board met and reviewed a report issued by the HealthBarn programming. The CBDAC will meet via zoom on February 8, 2024. She announced that she attended the Friends of Music Concert featuring all local musicians, this past Friday at George Washington Middle School.

Deputy Mayor Perron mentioned that she attended the grand opening of “Book Nook” on Cottage Place. They are enhancing literacy in children 18 months to 12 years old. She stated the approach is very interesting and effective.

Deputy Mayor Perron concluded by announcing the locations of local and virtual workshops being held by NJDEP to inform homeowners about the Blue Acres program, and encouraged interested residents to attend or view these workshops.

5. PRESENTATION

A. THE RIDGEWOOD NEWCOMERS - USE OF ZABRISKIE SCHEDLER HOUSE

Mr. Kazmark introduced the presentation. Councilmember Winograd reiterated the purpose of tonight's presentation is to start the conversation and discussion on possible uses for the Zabriskie Schedler house. These options are not before the NJ State Historic Preservation Office (SHIPO). Justine Kaufman, community liaison for The Ridgewood Newcomers, referenced the letter submitted to the Village Manager. She stated The Ridgewood Newcomers is an independent 501c3. She encouraged residents to join the association. The organization is looking for community space to host meetings and create a professional setting. Currently the organization relies on members to host functions and meetings in their homes. Ms. Kaufman stated she viewed the home via a video tour that was provided. Councilmember Weitz inquired if The Ridgewood Newcomers were looking for exclusive use of the property or would the organization be one of several groups permitted to use the property. Councilmember Winograd stated tonight's purpose is to begin the conversation and gauge the temperature of the Village Council for future uses of the property. Councilmember Winograd explained the unique partnership between The Ridgewood Newcomers and the Ridgewood Historical Society. A homeowner can work with these organizations to obtain historical information about their home.

Councilmember Winograd explained that when the full Schedler property is developed, there will be playgrounds and fields for younger patrons, passive areas for older residents and allowing The Ridgewood Newcomers to use the home on the property for meeting space, complements these demographics. She stated there is no official action to be taken on this presentation, this is the launch of the discussion concerning possible uses.

Ms. Kaufman stated that The Ridgewood Newcomers are always looking for members and invited all to join.

Mr. Kazmark outlined next steps in the process. He stated he would connect with Chris Rutishauser, Village Engineer, to ascertain the status of the SHIPO application. Once approved and project actions are complete, the Construction Official, Tony Merlino, can issue the Certificate of Occupancy. At that point, people will be able to enter the Zabriskie Schedler house. Councilmember Reynolds asked if there is a maximum occupancy for the home. Mr. Kazmark responded forty-nine is maximum. It was asked what the approximate membership of The Ridgewood Newcomers is currently, which is approximately 150, as it is groups of families.

Ms. Kaufman stated that depending on the space allotment, sometimes, limits are put on attendance for events. She stated The Ridgewood Newcomers would be able to work with the maximum allowable in the Zabriskie Schedler House.

Deputy Mayor Perron stated she liked the idea of The Ridgewood Newcomers and neighbors, as a way of encouraging participation and attendance at the events. Ms. Kaufman stated that outreach to different neighborhoods in Ridgewood is a goal of the organization.

Councilman Weitz stated this is a good start in the process. Once the Zabriskie Schedler House can be viewed, more discussions will be held to finalize plans. He stated he is open to the concept, as the Village will need to offset operational costs of upkeep on the home. He thanked Ms. Kaufman for speaking this evening on the proposal.

Mr. Kazmark stated once the Zabriskie-Schedler House secures the Certificate of Occupancy, an open house will be scheduled to allow residents to see the restored Zabriskie-Schedler House.

6. DISCUSSION

A. RIDGEWOOD WATER

1. AWARD ADDITIONAL AMOUNT OF SOLE SOURCE CONTRACT-FURNISH CORROSION INHIBITOR

Mr. Kazmark invited Richard Calbi, Director of Ridgewood Water, to present his agenda items. Mr. Calbi stated item 9a1 is to award a contract for the purchase of additional chemicals that are used for the corrosion prevention contract. The original contract was made to ESC Environmental in the amount not to exceed \$185,000 per year. Mr. Calbi is recommending the additional purchase of \$12,086.98 for additional treatment chemicals to complete the 2023 service year.

Deputy Mayor Perron stated the need for an additional award clearly demonstrates the dramatic increase in the cost of required chemicals. Mr. Calbi explained this specific chemical is necessary to prevent lead and copper corrosion throughout the system. It is added to every gallon of water that gets distributed in the system. In the beginning of the year, the contract is awarded as a unit price contract. The order is made based on the number of gallons that is projected to be needed for the contract year. In this case, the final amount was underestimated; therefore, an award adjustment is needed.

