

BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK

REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 19, 2023 – 7:00 PM

A Regular Meeting of the Highland Park Mayor and Council was held on Tuesday, September 5, 2023, and was called to order by Mayor Foster at 7:00 PM. Annual Notice of this meeting was provided to The Home News Tribune, the Star Ledger and the Highland Park Planet on July 6, 2023 and was posted on the Borough website at www.hpboro.com and on the bulletin board at Borough Hall, 221 South Fifth Avenue, Highland Park, NJ on January 4, 2023, and has remained continuously posted as required by law. In addition, notice of this meeting via Zoom was emailed to the Home News Tribune, The Star Ledger and the Highland Park Planet on August 3, 2023 and was posted on the Borough website at www.hpboro.com and on the bulletin board at Borough Hall, 221 So. Fifth Avenue, Highland Park, NJ on May 12, 2023 and has remained continuously posted as required by law

Pledge of Allegiance.

Meredith Carman led the flag salute.

Roll Call.

Present: Mayor Foster, Councilpersons Canavera, George, Hale, Hersh, Kim-Chohan, Postelnik;
Borough Administrator Jover, Borough Attorney Schmierer; Borough Clerk Santiago.

Absent: None

Agenda Questions by Council Members. - None

Honors and Awards.

Mayor Foster presented a proclamation to Main Street Highland Park Volunteers - Meredith Carman and Ira Grassgreen.

Mayor Foster wanted to mention there has better a lot of chatter and questions that have been floating around about redevelopment plans as to where we are in the process. We take your input very seriously and we appreciate the people who made comments and have committed their time and have shown great interest in our town and the development of our town. Unfortunately, we are unable to provide a specific level of details but we will real soon. We promise that as soon as we know, we promise transparency because that's one of the things we run on as soon as we know where we are in the process with our professionals. Councilman Hale and I have been meeting with the professionals, and we have been impressed. We want to see things we feel good about. Councilman Hale and I will continue to work with these developers and these professionals and to create visuals that you will be able to see. I believe before the end of the year, so again we actually need to be just a little but more patience. Its coming and we're working tirelessly to make sure that we can present something that we all will love. This is our town and we are just as vested in our town as you are. Thank you, and I'm quite sure there's going to be questions later but I wanted to start off with that for those who are here for that particular subject.

Council Reports.

Councilman George offered his congratulations to new officer Trey Wilson, stating he brings a good background and experience to our community. He also thanked Trish Sanchez who's been the chair of SWACC since its inception in 2016 and is now stepping down. She will remain serving as a member of SWACC. The SWACC Committee's Vice Chair Sean Nian has agreed to assume the responsibilities as co-chair along with Peter Dilton, who is a current member of SWACC. In regards to the library, planning moves ahead on the new roof installation as well as the contractor's work on the renovations for the remainder of the building.

Councilman Postelnik reiterated that the Borough has grocery store transportation and online food shopping assistance, available through the Department of Community Services. For more information please reach out to the staff of the Community Center at 732-819-0052. This Thursday, September 21st at 7pm at Pinos, the Historical Commissioner is going to put on a presentation on the findings from the recently concluded historical survey of our downtown. The presentation will briefly cover the broader history of Highland Park and focus on how the development of Route 27 and Lincoln Highway shaped our town. On Saturday, September 30th the mid-autumn festival will be held at the farmer's market parking lot from 3pm to 6pm. It's a celebration of unity, prosperity, and good fortune. It's going to feature a dragon and lion dance, Chinese opera, martial arts, tai chi, food, crafts, and art ventures. Wednesday, September 20th from 10 am to 1pm there will be the Middlesex County Senior Health and Fitness One in Roosevelt Park in Edison. If you're interested in attending please reach out to the Community Center. Transportation is available for anyone who needs it. Down the road we'll have our first flu shot clinic of the season on Tuesday, October 10th from 10am to 11am. It's free and is open to all residents from six months and older. There will be plenty of other flu shot clinics throughout the fall and winter months. The registration just opened up for an additional theater program, that's a musical theater review workshop, where you can gain confidence and experience in singing, dancing and acting while learning the fundamentals of Broadway style musical theater. It's open to 2nd through 6th graders. The first class starts October 9th and to register, please sign up on the Boroughs website. The Arts

Commission is starting to roll out, so the first set of sidewalk decals that they worked on has been installed. You can find them at Irving Bartle, the High School, Karsey Park and outside the Community Center. This is the first round of five, and he believes there's ten more to come. An open submission is coming soon for people that want to create these.

Councilwoman Kim-Chohan reported the Rent Control Board will be meeting next Wednesday, September 27th at 5:30 pm here at Borough Hall. This is a rescheduled meeting from last month. Everyone has some comments and some concerned residents about the Rent Control order. Just a reminder that senior freeze applications are due October 31st. You can visit www.seniorfreeze.nj.gov. Thursday, September 21st from 6 pm to 8 pm. The New Jersey Chinese Chamber will be hosting an insightful and an informal conversation diving into the unique challenges and rewarding aspects of caring for aging Asian parents. This event will be held at Golden Seafood, 518 Old Post Road, Edison, New Jersey. Please reach out to Tammy Payne at tammy.njcacc@gmail.com for more information. Today is National Voter Registration Day. It's a day to learn about voter rights and requirements. You can also learn about mail in voting, if you have any questions about voter registration like if you recently moved; be sure to know the requirements and make your vote count.

Councilman Hale said he wanted to give a shout out to all the volunteers and to Main Street Highland Park for the Arts in the Park event. There were people lined up helping vendors find their spots, set up their tents and do all the things that need to happen before the event started. During the event, volunteers and staff work tirelessly to make sure everything was running smoothly. The event was quite successful. Also remember they do the breakdown after it's over. There are more volunteers that take down the tents along with DPW and help get the streets cleaned. I just wanted to say thank you to everybody for the Arts in the Park, it was on September 10th. The town wide garage sale is on October 14th and 15th and this year to go along with the garage sales there will be garage bands that will be playing. Come out and get some cool stuff and listen to good bands. Please come out for the world famous and award winning Farmers Market on Friday afternoons and the Night Owl Market as well. The schedule for both is available at the Main Street website mainstreethp.org. We're also having the Christmas tree lighting and gingerbread contest on November 25th and the Menorah lighting on Sunday, December 7th. The Borough was likely to receive a Neighborhood Preservation Program Grant, which helps with a lot of refurbishing and upkeep on Woodbridge Avenue. One of the programs that the grant has funded is to allow businesses an opportunity to meet with a consulting service called Storefront Mastery to work on things to make the front of their buildings nicer. If you are a business owner or a resident on Woodbridge Avenue and you're interested in the MPP Program, please reach out to Emma Von Thun at the Borough office. I'll end with a shout out. I know Meredith and Ira are gone; but both of them are well deserved of the proclamation. Thank you very much for your four years.

