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TOWN OF WEST NEW YORK
 COUNTY OF HUDSON, NEW JERSEY



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
PLANNING BOARD
 428-60th STREET
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CLARA BRITO-HERRERA | CHAIRWOMAN
 ANDREA BOUNSIAR | VICE-CHAIRWOMAN
 JONATHAN CASTANEDA | BOARD MEMBER
 COMM. MARCOS ARROYO | BOARD MEMBER
 STEVEN FERRALES | BOARD MEMBER
 ALAIN GOMEZ | BOARD MEMBER
 HECTOR YANEZ | BOARD MEMBER
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 ANGIE GUTIERREZ | BOARD MEMBER
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 BOARD PLANNER
 DAVID SPATZ, P.P., AICP

MINUTES FOR REGULAR MEETING MONDAY AUGUST 11, 2025

The Planning Board has scheduled a regular meeting on **Monday August 11, 2025 at 6:00PM** via Teleconference. Call-In Number – **(929) 205- 6099** Meeting ID: **840 0476 7876** Password: **42860**

1. **Meeting called to order by Chairwoman Clara Brito-Herrera Time: 6:03 P.M.**
2. **Pledge of Allegiance led by Chairwoman Clara Brito-Herrera**
3. **Reading of notice in compliance with Open Public Meetings Act by Board Counsel**

This is the regular meeting of **August 11, 2025** of the **Planning Board of the Town of West New York**. Adequate notice of this meeting was provided pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, by at least 48 hours prior to this meeting, giving the time, date, location and, to the extent known, the agenda further indicating that formal action may be taken and this notice was (1) prominently posted in at least one public place reserved for such or similar announcements; (2) mailed, telephoned or telecopied to at least two newspapers, which newspapers have been designated by the Governing Body of the Town of West New York to receive such notices, one of which is the official newspaper of the Town; and (3) filed with the Clerk of the Town. Electronic copies of any hearing are available by contacting the Planning Board Secretary or the Town Clerk.

4. **Roll Call:**

	PRESENT	ABSENT
Chair Clara Brito-Herrera	✓	
Vice-Chair Andrea Bounsiar		✓
Member Jonathan Castaneda	✓	
Member Comm. Marcos Arroyo	✓	
Member Steven Ferrales	✓	
Member Alain Gomez	✓	
Member Hector Yanez	✓	
Member Israel Fuentez	✓	
Member Angie Gutierrez	✓	
Alt. Member 1 Markus Rehfield		✓
Alt. Member 2 Marelin Burgos	✓	

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5. Communications, reports, and administrative matters:

- a. Reappointing Andrea Bounsiar as Class IV Member of The Town of West New York Planning Board (Term: March 17, 2025 – March 16, 2029)**
- b. Reappointing Markus Rehfeld as Alternate No. I Member of The Town of West New York Planning Board (Term: June 8, 2025 – June 7, 2027)**
- c. Reappointing Commissioner Marcos Arroyo to Serve as Class III Member of The Town of West New York Planning Board (Term: June 8, 2025 – June 7, 2026)**
- d. Reappointing Marelin Burgos as Alternate No. II Member to The Town of West New York Planning Board (Term: May 10, 2025 – May 9, 2026)**
- e. Reappointing Hector Yanez as Class IV Member of The Town of West New York Planning Board (Term: April 21, 2025 – April 20, 2029)**

Note: Board Attorney Robert Ferraro, Esq. administered the oath of office.

6. Minutes of Previous Meetings:

It was regularly moved by **Chairwoman Brito-Herrera**, seconded by **Member Castañeda** that the Minutes of Regular Meeting: **July 28, 2025** be approved. The motion was carried by the following vote:

AYES	- Members Castaneda, Comm. Marcos Arroyo, Ferrales, Gomez, Yanez, Fuentez, Gutierrez, Burgos, and Chairwoman Brito-Herrera
NAYS	- None
ABSENT	- Member Rehfield and Vice-Chair Bounsiar

7. Resolutions:

a. RE: PB #2025-03 – Roseland/Port Imperial Partners, LP

It was regularly moved by **Chairwoman Brito-Herrera**, seconded by **Member Gomez** to **approve** the foregoing resolution. The motion was carried by the following vote:

