

**MINUTES FOR THE SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE MAYOR & COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF WALDWICK
HELD ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2026 AT 7:30 PM**

Mayor Giordano called the meeting to order and read the Statement of Compliance.

Mayor Giordano asked for a roll call. Present on roll call: Mayor Giordano, Ms. Cericola-Drake, Mr. Chrzanowski, Mr. Martinello, Mr. Ritchie and Ms. Wingate. Ms. Smith was Absent.

Also present: Borough Administrator Tatiana Marquis, Borough Clerk Kelley Halewicz; Borough Attorney Craig Bossong, Redevelopment Counsel Anna Monforth and Spach Trahan of Phillips, Preiss Grygiel.

Mayor Giordano asked everyone to join in the Pledge of Allegiance, remain standing for a moment of silence honoring our Veterans and to remain standing for the prayer.

Mayor Giordano shared that the Administrator would like to say a few words.

Mrs. Marquis explained that this Special Meeting is for the public hearing for Ordinance 2026-15 adopting block 116, lots 9, 16 and 18 redevelopment plan.

She shared housekeeping items with the public in attendance including safety in the building.

CONSENT AGENDA RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-246

Payment of Vouchers

Council Member	Motion	Second	Ayes	Nays	Abstain	Absent
Cericola-Drake	X		X			
Chrzanowski			X			
Martinello		X	X			
Ritchie			X			
Smith						X
Wingate			X			
Mayor Giordano						

Mayor Giordano recused and left the building at 7:36 pm and meeting will be conducted by Council President Martinello.

Mr. Martinello invited Mrs. Marquis to provide a few comments.

Mrs. Marquis asked residents to speak clearly so their comments could be heard and recorded. She also asked that residents approach the podium only once and limit their comments to five minutes to allow everyone an opportunity to speak.

Mrs. Marquis provided a timeline of the events leading up to the meeting. On April 22, 2026, Borough Redevelopment Attorney Anna Monforth received a concept plan from DMR for the proposed redevelopment of Block 116, Lots 9, 16 and 18 on Hewson Avenue. On April 28, 2026, Doug Doyle of DMR presented the concept to the Council during the public portion of the meeting. Borough Planner Paul Grygiel was also present. Following that meeting, the Council continued its review of the proposal. Mrs. Marquis then turned the meeting over to Ms. Monforth and Spach Trahan of Phillips Preiss Grygiel to explain the redevelopment process and proposed plan.

Ms. Monforth explained that the purpose of the presentation was to review the proposed redevelopment plan, the steps taken by the Borough under the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law and answer any questions before the Council considered adopting the Ordinance.

She reviewed the history of the redevelopment process. On August 16, 2022, the Council adopted Resolution 2022-266 directing the Planning Board to study an area near the Waldwick train station, including Block 116, Lots 9, 16 and 18, to determine whether it qualified as an area in need of redevelopment.

The Planning Board reviewed the study and held a public hearing on April 24, 2023. Following the hearing, the Board unanimously recommended that the area be designated as a non-condemnation area in need of redevelopment. The Council approved the designation through Resolution 2023-182 on May 9, 2023. On February 13, 2024, the Council adopted Resolution 2024-76 to include the three lots that had been left out of the original designation.

On May 12, 2026, the Council adopted Resolution 2026-151 directing Borough Planner Paul Grygiel to prepare a redevelopment plan for the properties. On August 11, 2026, the Council adopted Resolution 2026-218 referring the proposed plan to the Planning Board for review.

The Planning Board reviewed the plan at its September 2 and September 21, 2026 meetings. Mr. Grygiel provided a memorandum regarding its consistency with the Borough's Master Plan. On September 22, 2026, the Planning Board submitted its report to the Council, finding the plan substantially consistent with the Master Plan while raising concerns about the proposed maximum building height.

Ms. Monforth explained that the redevelopment plan would allow the Borough to improve underused properties, generate additional tax revenue and establish standards for future development. She then turned the presentation over to Ms. Trahan.

Ms. Trahan provided an overview of her professional background and explained that the proposed redevelopment area consists of three properties totaling approximately 1.25 acres at Hewson Avenue and Walter Nightengale Place.