Councilwoman Canavera reported that the Board of Health wants everybody to be aware that September is Blood Cancer Awareness Month. This is the time to raise awareness. September 23rd is the International Day of Sign Languages, which is a unique opportunity to support and protect the identity and cultural diversity of all sign language users. It is also Hispanic Heritage Month. September 15th and October 15th is an annual celebration in the United States that honors the history culture and contributions of Americans whose ancestry can be traced to 20 different countries. National Suicide Prevention Month is honored each year in September. If you or someone you love is struggling please call the 988 suicide crisis lifeline by dialing 988 vortex home h-o-m-e to 741-741. Lastly our two programs for food insecurity are the Highland Park Food Pantry and the Highland Park Gives a Hoot. Visit the pantry located at the Community Center, 220 South 6th Avenue on the second and fourth Thursday of each month from 8 am to 10:45 am and then 6pm to 7pm on the Saturdays of those weeks from 9:30 am to 10 am, then Tuesdays at 11 am. Highland Park Gives a Hoot offers free groceries to Highland Park families in need of support. No sign up or questions ask.

Mayor Foster added that this was also Diaper Support Month. There's a proclamation that you'll be signing for that as well for people who are in need of diapers and supplies.

Council President Hersh said it was really nice to see so many folks out here to support Meredith. While it is still summer let's take part in our green infrastructure tour led by Sustainable Highland Park. It's a virtual tour so you can schedule it whenever you want. As summer winds down, we suggest that you take some time to get outside and explore the Borough by way of the Sustainable Handler's Green Infrastructure Walking Tour. This is a self-guided tour and consists of 10 stops between River Road and North 5th Avenue. The walking tours are a culmination of a grant project generously sponsored by Sustainable Jersey and the PSE&G Foundation. The Sustainable Highland Parkland will next meet on Wednesday, September 27th at 7:30 pm on Zoom. More information for that can be found at www.hpboro.com. Just an update to last meetings announcement of meter replacements, as of August 31st 1,737 meter exchanges were completed and approximately 80 major exchanges have been scheduled. If you did get notice, please respond. You can call Borough Hall to see if you are on the list. There are currently 185 customers who are on the Sabbath Compliant Meter waiting list. There are currently 30 meters exchanges that National Metering, the contractor who is installing the meters, ran into issues such as unable to locate the meter and unable to operate a curb stop. USA HP has been assisting Nationals with the issues and resolving them. Park Partners funded cleanups and part of that was funded by a \$2,000.00 Rutgers Grant. This is investing in a community development activity, for the improvement of our neighborhoods. It was used to conduct 32 trash cleanups, 29 of the 32 were in Highland Park, or in county parks. There were 191 resident in total that came out and helped participate in these clean ups. The number of volunteers in any individual clean up, range from 1 to 64. It's an

opportunity for you to be able to participate in this every week when there's a clean up, at your convenience. There was 1,421 pounds of trash that could be weighed, removed, plus items that were too heavy to weigh like couches, desks, tires, metal furniture, bed frames and other items. Of that \$2,000.00 Grant, \$1,998.78 was spent. Please go to www.hpboro.com for more information. There was a Climate March on Sunday, this was a national march in New York City to end fossil fuels. Several Highland Park Board members were in attendance, including Sustainable Highland Park and the Environmental Commission. The march coincided with tomorrow's United Nations Climate Ambition Summit that will call on the world leaders to commit to phasing out fossil fuels. He also mentioned a purchase order that he signed related to take out gallons of diesel fuel in the amount of \$3,447.00. These are the kind of expenses that we're trying to shift if we can advocate for more energy efficiency vehicles and appliances, and homes. He said he thinks we'll get to a much better place.

Mayor Foster replied Council President Hersh you had mentioned that they disposed large items such as desks, mattresses and couches. Where would you suggest that people call those into?

Council President Hersh responded you can call the Department of Public Work and schedule a bulk pickup collection. The timeline for the Garage Sale, there will be a town wide bulk collection following that so if you do have items that are going to be left on the curb, keep them out for Sunday night for pickup, otherwise you have to call Public Works and schedule a pick up.

Borough Administrator Jover – no report.

Borough Attorney's Report – no report.

Mayor's Report.

Mayor Foster said with regards to the supermarket, we are still actively engaged in conversation with the owners of the property. They found a supermarket that they like, but they're working through all of the technical details. As soon as that information becomes available I will be the happiest person in Highland Park letting everyone know that the deal is done, we have a supermarket. I am pleased to recognize the extraordinary efforts of Melina, the youth Librarian at the Highland Park Library. Melina received a grant from the National American Library Association, 1 of only 29 libraries nationwide to conduct a reading club for under-served teens in the area. Melina has conducted this reading club for teens at the Turning Point Academy. The internal school serving at residence of Middlesex County for Juvenile Detention Center in North Brunswick. Melina thank you for finding this grant and reaching out and serving this part of our population that surely needs all the help it can get, so wonderful work. Mike Bobish is here so please pass the word on that we are beyond happy that Highland Park got that grant to serve all of Middlesex County. I had an invitation from the energetic coordinator of Zone 16 Center, Ashton Burrell, I was happy to participate in a free back to school giveaway at Zone 16 along with Council President Hersh. I got to meet dozens of students and their family members and see them take the supplies that were provided to them, for their much needed school success. I was also pleased to be one of the persons to be part of the giveaway. I was so happy to be a part of the donors that supplied the much needed giveaway supplies for students going back to schools. We had to take a pause and remember a pivotal turn in our history, which many of us in this room can remember and that was the attack on our nation on 9/11/2001. On Monday morning, September 11th the event featured Chief Abrams of our Police Department, First Aid Squad president Ari Loretta, a representative from the Fire Department Frank Santora and myself. We raised the flag in remembrance of those victims of 9/11 along with a moment of silence. We had about three dozen attendees along with the members of our Council and Assemblyman Karabinchek. We thank all those who came out to show their support in remembrance for all of those who lost their life on that tragic day. You may have driven or walked by Irving School and you have seen trailers. Irving School is on South 11th and Woodbridge Avenue, there are two large trailers to be used to accommodate an all-day pre-k program, which is a State mandate requirement. I have discussed this with the School Superintendent, and I understand this is only a temporary situation for accommodations for these students until a permanent classroom is built. For further information, please reach out to the school board or to Superintendent. Today was a fun day. I was honored to have Assemblyman Stanley come to our Community Center, he participated in our annual luncheon. He brought his staff from the New Jersey Department of Treasury to explain the Anchor Program and the Tax Rebate Programs to our Seniors, and have them sign up. It was a great convenience to our Seniors and a very thoughtful way to introduce a tax rebate program to them. Thank you Assemblyman Stanley for arranging this visit and the lunch, it was a great day and a good time. The Borough has started distributing the September 2023 issue of our quarterly newsletter, on the cover you will see me along with Mayor Joshi of Edison. Both of us are holding puppies with a small news item about the animal shelter in Edison. The animal shelter is a shared service with Highland Park and it is quite crowded now. If you're looking to adopt a new furry companion, now is a great time to do so. Visit the animal shelter and consider the possibility of adoption. One of the most active groups in Highland Park is the Mayor's Teen Advisory Council, headed by the teens of Highland Park High School. The Teen Council meet and share concerns of teens here in town. They also raise money for local causes and engage teens with events and activities in the Borough. This year the team decided to connect and learn from decision makers in the Borough and Government. The Teen Council spoke with Lieutenant David Sodan, the head of the Traffic Safety Bureau at the Police Department in Highland Park. Lieutenant Sodan discussed traffic issues concerns with the team and answered their questions. They're very engaged and they get the work done so look out for more to follow from these teens. We support a healthy redevelopment project in Highland Park, those who have enriched our community and respect the neighborhoods where they are