AYES	- Members Castaneda, Comm. Marcos Arroyo, Ferrales, Gomez, Yanez, Fuentez, Gutierrez, Burgos, and Chairwoman Brito-Herrera
NAYS	- None
ABSENT	- Member Rehfield and Vice-Chair Bounsiar

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Resolutions (Cont'd):

b. RE: Amended Resolution – 6117 Bergenline Avenue (Block: 139 Lot: 5)

It was regularly moved by **Member Gomez**, seconded by **Chairwoman Brito-Herrera** to **approve** the foregoing resolution. The motion was carried by the following vote:

AYES	- Members Castaneda, Comm. Marcos Arroyo, Ferrales, Gomez, Yanez, Fuentez, Burgos, and Chairwoman Brito-Herrera
NAYS	- None
ABSENT	- Members Gutierrez, Rehfield and Vice-Chair Bounsiar

8. Acceptance/Completeness: None

9. Old Business – Applications: None

10. New Business:

Note: Chairwoman Brito-Herrera recused herself from consideration of this application.

Upon motion by **Chairwoman Brito-Herrera**, seconded by **Member Castañeda**, the Board appointed **Member Fuentez** as **Acting Chair for the remainder of the meeting**. The motion was unanimously approved.

a. Planning Board Docket #PB 2025-01; filed January 29, 2025
6308 Jackson Dev, LLC site plan -- 6308 Jackson Street (Block: 153 Lot: 14)

The applicant proposes to construct a three story, 16-unit elevator apartment building on the above noted vacant lot. The project consists of two residential floors over one at grade level of parking; there will be 10, one bedroom and 6, two-bedroom units. The property is located on the eastern side of Jackson Street, between 62nd Street and 65th Street, in the Town's R-M, Medium Density Residential Zone. **(Public Notices are Required)**

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New Business (Cont'd):
Experts & Board Testimony:

1. J. Alvaro Alonso, Esq. – 6121 Kennedy Boulevard - On behalf of the applicant:

Mr. Alonso, Esq. presented the application for 6308 Jackson Development LLC, requesting site plan approval and variances to construct a three-story, 16-unit elevator apartment building with two residential floors above at-grade parking. The proposal consists of ten one-bedroom and six two-bedroom units on a lot in the RM Medium Density Residential Zone that has remained vacant for decades. He reviewed the site's history of larger, unsuccessful proposals that had required significant variances, noting that the current plan is considerably smaller, avoids the need for any D variances, and seeks only C1 and C2 bulk variances related to the lot's size and configuration.

2. Albert Arencibia, A.A. – 50 E. Palisades Ave, Englewood, NJ:

Mr. Arencibia testified that he has been involved with the 6308 Jackson Street site for nearly a decade, including prior, larger proposals that were ultimately scaled back in response to zoning requirements and community concerns. The current proposal is for a three-story, 16-unit elevator building which includes ten one-bedroom and six two-bedroom units, over at-grade parking, designed to match the neighborhood's height and setbacks. The building will have two means of egress, full fire protection, ADA compliance, and modern amenities. He stated that parking will meet town standards and be enhanced with automated stackers. Landscaping will be added along the property's edges, with openness to neighbor input on fencing. A roof deck, set back to maintain privacy, is planned, and the exterior will feature a consistent residential appearance using brick, wood accents, and cement panels. Mr. Arencibia noted measures to reduce visual and noise impacts, such as enclosing gas meters, placing mechanical equipment on the roof with potential screening, and using shielded lighting to prevent glare.