2. AWARD EMERGENCY CONTRACT - REPACKING OF AIR STRIPPING TOWERS - TWINNEY WATER TREATMENT FACILITY

Mr. Calbi explained an emergency was declared by Ridgewood Water for an occurrence at the Twinney Water Treatment Facility. The Emergency repair was approved by the Village Manager and the Village Chief Financial Officer. This award is for PACT Two, LLC to provide media to the Village of Ridewood for the emergency repacking of the air stripping towers at the Twinney PFAS Treatment Facility. The award of contract is in an amount not to exceed \$132,450.00 and funds are set aside in various accounts.

3. AWARD CONTACT - SERVICE AND REPAIR OF ELECTRIC SOURCE

Mr. Calbi explained that this item pertains to the award of contract for annual servicing and repair of Electric Source for the years 2024 and 2025. The recommended award is for the first year of a two-year contract to Vanore Electric, Inc., with a calculated rate of \$112.46 per hour. They are licensed electricians and a successful repeat vendor. Funds are set aside in the water utility operating budget.

4. AWARD CONTRACT - SERVICING AND REPAIR OF POTABLE WATER WELLS & PUMPING FACILITIES

Mr. Calbi explained that this item pertains to the award of contract for annual servicing and repair of Potable Wells and Pumping Facilities for the years 2024 and 2025. One bid was received, for an annual amount not to exceed \$500,000. The recommended award is for the first year of a two-year contract to William Stothoff Company, in an amount not to exceed \$500,000.

5. AWARD CONTRACT-ANNUAL PFAS LABORATORY ANALYSIS SERVICES

Mr. Calbi explained that this item pertains to the award of contract for PFAS Laboratory Analysis Services. The recommendation of award is for year two of a two-year contract to Pace Analytical Services, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$82,000. There may be an opportunity in future years to perform these services in-house, but at this time it must be awarded to an outside vendor.

6. AWARD CONTRACT-TREE MAINTENANCE SERVICES

Mr. Calbi explained that this item pertains to the award of contract for tree maintenance services on properties owned by Ridgewood Water. The recommendation of award is for the second year of a two-year contract to Downes Tree Service, in an amount not to exceed \$80,000.00. The contract provides for pruning and removal of trees at all Ridgewood Water properties.

Councilmember Winograd inquired if new trees are planted when trees are removed. Mr. Calbi stated new trees are planted; however, it is not a one for one replacement. Tree plantings are usually part of a larger project affecting a property.

7. AWARD CONTRACT-COLD WATER METERS AND ACCESSORIES

Mr. Calbi explained that this item pertains to the award of contract for purchase of cold-water meters and accessories. The recommendation of award is for year two of a two-year contract to Rio Supply, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$213,634.41. The contract provides for purchasing of materials for the water meters that go inside the residents' homes and used throughout the Ridgewood Water system.

8. AWARD CONTRACT - ANNUAL LABORATORY ANALYSIS SERVICES

Mr. Calbi explained that this item pertains to the award of contract for annual laboratory analysis services. The recommendation of award is for year two of a two-year contract to Pace Analytical Services, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$179,640.00. The contract provides for testing of contaminants that the utility is not currently certified to perform in-house.

9. AWARD CONTRACT - WATER BILLING AND DATA COLLECTION SERVICES

Mr. Calbi explained that this item pertains to the award of contract for annual water billing and data collection services. The recommendation of award is for year three of a three-year contract to Computil, Inc., in an amount not to exceed \$320,096.00. The contract provides for the preparation of all billing as well as the software platform that the customer service department utilizes.

10. AWARD CONTRACT UNDER SOURCEWELL COOPERATIVE PRICING SYSTEM-MAINTENANCE OF GENERATORS

Mr. Calbi explained that this item pertains to the award of contract for annual generator maintenance, inspection, and repair services. The recommendation of award is for year three of a three-year contract to Cummins, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$42,176.15. This contract provides for the coverage for the fourteen auxiliary generators that are inspected annually.

11. AWARD PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT – HYDROGEOLOGICAL CONSULTING SERVICES

Mr. Calbi explained that this item pertains to the award of contract for professional services in connection with the Capital Improvement Program of Well Maintenance and Testing Programs. This is a licensed firm, WSP USA, that has provided these services to the Village for decades. The recommendation of award is for a one-year contract to WSP USA in an amount not to exceed \$109,000.00 This contract provides for full services inclusive of, but not limited to, submitting permits, tests on wells and various other tasks associated with ground water monitoring.

12. ACCEPT RIDGEWOOD WATER ANNUAL MAINTENANCE FEE

Mr. Calbi explained the next two items are recommended by the Chief Financial Officer. The first item is the annual payment from the Ridgewood Water utility to the Village of Ridgewood for land and taxes. The amounts are reflected on “Schedule A” of the resolution, for a total amount of \$127,242.52 in 2024.