located. I'm happy to speak of the work on Cleveland Avenue at the covert formerly followed property at the end of the street on Cleveland Avenue, the new site of Yeshiva Girls School. They are making great progress and I look forward to the grand opening of the school at this new location next year. I am happy to represent the Borough at the Lunch and Learn webinar that will be held by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection on Friday, September 29th. It will highlight some of the concerns that we're all seeing lately and it's inland flooding and how to protect and the rules that protect our areas with inland flooding. I will be updating you on what I've learned and as we see the effects of climate change and how it affects our parks and our neighborhoods.

Public Participation.

Mayor Foster opened the meeting for public discussion and called upon all those wishing to speak to identify themselves. The total time for this session is 21 minutes; three minutes maximum per speaker. Comments are limited to items on the agenda. If you want to speak on an item that is not listed, there will be an opportunity to do so later in the meeting.

Robert Holtzpfel, 431 South 7th Avenue, supports the Council and Mayor with the Redevelopment plan as well as not commenting until the deal is complete. He wanted to know if we are getting a boat house back in town. Mayor Foster responded that she and Borough Administrator Jover had a meeting with Edison, it would have to be some kind of shared service with Edison and New Brunswick because we all share that right for space, and said they would explore this with the county.

Borough Administrator Jover added that we have a grant for a feasibility study for the River trail concept. We have subcommittee that's started a review process and we're hoping to roll it out in the next couple of months. The River trail would connect Donaldson and Johnson Parks along the River. Some of the things we've been discussing are overlook boat launches, things like that to figure out how to connect people. There's a lot of this feasibility study that is going to raise many questions. We'll be sharing more information.

Council President Hersh added it will be great to have a boathouse on the River trail. At the first subcommittee meeting I identified the logistics that we have to go through, such as access point, property acquisitions or area concepts that we'd like to see through the work of the Lower Raritan Watershed partnership. They are currently leasing a space on Raritan and have shown an interest in reconnecting to the River with a boathouse. I think many of us are interested in doing it.

Mayor Foster said we need our partners from the two adjoining towns to make it feasible. We have a lot of boaters stocking their boats in other towns. We did have a conversation with Edison and they're interested.

Lois Lebbing, No. 2nd Avenue, you have 9-23-200 Storm Water Grant and 9-23-209. I'm just going to comment about 209. Would that possibly include the 300 block of Denison Street. That's a washboard road from the 18th Century. Are we finally going to get more storm water, are they doing anything to the sewer to make sure that all these new developments will not have flooded basements again?

Borough Administrator Jover replied the NJDEP issued all tier four and we're eligible for \$15,000.00 grants toward our storm water permit annual requirements. We applied and we received an award of \$15,000.00. There's a number of activities but \$15,000.00 isn't going to go towards the kind of things you're talking about. There's a lot of compliance issues with the permit. What we're hoping to be able to do and it's not definite; is to partner with Middlesex County's GIS team to upgrade the mapping of all of our storm water inlets and outfalls, as part of our compliance with our DEP annual MS4 permit. There's a number of purposes we could put it toward but it's not a scale along which you were indicating. It's not that kind of program. It's a pretty modest program to help towns progress with their permit compliance.

Lois Lebbing spoke about the fossil fuel parade that was mention. She thinks the lithium and cobalt, whatever is used in electric batteries, will fix themselves out of the mountainside with lasers. The earth movers use diesel, they take your electronic stuff requirements for your batteries out of the mountains. You're forgetting where the equipment comes from, if you want to have a clean earth you're forgetting to go to steam. All you have to do is modernize different things.

Marsha Shiffman, North 6th Avenue is a member of Main Street Board and the Design Committee and is happy to see that Meredith and Ira got the award tonight. She commented on item 14c #9-23-202; professional planning services related to review and amendment of signage ordinance. She is very happy to work with LRK on this. She feels improve the signage is a very good thing.

Rob Scott, South 2nd Avenue expressed his frustration and differed on the Mayor and Council not speaking of any details for the extension of the redevelopment agreement with Garden Homes. He added he believes the public would like to know about some of these big issues before the conditional redevelopment agreement is renewed. He asked each of the Council members and Mayor to offer their view on the notion should there be no net loss of public space in Highland Park.

Mayor Foster replied as she noted at the top of the meeting, they are carefully looking at everything. At this time we are not going to make any public statements. When we have the opportunity to come out and make a

public statement we'll be happy to do so. We have a lot of work to get done and a lot of things that need to be reviewed and we will not be making a public statement tonight.

Rob Scott said to the Mayor that he asked the Council as a whole to answer and does not think it is a positive thing for our democracy if the Mayor spoke for the whole Council.

Special Council Baumann replied Council members are free to speak or not speak. Cautiously, I don't see that as totally productive. Every project will stand upon itself to make a broad stroke decision that there should be no net loss. He does not find it to be particular helpful without facts for now. In terms of the conditional designation in front of us, it's pretty difficult for these destinations to get with you periodically and show us the process when you pick the initial period of time. You're trying to keep the developer on a short leash to keep us all focused and diligent on our process but as long as the process is moving forward in a manner which we're making progress along the way it's pretty typical. I strongly recommend you consider extending the designation. All it does is it gives the developer a period of time which we exclusively negotiate with them versus the other proposers and it gives us a source of revenue to pay for our loss and funding. Both of those things are appropriate. If there is a moment where I feel we're failing, both us and the developer will be happy to walk from them and having to pay the bills and for us to move on.