She explained that the redevelopment plan would establish new zoning standards for the properties and replace the existing zoning requirements. Any future development would be required to follow the standards outlined in the plan.

Ms. Trahan reviewed the plan's consistency with the Borough's Master Plan. She explained that the Borough's 2013 and 2018 Master Plan Reexamination Reports encourage development that maintains

Waldwick's residential character, strengthens the tax base, improves the appearance of properties and supports growth near the train station.

She also explained that the Borough's Housing Element and Fair Share Plan identifies this area as suitable for residential redevelopment due to its proximity to the train station, businesses and other services.

Ms. Trahan stated that the redevelopment plan requires 20% of the residential units to be affordable housing. With a maximum of 30 units permitted, six would be affordable units. These units could help the Borough meet its affordable housing obligations for 2025 through 2035.

She explained that the Planning Board found the redevelopment plan substantially consistent with the Borough's Master Plan. However, the Board raised concerns regarding the proposed maximum building height of 50 feet and questioned whether that height was necessary.

Ms. Trahan also reviewed the Bergen County Master Plan and the State Development and Redevelopment Plan. She explained that both support redevelopment near transportation, additional housing opportunities and improvements to existing communities. She stated that the proposed redevelopment plan is consistent with those goals.

Ms. Trahan then reviewed the proposed zoning and design requirements. The plan would permit attached single-family town homes, with each unit having its own front and rear entrance. Units would not be permitted to be stacked on top of one another.

The plan requires a minimum setback of 10 feet from property lines and allows a maximum building height of four stories or 50 feet. She explained that the existing affordable housing overlay zone permits three stories or 42 feet, while the Harrison Avenue Redevelopment Plan allows four stories or 50 feet. The additional height would allow for a fourth story, sloped roofs and changes in the property's elevation.

She further explained that no more than eight townhomes could be attached in one row. The plan would allow a maximum of 24 units per acre, or 30 units' total. For comparison, the Harrison Avenue Redevelopment Plan allows 33 units per acre.

Regarding parking and access, Ms. Trahan explained that individual driveways would not be permitted along public streets. Instead, shared driveway entrances would be required to limit the number of access points. Sidewalks would also be required along the streets.

She reviewed the landscaping requirements, which include street trees, flowering plants and evergreen landscaping along property lines, driveways and building entrances.

Ms. Trahan explained that the redevelopment plan includes specific architectural standards to ensure the buildings have a quality appearance. The front and other main building elevations would be required to include brick, stone or similar materials covering at least 50% of the exterior. Certain lower-quality materials would not be permitted.

She further explained that the buildings would be required to include changes in materials and architectural features to avoid the appearance of one large structure. These features could include decorative trim, dormers, bay windows and recessed entrances. Windows and doors would also be required along portions of the ground floor.

Sloped roofs would be required on the main building elevations. Ms. Trahan explained that the proposed height would allow for these roof designs. Rooftop structures for elevators or stairways would not be permitted.

She noted that terraces or balconies could be permitted on the third or fourth floors, provided they remain within the building footprint. Additional requirements address lighting, fencing, mechanical equipment and signage.

Ms. Trahan explained that the goal of the redevelopment plan is to encourage development near the train station and downtown area while preserving the character of the Borough's existing residential neighborhoods.

She noted that the property is located near the railroad tracks, commuter parking lot, an auto repair garage and a PSE&G easement.

Ms. Trahan concluded that the proposed redevelopment plan would provide additional housing opportunities, including affordable housing, improve the appearance of the area and support redevelopment near the train station. She then made herself available for questions and comments.

Council comments.

Mr. Martinello referred to the Planning Board's comments regarding the Borough's 35-foot zoning height limitation. He noted that Ms. Trahan had previously explained that the subject properties are currently within an affordable housing overlay zone permitting a height of 42 feet. He asked her to clarify for the public that the existing permitted height for these properties is 42 feet rather than 35 feet.

Ms. Trahan confirmed that the existing affordable housing overlay zone permits a maximum building height of 42 feet and three stories. She explained that overlay zones are applied to underlying zoning districts to achieve specific planning goals, including affordable housing development to help municipalities meet their state obligations.