13. ESTABLISH INTEREST RATES FOR DELIQUENT PAYMENTS TO THE WATER UTILITY FOR 2024 AND SET GRACE PERIOD FOR PAYMENT OF WATER UTILITY BILLS

Mr. Calbi explained this item establishes the interest rates and penalty for delinquent payments. The penalty is based on the amount that is delinquent, along with the interest and an extra penalty if the outstanding delinquency is more than \$10,000.00. Councilmember Weitz inquired if the rate is industry standard. Mr. Calbi provided confirmation.

Changing the subject, Mr. Calbi stated Ridgewood Water is continuing to complete work in the PSE&G right of way. The project is rehabilitating and replacing the 20-inch trunk line that runs through both Glen Rock and Ridgewood. Notices have been provided to residents near the area where work is being performed. He acknowledged that the project will impact a portion of the Dunham Trail. Photographs will be taken prior to the commencement of the work. The Dunham

Trail will be closed for approximately one week to allow for the replacement of the water main. The dirt path will be fully restored at the conclusion of the project.

Deputy Mayor Perron inquired if any large trees have to be removed. Mr. Calbi stated the intent is not to remove any trees. Mr. Kazmark stated the position of Ridgewood Water is to fully restore the area, at the conclusion of the project. He stated the High School has also been notified of the projected work. Councilmember Winograd stated the erosion of the Dunham Trail is concerning. She encouraged the Village Councilmembers to go see the erosion.

B. PARKING

1. AMEND CHAPTER 265 - VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC- REYNEN COURT PARKING

Mr. Kazmark stated that there is consensus of the Village Council to move forward as outlined earlier this evening. Ms. Mailander reconfirmed the date for the Ordinance Introduction is February 7, 2024 at a Special Public meeting within the Work Session, the Adoption of the Ordinance will be February 28, 2024 at a Special Public meeting within the Work Session. The Ordinance becomes effective twenty days after the date of adoption. Councilmember Winograd thanked Ms. Mailander for compiling all the information provided by residents and sending it to the Village Council.

C. BUDGET

1. AWARD CONTRACT UNDER SOMERSET COUNTY COOPERATIVE PRICING SYSTEM- SOLAR TECH MESSAGE BOARD TRAILERS

Mr. Kazmark stated this item is to award a contract to purchase a Solar Tech Message Board Trailer. The purchase is being funded by a grant obtained by the Ridgewood Health Department, in an amount not to exceed \$27,091.60

2. AWARD CONTRACT – SOILS INVESTIGATION - BERM AT SCHEDLER PROPERTY

Mr. Kazmark explained the NJDEP has requested that the Village conduct a more detailed investigation of soils imported for the construction of the sound attenuation berm. He authorized the Village Engineer, Chris Rutishauser to solicit proposals for this service. Mr. Kazmark

recommends Matrix New World Engineering, Land Surveying and Landscape Architecture in an amount not to exceed \$38,300.00.

3. **AWARD CONTRACT – ANNUAL MAINTENANCE FOR SOFTWARE FOR FINANCE DEPARTMENT**

Mr. Kazmark stated items 3 through 9 are all Finance Department related awards. He stated this item is for the 2024 annual maintenance for proprietary software for Tax Collection, Financial Accounting, Payroll, Escrow Accounting, Human Resource and Accounts Receivable functions. The recommendation is to award a contract to Edmunds and Associates in an amount not to exceed \$25,000.00

4. **ESTABLISH INTEREST RATE FOR DELINQUENT TAXES AND NON-PAYMENT OF ASSESSMENTS AND OTHER MUNICIPAL LIENS FOR 2024 AND SET GRACE PERIOD AND DUE DATE**

Mr. Kazmark stated this item established the interest rate for delinquent taxes and non-payment of assessments. This allows fixing the rates based on the amount of delinquency similar to what was explained for Ridgewood Water Utility. There is also a set amount fixed for delinquencies over \$10,000.00

5. **ESTABLISH INTEREST RATES FOR DELINQUENT PAYMENTS FOR SIGNIFICANT SEWER DISCHARGER BILLS FOR 2024**

Mr. Kazmark stated this resolution allows the Tax Collector to impose a delinquency rate to assist in the processing of the collection of the bills for the Significant Sewer Discharger Annual Flow.

6. **AUTHORIZE MAILING OF ESTIMATED 2024 THIRD QUARTER BILLS**

Mr. Kazmark stated he confirmed with the Chief Financial Officer that Ridgewood historically issued Estimated Tax Bills. This resolution governs the process.

7. **AUTHORIZE ELECTRONIC TAX SALE**

Mr. Kazmark stated this resolution will permit the Village to conduct an Electronic Tax Sale under the statutory provisions.