Ethan Smallman, Harrison Avenue stated he thinks there are really good arguments for the redevelopment that's been proposed to welcome low-income families, provided more corporate housing create more walkable downtown. He feels it's a mistake to forget that we had a primary election in this town. Mayor Foster was in favor of moving forward. The town had a chance to say this year we want to make a big u-turn and they didn't until Mayor Foster won. I hope the council moves forward with these plans.

David Hughes, South 3rd Avenue said he would like to speak about the proposal for the boat house. He feels kayaks, motorboats and jet skis will cause pollution, noise pollution and erosion on the Raritan River. They are unsafe and break the law. He does not feel there is reason to invest public funds for it. He would like a boat house for kayaks and canoes and other human-powered crafts.

Jessica Hundson, Montgomery Street stated she supported the Resolution for the striking nurses. She also had questions regarding the denial of the request of the performance bond. She wanted to know what was being voted on relating to Highland Cliffs. She asked for an explanation of what the issue is and why there needs to be a vote on the JSM motor vehicle related to traffic.

Borough Administer Jover responded before we release the performance bond for a development, our Borough Engineer reviews various aspects. I don't know the details of why he recommended we not release the bond to the developers of this project. They've already been chipping away at the punch list. We have a time frame in which we must respond to the request. Our response was, not yet until you deal with the items in our letter. It's our understanding they're making their way through it and hopefully by the next meeting they'll be in position to release it.

Mayor Foster added the terms were not completed. She replied for 203 903 203, that was done for traffic enforcement in that area, giving our Police Department a jurisdiction to enforce traffic on the developed property.

Ordinances Requiring a Second Reading.

Ordinance No. 23-2075 Capital Ordinance Providing for Improvements to the Library Roof in the Amount of \$215,000

The Clerk reported that Ordinance No 23-2075 entitled, Capital Ordinance Providing for Improvements to the Library Roof in the Amount of \$215,000 was duly advertised for consideration of passage on final reading by title and affidavits of publication are on file. The ordinance was also posted and made available for public inspection as required by law.

Mayor Foster declared the public hearing on the ordinance open to all officials and persons present and called upon all those wishing to speak for or against the ordinance to do so.

No one appearing to be heard and no objections having been received in writing, the Mayor closed the public hearing.

On motion made by Councilman George seconded by Councilwoman Canavera, Ordinance No. 23-2075 entitled as above, was duly adopted by the following roll call vote, to wit:
Ayes: Councilpersons Canavera, George, Hale, Hersh, Kim-Chohan, Postelnik
Opposed: None.
Absent: None.
Abstain: None.

Ordinances Requiring a First Reading.

Ordinance No. 23-2076 An Ordinance Amending and Supplementing the Code of the Borough

of Highland Park, Chapter 7 Traffic, Establishing “Schedule XXI,
Mid-Block Pedestrian Crossings”

The Clerk reported on Ordinance 23-2076 entitled An Ordinance Amending and Supplementing the Code of the Borough of Highland Park, Chapter 7 Traffic, Establishing “Schedule XXI, Mid-Block Pedestrian Crossings” has been duly introduced by the Public Safety Committee for consideration of passage on first reading by title.

On a motion made by Councilman George, seconded by Councilman Postelnik, the ordinance entitled as above was approved on introduction, authorized publication as required by law and set public hearing for October 10, 2023, by the following roll call vote, to wit:

ROLL CALL: Ayes: Councilpersons Canavera, George, Hale, Hersh, Kim-Chohan, Postelnik
Opposed: None.
Absent: None.
Abstain: None.

Consent Agenda Items - Resolutions.

Resolution Nos. 9-23-200 through 9-23-213 were duly adopted on a motion made by Council President Hersh seconded by Councilwoman Canavera and carried by the following roll call vote, to wit:

Councilman George abstained from Resolution 9-23-210 and Councilwoman Kim-Chohan abstained from Resolution 9-23-203.

ROLL CALL Ayes: Councilpersons Canavera, George, Hale, Hersh, Kim-Chohan, Postelnik
Opposed: None.
Absent: None.
Abstain: George (23-210), Kim-Chohan (23-203).

Resolution 9-23-200

WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 40A:4-87 provides that the Director of the Division of Local Government Services may approve the insertion of any special item of revenue in the budget of any county or municipality when such item shall have been made available by law and the amount was not determined at the time of the adoption of the budget; and

WHEREAS, the Director may also approve the insertion of an item of appropriation for equal amount.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey, hereby requests the Director of the Division of Local Government Services to approve the insertion of an item of revenue in the 2023 budget in the sum of \$25,000.00, which is now available from the Stormwater Assistance Grant, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the like sum of \$25,000.00 is hereby appropriated under the caption of Stormwater Assistance Grant.

Resolution 9-23-201

WHEREAS, on January 28, 2016, Highland Cliffs LLC, hereto posted with the Borough of Highland Park a performance bond No. FP0022695, issued by First Indemnity of American Insurance Company in the amount of \$1,108,004.40 and a cash performance bond in the amount of \$123,111.60, for a total amount of \$1,231,116.00, in connection with a final major site plan and final major subdivision application on the property known as 2 South Adelaide Avenue, Block 1, Lot 1.01, in the Borough of Highland Park; and

WHEREAS, on October 5, 2018, by Resolution No. 10-18-269, the Borough Council authorized reduction of performance bond No. FP0022695, issued by First Indemnity of American Insurance Company from \$1,108,004.40 to \$409,471.18.; and

WHEREAS, the developer for the referenced project has requested that the release of performance bonds; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Engineer has conducted a site inspection of this project and filed report dated August 31, 2023 recommending the denial of Performance Bond No. FP0022695, issued by First Indemnity of American Insurance Company in the amount of \$409,471.18 and a cash bond in the amount of \$123,111.60; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey, that

1. Highland Cliffs LLC is hereby denied the request for relase of Performance Bond No. FP0022695, issued by First Indemnity of American Insurance Company in the amount of \$409,471.18 and a cash bond in the amount of \$123,111.60, in accordance with the Borough’s Engineers report dated Auust 31, 2023.
2. Certified copies of this resolution be forwarded to the Finance Department, Borough Engineer, Construction Official and Highland Cliffs LLC.

Resolution 9-23-202

WHEREAS, one of the goals of the Highland Park Neighborhood Preservation Program (NPP) is economic development and business attraction; and

WHEREAS, the NPP Stakeholder Team desires to streamline the existing signage guidelines into a consolidated signage ordinance to make it easier for Woodbridge Avenue business owners and property owners to navigate and implement; and

WHEREAS, such services are professional services as defined in the Local Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq.; and

WHEREAS, LRK, Inc., is a firm of licensed planners of the State of New Jersey with extensive experience in providing these services; and

WHEREAS, funds for this purpose will be available in Grant Fund Account No. G-02-41-768-200 in an amount not to exceed \$20,000.00, as reflected by the Certification of Funds by the Chief Financial Officer Certification No. 2023-60.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey, that:

1. The Mayor and Borough Clerk are authorized and directed to execute and attest on behalf of the Borough an Agreement for Professional Services with LRK, Inc., 1218 Chestnut Street, 5th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107, a copy of which is attached hereto
2. Notice of this contract be published as required by law and that a copy of executed Agreement be placed on file in the office of the Borough Clerk.