Mr. Martinello asked Ms. Trahan to further explain the importance of transit-oriented development in this area and why concentrating development near the train station is beneficial.

Ms. Trahan explained smart growth, a term that planners often used. This came out of a movement that was away from sprawl, which was taking large, open tracks of undeveloped land and building low density housing. That had some benefits; however, it was inefficient in terms of infrastructure use. It also promoted a lot of vehicle miles travel and created traffic concerns. It kept people away from their goods and services and made it more difficult for them to reach job centers. There was a movement back toward with transit oriented development and smart growth to move development intensity a little closer to train stations so that people who are commuting via train will not have to drive as frequently and create traffic

and also to be close to other retail and commercial corridors so that they can meet their daily needs within a relatively easy distance. They can also choose to walk, which can create a more active commercial environment where folks can walk around their downtown areas and live in those areas. It becomes a symbiotic situation around train stations. This has been a goal of a lot of New Jersey State agencies over the years including the County and State plan to promote development that is closer to train stations and existing developed areas to stay protected.

Mr. Martinello clarified that she discussed the redevelopment plan specifically for the three lots currently up for discussion. He realizes people may worry about setting precedents and allowing building up to potentially 50 feet in other areas of town. He asked Ms. Trahan to further explain how that works specific to Waldwick. As an example, it does not mean he can go around the corner from his house and build a 50 foot building.

Ms. Trahan explained the 3 blocks along the train station line were designated as an area in need of redevelopment. Only areas in need of redevelopment can have a redevelopment plan crafted for those areas. Otherwise, all the regular single-family zoning within the town or other zoning districts remain unchanged and would not be at risk because they are not redevelopment areas. When a redevelopment designation is done it is because the properties are likely deteriorating, in poor condition, underutilized and so the planners make findings in line with the local redevelopment and housing law and the Council can make the final decision on whether to designate which this Council agreed with.

Mr. Martinello recalled from discussion that these were concept plans that were presented that go along with the master plan and redevelopment plan that were submitted. 50 feet was discussed. 42 feet to get to 50 feet is an additional 8 feet which is what is being discussed to get the 42 feet to 50 feet. He also confirmed discussion of the sloping gables to reduce. He asked for confirmation that the point potentially is the 50 feet, not the whole mass is 50 feet.

Ms. Trahan confirmed that the highest point of the building would be 50 feet.

Mr. Martinello explained that the Planning Board found the proposed redevelopment plan to be consistent with the Borough's Master Plan. He asked Ms. Trahan to clarify what this means.

Ms. Trahan explained that the Master Plan does not make specific recommendations regarding building height in this area. While it references existing zoning, it does not recommend a particular height. She explained that the redevelopment process allows the Borough to establish new zoning standards for areas designated as in need of redevelopment. The Planning Board found no inconsistencies and determined that the redevelopment plan was substantially consistent with the Master Plan.

Mr. Martinello asked if any Council Members had additional questions or comments.

Mr. Ritchie asked Ms. Trahan to clarify what the Council was voting on and what the process would be for someone interested in developing the property.

Ms. Trahan explained that the Ordinance establishes the zoning standards for future development. Once the redevelopment plan is adopted, a property owner or developer would still be required to submit a site plan application to the Planning Board. The application would go through the standard public review process, and the Planning Board would have the authority to approve, deny or impose conditions on the application. She further explained that the Planning Board may consider certain minor deviations,

known as C variances, but cannot approve deviations equivalent to D variances, including uses not permitted under the redevelopment plan.

Mr. Chrzanowski read a prepared statement. He explained that although he has only served on the Council for three months and was not involved when the concept was first introduced, he took the time to review the proposal, attend the September 21 Planning Board meeting and speak with those involved in the process.

He stated that the property is located in an area designated as in need of redevelopment and that the project would provide additional tax revenue to help address the Borough's financial challenges. He referenced the Planning Board's finding that the plan is consistent with the Master Plan and noted that the primary concern raised was building height. He explained that the Borough's 50-foot height limitation would still apply and questioned the significance of the difference between the proposed height and the 42 feet currently permitted.