3. Adnan Khan – AWZ Engineering:

Mr. Khan, the project's civil engineer, testified that the plans dated February 15, 2025, included seven sheets covering site layout, grading, drainage, and utilities. He explained that the project requires a minor lot coverage variance of 77.92% where 75% is permitted, and that the property slopes about 7–8 feet from front to back, allowing use of mechanical parking lifts at the rear. Stormwater from the roof will be collected into an oversized underground detention system designed to North Hudson Sewerage Authority's stringent requirements, with controlled discharge to the municipal sewer. New water, fire, sewer, and gas services will be installed, along with two street trees, additional landscaping at the rear, and rooftop plantings. Garage lighting will be LED, fully shielded, and downward-facing. During questioning, Mr. Khan confirmed there would be no basement, minimal excavation limited to footings and the parking lift area, and no anticipated blasting. He described the trash and recycling area at the rear, with waste rolled to the curb for private collection. Board members also sought clarification on the mechanical parking system, which architect Albert Arencibia explained allows for six stacked spaces in the rear, with one space left open for access. Mr. Khan confirmed stormwater approval will be obtained from North Hudson before construction.

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New Business (Cont'd):

Experts & Board Testimony (Cont'd):

4. Andrew Jafolla – Dynamic Traffic Engineer:

Mr. Jafolla, the project's traffic engineer, testified that his February 27, 2025 traffic impact study reviewed both traffic generation and parking for the proposed 16-unit building. Based on Institute of Transportation Engineers data, he concluded the project would generate fewer than five trips during peak morning and evening hours which he stated was well below thresholds for further analysis. He further stated that its proximity to mass transit, shopping, and the Bergenline Avenue light rail would further reduce reliance on personal vehicles. He noted that West New York census data shows an average of 0.7 vehicles per rental unit, indicating a need for about 12 spaces; the plan provides 19, meeting local requirements and RSIS maximum limits. Mr. Jafolla stated that the garage's 8.5-by-18-foot spaces and 23.5-foot drive aisle are sufficient for a low-turnover residential use, and the layout prevents adding pressure to on-street parking. He also highlighted a safety advantage over typical two-family homes by avoiding the need for vehicles to back directly onto Jackson Street, and confirmed that similar local projects have shown parking demand at less than one space per unit.

5. Alex Dougherty, P.P., AICP – 101 Gibraltar Ave Morris Plains NJ:

Mr. Dougherty, the project's planner, testified that the 6308 Jackson Street lot lies in the RM Medium Density Residential Zone, where multifamily elevator buildings are permitted. He reviewed the bulk variances requested, noting the lot's 9,779 square feet and 50-foot width fall short of the ordinance's 40,000-square-foot, 200-foot-wide requirement, though it exceeds the master plan's 7,500-square-foot recommendation for medium-density sites. Additional relief is sought for front and side yard setbacks and slightly exceeding the 75% lot coverage limit. The three-story building would remain well under height, density, and floor area ratio limits, with 16 units over at-grade parking and 19 on-site spaces. Mr. Dougherty argued the project fits the neighborhood's scale, provides housing near ample mass transit, and aligns with master plan goals, supporting approval under both C1 (hardship due to lot size) and C2 (benefits outweighing detriments) criteria. However, Board Planner Spatz and members questioned the C1 applicability, noting a two-family home could be built without variances, but agreed C2 could justify approval.

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New Business (Cont'd):
Public Portion:

6. Jeffrey Courtney – 6040 Kennedy Boulevard East:

Mr. Courtney, a former Jackson Street resident, opposed the proposed 16-unit building, arguing it does not fit the neighborhood's character. He described Jackson Street as a block with apartments on the corners transitioning to two-family homes mid-block, similar to other preserved areas in town. He criticized the project as an apartment building "pitched as a two-family" that requires an elevator parking system to meet parking minimums, asserting it does not belong in this location and that the town should preserve existing neighborhood patterns. In response, Mr. Alonso acknowledged the building is multifamily but emphasized it is a permitted use under current zoning, with references to two-family homes made only for scale comparisons. He noted that safety and parking design were considered, and the zoning ordinance still allows multifamily buildings mid-block, reflecting prior planning decisions.

7. Katherine Chao – 588-65th Street:

Ms. Chao, a 45-year resident living around the corner from the site, opposed the project, citing Jackson Street's narrow, busy two-way configuration and frequent ambulance traffic that already struggles to get through. She expressed concerns that adding 16 units would worsen safety risks for children, churchgoers, and elderly pedestrians, worsen overpopulation in local schools, and overwhelm the neighborhood. She also objected to the electric parking system, calling it too much for the area. In response, Mr. Alonso acknowledged her concerns but argued the proposal is safer and better than building multiple two-family homes, which could yield nearly as many bedrooms with far less parking and potentially illegal conversions to three-family homes. He emphasized that the project meets parking requirements and allows cars to pull in and out without blocking each other, improving safety compared to typical driveway configurations on the street.