Resolution 9-23-203

WHEREAS, the Borough of Highland Park has received a written request authorizing enforcement of traffic regulations on private property pursuant to N.J.S.A. 39:5A-1 et seq. and specifically requesting that the provisions of Subtitle 1, Title 39, of the Revised Statutes of the State of New Jersey shall be made applicable to the following area:

- A. JSM at Highland Park LLC
Block 3301, Lots 27-75

WHEREAS, the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park deems that enforcement of traffic regulations on the aforesaid private property will benefit all of the citizens of the Borough.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the Police Department of the Borough of Highland Park and other law enforcement agencies be and the same are hereby empowered to enforce the provisions of Subtitle 1 of Title 39 of Revised Statutes of the State of New Jersey.

Resolution 9-23-204

BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that the following shall be and is hereby appointed to serve as a member of the Highland Park Housing Authority for a term to expire as indicated:

David Copperman

unexpired term of December 31, 2027

Resolution 9-23-205

WHEREAS, the Highland Park Public Works Department had a need to make emergency repairs to the Garbage Truck 10; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Local Public Contracts Law NJSA 40A:11-6 et seq, a contract may be awarded and immediate delivery of goods or the performance of services may be provided when an emergency affects the public health, safety or welfare; and

WHEREAS, On-Site Fleet Service, Inc. is qualified and able to make said emergency repairs and has been authorized to proceed with the work in an amount not to exceed \$11,188.62; and

WHEREAS, funds for this purpose are available in the Current Fund Account No. 3-01-26-315-232, in an amount not to exceed \$11,188.628, as reflected by the certification of funds by the Chief Financial Officer No. 2023-56.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The Chief Financial Officer is hereby authorized and directed to issue payment in the amount not to exceed \$11,188.52 to On-Site Fleet Service, Inc., 36 Edgeboro Road, East Brunswick, NJ 08816, for the repairs to Garbage Truck 10.
2. Copies of this Resolution shall be forwarded to the Chief Financial Officer, the Department of Public Works and Borough Administrator.

Resolution 9-23-206

WHEREAS, the Borough of Highland Park has a need for property valuation and consulting services to assist with the defense of tax appeals related to the townwide property revaluation for the tax year 2023; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Local Public Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq., these services are professional services, which may be awarded without public bidding; and

WHEREAS, BRB Valuation and Consulting Services LLC possesses the necessary qualifications to undertake this work and was selected by the Borough of Highland Park to complete the revaluation of 44 complex commercial properties as part of the townwide revaluation for the tax year 2023; and

WHEREAS, BRB Valuation and Consulting Services LCC has submitted the attached proposal dated September 12, 2023 to provide the services related to the defense of tax appeals for an amount estimated not to exceed \$30,000; and

WHEREAS, funds for this purpose are available in the Reserve for Revaluation Account No. 3-01-300-60-002-010 in an amount not to exceed \$30,000.00, as reflected by the certification of funds by the Chief Financial Officer No. 2023-61; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, in the County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey, as follows:

1. The Mayor or Borough Administrator is hereby authorized to execute an agreement with BRB Valuation and Consulting Services LLC, 22 Windham Drive, Eastampton, NJ 08060, for an amount not to exceed \$30,000.00.
2. Certified copies of this resolution shall be forwarded to the Borough Administrator, Tax Assessor, and the Chief Financial Officer.

Resolution 9-23-207

WHEREAS, on September 6, 2022, Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park (the “**Borough Council**”) passed Resolution No. 9-22-222, authorizing a professional services agreement with LRK Inc. (“**LRK**”) for professional redevelopment planning services to: 1) conduct a preliminary investigation of the former Stop & Shop and adjacent properties (BLOCK 3002, LOTS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 30, 34, 35, 36, and 37) to determine whether they meet the criteria set forth in the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (the “**LRHL**”) and should be designated as an area in need of redevelopment, and 2) to prepare a redevelopment plan for said Study Area; and

WHEREAS, on December 20, 2022, the Borough Council passed Resolution No. 12-22-289, designating the former Stop & Shop and adjacent properties as a non-condemnation area in need of redevelopment; and

WHEREAS, on May 16, 2023, the Borough Council adopted Ordinance No. 23-2071 to establish the 420-424 Raritan Avenue Redevelopment Plan for BLOCK 3002, Lots 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 30, 34, 35, 36 & 37; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Council believes it in the best interest of the Borough of Highland Park to amend the 420-424 Redevelopment Plan to include all of the properties on Block 3002 that face Raritan Avenue; and

WHEREAS, the Borough has need for continued services of a Planner to prepare an amendment to the 420-424 Redevelopment Plan to include Block 3002, Lots 1 (the former “Wells Fargo Bank” property), 2 (the “Park Town Center” property), and 7 (the “Landmark/The Hair Loft” property); and

WHEREAS, such services are professional services as defined in the Local Public Contracts Law, *N.J.S.A. 40A:11-1 et seq.*; and

WHEREAS, LRK is a firm of licensed planners of the State of New Jersey with extensive experience in providing these services.

WHEREAS, funds for this purpose will be available in Capital Fund Account No. C-04-55-814-001 for an amount not to exceed \$24,000.00, as reflected by the certification of funds by the Chief Financial Officer Certification No. 2023-62.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey, that:

1. The Mayor and Borough Clerk are authorized and directed to execute and attest on behalf of the Borough an Agreement for professional services with LRK Inc., 1218 Chestnut Street, 5th Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107, a copy of which is attached hereto.
2. Notice of this contract be published as required by law and that a copy of executed Agreement be placed on file in the office of the Borough Clerk

Resolution 9-23-208

WHEREAS, pursuant to Resolution No. 4-23-116, adopted by the Borough Council on April 18, 2023, a contract was awarded to Molba Carpentry, Inc. t/a Molba Construction of Little Ferry, NJ, for the Highland Park Public Library Interior renovations; and

WHEREAS, it appears from Pay Estimate No. 2 certified by Arcari + Iovino Architects PC, that certain work under said contract has been completed and approved and there is due to Molba Carpentry, Inc. t/a Molba Construction. the sum of \$138,092.85 in accordance with said Pay Estimate for work performed through August 31, 2023; and

WHEREAS, funds for this purpose are available in Capital Fund Account No. C-04-55-831-001 in an amount not to exceed \$138,092.85, as reflected by the Certification of Funds Available by Chief Financial Officer Certification No. 2023-57.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey, that:

1. The Chief Financial Officer be and is hereby authorized and directed to pay Molba Carpentry, Inc. t/a Molba Construction the sum of \$138,092.85, as certified by the Architects certification of Pay Estimate No. 2, subject to the Clerk’s receipt of the Certified Payroll and Project Manning Reports; and
2. Certified copies of this resolution be forwarded to Chief Financial Officer and the Arcari + Iovino Architects PC.