8. AUTHORIZE CANCELLATION OF TAX OVERPAYMENTS AND DELINQUENT AMOUNT

Mr. Kazmark stated this is an allowable financial process under the statute and authorizes the Tax Collector to cancel tax overpayments and delinquent amounts under a specific threshold.

9. AUTHORIZE TAX COLLECTOR TO CHARGE FOR MAILING OF TAX SALE NOTICES

Mr. Kazmark stated this is the final item on tonight's agenda that are annual Finance Department resolutions. This authorizes the Tax Collector to charge for the mailing of Tax Sale Notices.

7. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Michele Italia, 3 Betty Court, asked for clarity about the soil testing at the Schedler Property. She inquired as to how a recommendation is determined. Specifically, how one company is chosen over another company.

Mr. Kazmark stated that in this case, all three vendors submitted proposals for the same services required by the NJDEP; and the lowest responsible vendor was selected.

Patty Infantino, 6 Betty Court, thanked all of the young students for speaking earlier about the Warner theater. She indicated she was under the impression that West Saddle River Road was a county road and now understands that it is a municipal roadway. She stated the road is in disrepair and needs attention. She supported the concept of an open house for the Zabriskie Schedler House once a Certificate of Occupancy is issued.

Cynthia O'Keefe, 542 West Saddle River Road, inquired about Grubb Associates that performed the archeological study. She asked if the soil that was removed from various sites in Ridgewood to create the berm was tested as part of the archeological study. She stated she is hopeful that the archeological study was done closer to the Zabriskie Schedler House.

Boyd Loving 342 South Irving Street, stated that he has concerns about the soil testing after reading the December 11, 2023 letter from the NJDEP. He stated he attended Village Council meetings during the time of the soil removal from the various sites, and it was not publicly discussed. Mr. Loving clarified there were six locations from which soil was removed, including a private home, Bergen Community College, and Route 208. He inquired if the Village Council was aware that these out-of-town sites were providing soil, and requested the Village Manager perform an investigation to ensure this does not occur in the future. He expressed concerns about the impending action plan, due to the NJDEP. According to the December 11, 2023 letter it

stated the Village is required to submit an action plan within 60 days. He stated that the award of contract is to be approved at the February 14, 2024 meeting which falls outside the 60-day requirement. He suggested the Village Council either award the contract prior to the February 14, 2024 meeting or request an extension to remain in compliance.

Anne Loving 342 South Irving Street, stated it was nice to hear all of the students speak earlier and was quite proud of the student that referenced Roger Wiegand in her comments. She stated that everyone who knew Roger Wiegand, appreciated the quote. She stated the library tech support employee is no longer at the library. She announced if anyone needs help, to call the library and make an appointment, and they have a staff member who is quite helpful.

Saurabh Dani, 390 Bedford Road, highlighted that during the portion of the meeting in which the Village Manager and Director of Ridgewood Water recommend large contracts, there was not any follow up questions from the Village Council regarding the issue, even though only one bid was received.

Kristina Milian, 530 West Saddle River Road, commented on her concerns regarding the December 11, 2023 letter issued by the NJDEP outlining the contaminated fill. She stated that residents walk their pets every day on the Schedler property. She asked if signage is going to be posted to reflect the contaminated soil.

There were no further public comments.

Mr. Kazmark responded that the archeological study did not extend into the berm area. The Village is awaiting NJ State Historic Preservation Office approval before being allowed to conduct the Phase II archaeological study. Once completed, those findings will be shared with the public, as was the protocol with Phase I.

Mr. Kazmark, he is frustrated with the soil contamination issue as well. The testing that was done under a prior administration was sent to the NJDEP. The action plan was conveyed to the NJDEP by the Engineering Department. He added that he met with representatives of the NJDEP. The NJDEP did not convey there was any threat to Public Health They did not direct that any part of the property needs to be shut down nor does any additional signage need to be posted.

Mr. Kazmark provided clarity to the bidding process in public purchasing. Councilmember Weitz added that there are times that sole bids are rejected if the criteria is not met. Councilmember Weitz asked if the prior soil testing that was submitted, reflected any issues with the results. Mr. Kazmark stated the NJ State Historic Preservation Office approved that testing retroactively, and he was not aware of any issue that had been directed to the Village. Mr. Kazmark further explained that if a bid exceeds the internal cost estimate, it could lead to a bid rejection.

Councilmember Winograd stated she was also unaware that more than two sites were used for the soil moving to the Schedler Property. She highlighted that the current Village Council has hired an expert to assist the Village in this process. Mr. Kazmark stated that he believes the donation of soil that was accepted years prior was at no cost to the Village, which might have been a reason it was included with the intown soil moving.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Village Council, on a motion by Deputy Mayor Perron, seconded by Councilmember Winograd, and carried unanimously by voice vote, the Village Council's Regular Public Work Session was adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Paul Vagianos
Mayor

Heather A. Mailander
Village Clerk