Mr. Chrzanowski addressed concerns regarding tax incentives and potential private arrangements. He stated that the Council has made clear it is not interested in a PILOT for this project and that DMR has indicated it does not intend to request one under the current design. He dismissed allegations of secret deals and encouraged residents to focus on the facts of the proposal.

He acknowledged concerns regarding building design, traffic, parking, construction and safety. He stated that these issues are important and should be addressed through the site plan review process, appropriate conditions and enforcement. He emphasized the importance of construction staging, truck routes, weight restrictions and traffic impacts on surrounding streets.

Mr. Chrzanowski further stated that the proposal is a targeted townhouse development, not a high-rise project, and that responsible redevelopment can provide new housing opportunities, including affordable housing, while strengthening the Borough's tax base. He encouraged the Council to consider the Planning Board's findings, financial benefits and appropriate development conditions when making its decision. He expressed his support for responsible redevelopment that preserves Waldwick's character.

Mr. Martinello agreed with several of Mr. Chrzanowski's comments. He explained that the project is expected to generate approximately \$450,000 to \$500,000 annually in new tax revenue. Since the project is not proposed as a PILOT, the revenue would be distributed through the regular tax structure, including the Borough and Board of Education. He noted that both are facing financial challenges, including rising health insurance costs, and that additional tax revenue could help offset future tax increases.

He further explained that the proposed density is approximately 24 units per acre, which he considers relatively low for an area near the train station. He expressed his support for the concept design, noting that it would be more visually appealing than a single large building. He believes the project would improve the appearance of the area, generate additional tax revenue and encourage future redevelopment.

Mr. Ritchie agreed with Mr. Martinello and stated that he liked the appearance of the proposed development. He noted that the density is relatively low compared to other projects and that the units would be townhomes offered for sale.

Mrs. Cericola-Drake acknowledged residents' concerns about the possibility of another inexpensive-looking building. She explained that the Planner had reviewed the design standards and guidelines intended to address those concerns. She stated that the Council had been supportive of the concept when it was originally presented.

Ms. Wingate expressed her support for redevelopment and stated that she liked the proposed concept. She hopes to see the project move forward and looked forward to hearing comments from the public.

Public comment.

Carol Hill requested clarification regarding the design requirements, the possibility of additional structures on the property, whether the proposed zoning would be permanent and the anticipated tax revenue. She expressed support for redevelopment but raised concerns about the proposed building height.

Gino Maraglia was confused regarding the proposed building height.

Bert Hartmann asked about the height of the tallest existing building in Waldwick. He also requested clarification regarding the referral process to the Planning Board and how the Borough and redeveloper work together throughout the planning process.

Mark Ramundo questioned whether any private meetings took place between Council Members and the developer.

Doug Hill expressed concerns regarding the proposed design requirements, particularly the building height.

Joe Incardona, who owns property behind the proposed development, expressed concern that his tenants may vacate if the project moves forward.

Eric Ackerman questioned the buffer area between the proposed development and Harrison Avenue.

Eric Rubenstein requested clarification regarding the Ordinance under consideration.

Kim Antonick expressed opposition to the proposed development design.

PUBLIC HEARING & ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE(S)

Mr. Martinello asked the Clerk to read Ordinance No. 2026-#15 by title.

Ordinance No. 2026-#15 – ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE BLOCK 116, LOTS 9, 16 & 18 REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Mr. Martinello closed the Public comment. Ordinance No. 2026-#15 was advertised and on second reading is adopted. This ordinance will go into effect immediately after approval and publication according to law.

Council Member	Motion	Second	Ayes	Nays	Abstain	Absent
Cericola-Drake		X	X			
Chrzanowski			X			
Martinello			X			
Ritchie	X		X			
Smith						X
Wingate				X		
Mayor Giordano						

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one wished to be heard.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Council at its Special Meeting on MOTION by Mrs. Cericola-Drake and seconded by Mr. Ritchie and on roll call carried the meeting adjourned at 9:25 pm.

Adopted: October 20, 2026

KELLEY HALEWICZ, RMC/CMC
MUNICIPAL CLERK