Resolution 9-23-209

WHEREAS, pursuant to Resolution No. 7-22-175, adopted by the Borough Council on July 5, 2022, a contract was awarded to CCM Contracting Inc. of Greenbrook, NJ, 2021 Roadway Improvements Project for the resurfacing and reconstruction of South 1st Avenue between Johnson Street and Valentine Street, Tenth Avenue between Raritan Avenue and Woodbridge Avenue, North Tenth Avenue between Abbott Street and

Raritan Avenue, Lexington Avenue between the Borough limits and Raritan Avenue, and Alcazar Avenue between Central Avenue and Cherry Street; and

WHEREAS, it appears from Pay Estimate No. 3, filed by CME Associates, that certain work under said contract has been completed and approved and there is due to CCM Contracting Inc. the sum of \$173,396.62 in accordance with said Pay Estimate for work performed from June 3, 2023 to August 10, 2023; and

WHEREAS, funds for this purpose are available in Account No. C-04-55-825-001 in the amount of \$173,396.62, as reflected by the Certification of Funds Available by the Chief Financial Officer, no 2023-58.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, as follows:

1. The Chief Financial Officer be and is hereby authorized and directed to pay CCM Contracting Inc. the sum of \$173,396.62, as certified by the Engineer in Pay Estimate No. 2, subject to the Clerk's receipt of the Certified Payroll and Project Manning Reports.
2. Certified copies of this resolution be forwarded to Chief Financial Officer and the CME Associates forthwith.

Resolution 9-23-210

WHEREAS, the governing body of Highland Park, Middlesex County, New Jersey, does hereby find as follows:

WHEREAS, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital is the primary care facility and Level 1 Trauma Center serving Highland Park Borough; and

WHEREAS, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital is currently involved in a labor dispute with 1700 nurses represented by United Steelworkers Local 4-200; and

WHEREAS, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital nurses assisted with critical and life-saving services and continue to provide care for some of the most complex medical cases in New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, United Steelworkers Local 4-200 contract expired on June 30, 2023, negotiations to date have not resulted in a contract agreement, and 1700 nurses have been on an Unfair Labor practice strike in support of safe staffing since August 4, 2023; and

WHEREAS, safe staffing saves lives, the odds of patient death increases for each additional patient a nurse must care for at one time according to the Journal of American Medical Association; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey, that we urge the President of Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital and Unites Steelworkers Local 4-200 to return to the negotiating table and engage in good faith bargaining aimed at resolving the dispute.

Resolution 9-23-211

WHEREAS, the Borough of Highland Park, a public body corporate and politic of the State of New Jersey (the "**Borough**"), is authorized pursuant to the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law, N.J.S.A. 40A:12A-1, *et seq.* (as same may be amended from time to time) (the "**Redevelopment Law**") to act as a redevelopment entity and to implement redevelopment plans and carry out redevelopment projects in the Borough; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Redevelopment Law, the Borough Council caused a redevelopment plan to be prepared for certain property located withing the Borough, entitled the "Downtown Redevelopment Plan for Tracts A-D" (the "**Redevelopment Plan**"); and

WHEREAS, on September 14, 2021, the Borough Council approved Ordinance No. 21-2030 adopting the Redevelopment Plan; and

WHEREAS, as described in the Redevelopment Plan, the properties identified as Tract A: Block 1704 [173], Lots 41-49 & Portion of Lot 20 ("**Tract A**"); Tract B: Block 2201 [13], Lots 6 & 9 ("**Tract B**"); Tract C: Block 2202 [22], Lots 4, 32.02 & 33.01 ("**Tract C**"); and Tract D: Block 1604 [158], Lots 20-26, 42, 50-51 & Portion of Lot 47, and Block 1603 [162], Lots 36-38 ("**Tract D**") on the Official Tax Map of the Borough (collectively, the "**Properties**") have been designated as an "area in need of rehabilitation", "area in need of redevelopment" and/or a "condemnation area in need of redevelopment"; and

WHEREAS, on December 7, 2021, the Borough Council approved Resolution 12-21-299, authorizing the issuance of a Request for Proposals (the "**RFP**") related to the redevelopment of Tracts A, C, and D; and

WHEREAS, the Borough received a proposal from Garden Homes, doing business as 232 Raritan Avenue, LLC (the "**Conditional Redeveloper**"), for Tract C and the Borough and the Conditional Redeveloper intend to pursue pre-development activities, including but not limited to review of the Conditional Redeveloper's proposal, negotiation in good faith and preparation of a redevelopment agreement and other related actions (the "**Pre-Development Activities**"); and

WHEREAS, the Conditional Redeveloper recognizes that the Borough will incur costs and expenses in connection with the Pre-Development Activities, and the Borough is willing to defray those costs and expenses, with no assurance of a particular result for the Conditional Redeveloper from the Borough; and

WHEREAS, the Borough authorized and entered into an interim cost and conditional redeveloper's agreement with the Conditional Redeveloper (the "**Conditional Redeveloper's Agreement**") to effectuate the funding of an escrow account and procedures for the payment therefrom of moneys to pay the Borough's costs and expenses incurred in undertaking the Pre-Development Activities; and

WHEREAS, the Borough authorized the extension of the conditional designation on February 21, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the Borough wishes to extend such conditional designation and such Conditional Redeveloper's Agreement for a term ending on December 31, 2023.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park as follows:

Section 1. Generally. The aforementioned recitals are incorporated herein as though fully set forth at length.

Section 2. Execution of Agreement. The Borough Council hereby authorizes an amendment to the Conditional Redeveloper's Agreement to extend such agreement for a term ending on December 31, 2023.

Section 3. Severability. If any part of this Resolution shall be deemed invalid, such parts shall be severed and the invalidity thereby shall not affect the remaining parts of this Resolution.

Section 4. Availability of the Resolution. A copy of this Resolution shall be available for public inspection at the office of the Borough Clerk.

Section 5. Effective Date. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

Resolution 9-23-212

WHEREAS, the Police Chief's current vehicle is over a decade old, mechanical problems are becoming costly, and fuel efficiency is being lost; and

WHEREAS, the Borough desires to purchase a 2024 Tucson Hybrid as a replacement vehicle with better gas mileage and a hybrid engine; and

WHEREAS, three (3) quotes were solicited and were received as follows:

Route One Hyundai	\$38,519.00
Ciocca Hyundai	\$38,520.00
Freehold Hyundai	No Response; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Administrator has recommended that said vehicle be purchased from Route One Hyundai, Monmouth Junction, NJ based on their quote for same; and

WHEREAS, funds for this purpose were encumbered in the 2022 Municipal Budget, Current Fund Account No. 2-01-25-240-243 as reflected by the certification of funds by the Chief Financial Officer No. 2023-59

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park, County of Middlesex, State of New Jersey, that

1. The Borough Administrator is hereby authorized and directed to accept the quote for a 2024 Hyundai Tucson Hybrid from Route One Hyundai, 3905 Route 1 South, Monmouth Junction, NJ 08852, at a cost not to exceed of \$40,000.00; and
2. A certified copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Borough Administrator and the Chief Financial Officer.

Resolution 9-23-213

BE IT RESOLVED by the Borough Council of the Borough of Highland Park that all claims presented prior to this meeting as shown on a detailed list prepared by the Borough Treasurer, and which have been submitted and approved in accordance with Highland Park Ordinance No. 1004, shall be and the same are hereby approved; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Borough Clerk shall include in the minutes of this meeting a statement as to all such claims approved as shown in a Bills List Journal in accordance with said Ordinance.

1. The bills approved for payment at this meeting, Bills List 9/19/2023 can be found in the Bills List Journal Book No. 42.

Appointments.

On motion made by Councilman George and seconded by Councilman Postelnik Beth Stevens was appointed to the Public Information Committee.

ROLL CALL Ayes: Councilpersons Canavera, George, Hale, Hersh, Kim-Chohan, Postelnik
Opposed: None.
Absent: None.
Abstain: None.

Second Public Participation.

Mayor Foster opened the meeting for public discussion and called upon all those wishing to speak to identify themselves. Speakers are limited to 3 minutes and the discussion to end at 9:00 PM, prior to Work Session.

Debbie Israel, Barnard Street said she just became aware of the classroom modular by the Irving School. She asked where the overflow of students are coming from. Mayor Foster responded as she reported earlier there's a state mandate for pre-k classes.

Debbie Israel ask if these are new students that are from families already in Highland Park. Mayor Foster replied that these are Highland Park families that have children that are of pre-school age.

Debbie Israel asked if there was any nearby place for in person voting the day before the election that is not on a Saturday. Mayor Foster suggested that she call the Board of Election. They can provide you that information, but yes you can go to the county and vote.

Diane Feldman, North 4th Avenue brought up the subject of adding charging spaces for EVS and various parking lots. The issue is they should be placed in a way that does not negatively impact existing accessible parking spaces. She'd like the council to consider adding a statement in the ordinance stating that. Mayor Foster replied that this will be taken up with the Public Safety Committee.

Jessica Hundson, Montgomery Street said a resident mentioned we had a community letter, and she wanted to read the questions. What are the specific details of the proposed developments for Tract C and the Pedestrian Plaza currently planned for South Third Avenue? Some examples of what we would be looking for is what do they look like, what are the specifications, dimensions, what is the composition of units, apartments, condos, and a mix of both? What is planned for parking?

Attorney Baumann replied unfortunately those are the kind of details we don't have right now.

Jessica Hundson asked is the payment in lieu of taxes anticipated for Tract C, if yes what is the proposed financial agreement? Attorney Baumann replied it was too early to be determined.

Jessica Hundson proceeded to the next question and asked what specific resident benefits and amenities will the redevelopment entity require the developer to provide for our community so that would mean town infrastructure improvements and upgrades? Attorney Baumann again answered it is way too early to ask.

Jessica Hundson's asked will you commit to exceeding the state and local minimums of owned or leased affordable housing units and require that any developer and or lender wave and renounce their protection per NJSA 2A, so they must abide by our local rent control ordinance? Attorney Baumann stated that this seems like the same question as before where you're trying to get the Council to answer prematurely that may or may not make sense in the context of an actual project. So again I caution them not to draw the lines on those things because it just isn't helpful when we're still trying to work our way through many different moving parts that may or may not have a higher priority than the one you described.

Rob Scott, South 2nd Avenue, returned to the issue of questions from Highland Park residents. He stated he was frustrated that the Attorney is answering for the Council. He's going to rephrase his question to make it a general question stating it was just for the Council to answer. He asked, how would they feel about pursuing negotiations with any developer not specifically this one that the Attorney is saying you can't talk about, to get them to agree in a contract to abide by our rent control ordinance or get them to agree after 5 years. Mayor Foster replied you want us to speak about a hypothetical developer that may or may not come into Highland Park and say that they may do rent leveling or we may have to supersede the state law.

Rob Scott said, I'm not asking you to supersede a law. I'm asking what the council feels about doing something like that. Specifically directing the attorney to raise and negotiate the idea of a developer voluntarily agreeing to abide by the rent control ordinance. Attorney Baumann stated you've suggested three positions that the Governing Body take. I want to explain to you why it is not a good idea to choose anyone of the three. You suggested on one hand to increase the number of affordable units. You said on the same hand we should rent control the balance. As you can imagine by rent controlling the balance of units you may not get the additional affordable housing units you want. It's all about the amount of money. If you ask the Council to draw the line in the sand on particular issues you limit their ability to take an issue that might be more important. I already asked you would you rather have rent control on the balance of the market rate units or would you allow more affordable housing? Those are the kind of choices you have to make and the same thing with the amount of open space, they're going to have to make some hard decisions. Prioritize community benefits, community goals and necessity of that decision making because one impacts the other.

Rob Scott said this is not a question for the Attorney. I'm asking my elected officials do you think this is a possibility? Mayor Foster replied, that she thinks the Attorney is attempting to answer the question based on the three scenarios that you have provided. She is asked the Attorney Baumann to address the question.

Rob Scott said he is asking the Council to speak for themselves. Mayor Foster stated that she is presiding over the Council and could you please let the Attorney respond to the questions that you have asked.

Attorney Baumann replied in the first place he thinks this only happens in redevelopment areas. In terms of non-redevelopment projects they're going to be subject with. They don't get to negotiate on the rent control. It's just what the law is. We're all involved with the redevelopment context. I'm involved with negotiating with all the developers. That's why they're being cautioned. Everything is on the table. If there's a way to keep the market rents from going too high we will do that.

Mr. Crowley, Harrison Avenue, referred to Tract C redevelopment questions. He would like to hear about the process of how we are going to get from these early negotiations through a series of decisions. It sounds like there's a small team leading the negotiation are we still free to vote yes or no or have things been set in stone? Attorney Baumann answered the team starts with the Mayor and Council. Councilman Hale is really involved, and Borough Administrator Jover who is the most involved and spends the most time on it. She's pulling in Council as needed. The professional team on the legal side is our law firm, so we're special counsel. We have been doing this for 35 years, we have a planner who is involved in making sure that they're planning for the components of the design, the bulk standards, and the access, all those things we are going to be targeted. Then

our firm routinely retains a financial person to assist me to the finances involved. We cover pretty much gamut and that's the team that negotiates. Where we are today is, we went through a very long process to get the zoning in place so that's the redevelopment plan. We went to getting a redevelopment area designated plan in place so we could have the negotiations we're talking about today, which we could not have zoned. We couldn't extract community benefits for example out of a problem.

Attorney Baumann stated we have the area done and we got the plan done. Then we found a few processes too and we said to the development community here's the four parcels, if it's part of your bid do you think that we should make the area bigger; because it'll be better. Post that, we asked them to be pretty creative. We said even though we have a plan if you have something that's better tell us about it. We may agree or disagree. We got a number of proposals we vetted them and we designated one team for the Classic Cleaners, properties on that side of the street and another team we designated for the Farmers Market site. Those processes conditionally designated each of those exclusively negotiate with each. They funded in escrow to start paying for all these professionals that are working for you. That's just like a planning board application trying to shift the costs doing this from us to the developers. We're in the middle of that process. On the Classic Cleaners site, that's going really well. We have two property owners there who we're not in charge of. We're working pretty hard to get them over here. Then on the side of the Farmers Market the developer has suggested that they have control over certain properties and we think they should. We had said you would have to control the property or have the property owners consent to do that. We're in the process of considering expanding that area. The Mayor has been really pressing them for us to get a concept plan so we can begin to show you what that looks like. We're pretty focused on that and trying to save a grocery store.

Mr. Crowley responded that's exactly why I'm really wanting to know the process. There's so many distractions, so many people involved so you can speak.

Attorney Baumann added is once we have a deal worked out we will share that. Then we will have to go through the effort of the redevelopment agreement, financial agreement and whatever else is the sale agreement of buying that property then we will present that in a package to the public at a meeting. We will explain it, give people time to think about it, and ask questions, that has been Highland Park's practice. Then the Council and I will defend it and vote on it. Some of those votes will be held in two meetings. Then it's back to the Planning Board where the plan goes to a normal site plan process.

Mr. Crowley asked when would the developer sign? Attorney Baumann answered the redevelopment agreement and the financial salary agreement gets signed before we reveal the agreements.

Borough Administrator Jover said as part of this expansion, if the Governing Body is convinced and we've presented it to the public we will take feedback on it. Then the Planning Board meeting. Again, we won't have all financials figured out, but at least the zoning will be redone. It's a version of the same process of what we'll go through for the amendment. There's a lot of steps along the way toward getting this project. There's many opportunities. I know it's frustrating for the public to engage on that.

Mr. Crowley replied it is incredibly frustrating.

Attorney Bauman added I get that but I would measure this group of people by past performance. How many meetings did we have to get our redevelopment plan? Through the process I think we had more meetings, than I've ever seen on any of my projects ever. If you want to judge them about how transparent they are or whether they're going to give you enough time to think about or impact it; just see what they've done so far. Some people would say we've taken too long, some will say we've been taking long enough. From past practices of this group of people, you can be sure there will be a public input.

Debbie Israel said she thinks the fact that you said that the people will hear what the choices are. They'll be publicized so the people can come. I think this sounded to that people should have input when things are decided.

Mayor Foster said she just wanted to add that they know how persistent she has been about this. When we do the presentation for public forum and comment we will need to have a large enough space that will accommodate everyone in each of that station with pictures and renderings so people can add their comments as they move around the area. It will not be in the community center. We'll have enough station for people to add comments with stickers or what have you. We'll be collecting them and working on those, that's one of things I've been pushing for. That's why I want to see pictures and I know just about everyone wants to see the idea concept of what it's going to look like.

Abby Stern Cardinale, Harper St. said she really appreciates all of the discussion. It's a lot to think through. What she wanted to speak on was the idea of what central space is in this town and making sure that when we're look at projects for the town we're looking at the entire town. It just doesn't include the lower Raritan area. I think Zoom makes meetings much more accessible and she think it's great. I think that the people who are able to attend meeting are the most privileged of us. We need to look at what is for the greater good. We need to make sure we're representing the entire town in these negotiations. I think it's a balance. I think an equalizer would be a splash park, something that's a community resource that's accessible to everyone. What does

essential space mean in this town? We have to think what is best for the entire town. Abby mentioned this was great progress for the town.

Mayor Foster thanked Abby stating that is our primary focus. We look at the entire 15,000 plus people that live in Highland Park. Those who can attend meetings those who cannot but still want to see our town move ahead, progress and still want to be including every fiber of our town. We are collectively looking at all of that from pocket parks to environmental spaces. We're looking at all of it and trying to make it fit in our one point something square feet of property that will open the densely populated areas. We're trying to make sure there's a space for all as much as we can, so thank you. Yes that is our priority as we look at all of this.

Councilwoman Canavera said she may be on the council but she is one of our lower income residents. who utilizes the Food Pantry, housing assistance, and I also have a disabled husband. I am always looking out for all of the residents, not just people who consider themselves privileged but for every resident. I will continue to fight for the people that aren't heard. I just wanted to make sure that you know that.

Lois Lebbing, North Second Avenue said a couple of splash parks would be helpful when the weather is in the 90's. This morning about 9:30 she called DPW because there was very strong smell of an oil spill on North 2nd. It dissipated by noon, I couldn't open the front door. I couldn't open the front windows because it was so strong.

Council President Hersh replied that DPW did respond. He explained there was a truck that got stuck on some storm water. It caused the truck to leak and so the Hazmat crew came out. It was all cleaned up. DPW was notified. It was on Montgomery.

Borough Administrator Jover said she smelled it to on my way to work and she called DPW to ask what this was and they explained it. The County OEM came out. It had already been remediated by noon because the truck wasn't there. The County OEM, can now apply the proper material to the oil trail. It was a private truck, it wasn't one of ours that was the cause. As far as I know they inspected all the storm drains, nothing got into the River so they caught everything in plenty of time. I'm glad to report that everybody came out and the situation was an accident and the guy drove off and was leaking and I guess he didn't realize it.

No one else appearing to be heard, Mayor Foster closed the public discussion.

Recess (5 minutes). - None

Work Session Items: No formal action to be taken. None

Executive Session (if necessary). - None

There being no further business, on motion made by Councilman George, seconded by Councilman Postelnik and carried by affirmative voice vote of all Councilpersons present, the meeting adjourned at 8:11 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Santiago
Borough Clerk