8. Byron Betancourt – 6312 Jackson Street:

Mr. Byron Betancourt, a 15-year resident living at 6312 Jackson Street, opposed the project, arguing that placing a large building on this narrow street would harm safety and quality of life. He cited concerns about constant noise, loss of sunlight, and added traffic on a road already critical for EMS ambulances, whose headquarters is just one block away. Mr. Betancourt noted that the street is often double-parked, and additional vehicles could delay emergency response when every second counts. He also stressed that West New York is already overpopulated with insufficient street parking, and urged the board to prioritize community safety over what he called overdevelopment.

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New Business (Cont'd):

Public Portion (Cont'd):

9. Briana Abreu – Jackson Street:

Mrs. Abreu, who lives at 6305 Jackson Street across from the site, raised concerns about parking arrangements for the proposed 16-unit building. She asked whether the 19 parking spaces would be included in the tenants' leases at no additional cost, noting that in similar buildings, extra parking fees often push residents to park on the street, worsening congestion and blocking driveways. Attorney Alonso responded that the board could make it a condition of approval that each unit's rent include a parking space, with no separate charge. He explained that the lease would specify the space, ensuring exclusivity for the tenant, and that West New York's tenant certificate process would enforce this requirement during rental turnovers.

10. K. Hernandez – 6206 Jackson Street:

Ms. Hernandez, a resident of 6206 Jackson Street, spoke in opposition to the parking assessments presented by the applicant's professionals. She said that, as someone living on the block, she regularly experiences severe parking shortages, with cars double parked sometimes on sidewalks, in yellow zones, or near fire hydrants. She explained that finding a spot often requires parking several blocks away, making it especially difficult for families like hers, where her mother has a disability and uses a walker. Ms. Hernandez argued that the neighborhood is not a "walking culture" like Hoboken or downtown Jersey City, noting that most families rely on cars for daily needs such as transporting children or grocery shopping. She also raised concerns about ambulances frequently using the block and being impeded by the current congestion. She concluded that the applicant's parking analysis does not reflect the reality of this block's conditions. Attorney Alonso responded that the project was specifically designed to meet parking requirements without a variance, and he argued that two-family homes in the area often worsen parking problems due to tandem configurations, illegal apartments, and garages converted to storage, which eliminate on-site parking.

11. Clarissa Herrera – 6312 Jackson Street, Apt. 1:

Ms. Herrera, who lives next door to the proposed site at 6312 Jackson Street, opposed the project, citing worsened parking shortages, increased traffic, and safety hazards in an area already plagued by double parking and speeding cars. She argued the 16-unit building would need closer to 30 spaces, not 19, and raised concerns about air conditioning units, emissions from adjacent parking, and the reduced four-foot side yard setback instead of the required ten feet, which she said would harm visibility when exiting her driveway. She also warned that density could lead to overcrowding within units, creating further strain on the neighborhood, and urged the board to reject the project for the safety and well-being of residents. Attorney Alonso responded that the proposed four-foot setback is greater than the three feet allowed for a two-family home.

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New Business (Cont'd):

Public Portion (Cont'd):

12. Yoleisy Yanez – 6600 Jackson Street:

Ms. Yanez, of 6600 Jackson Street, echoed prior residents' objections to the project, citing its negative impact on traffic, safety, and neighborhood conditions. She described the challenges of navigating the narrow two-way street, especially during school months when ambulances frequently pass, forcing drivers to pull aside in already congested conditions. Noting the proximity to a school, park, and church, she urged the board to heed residents' opposition and reject the project. She challenged the developer and project team to experience the street's difficulties firsthand during rush hours, emphasizing that current problems would worsen if the proposal were approved.

13. Member Ferrales – 6600 Jackson Street:

Member Ferrales questioned where private trash-hauling trucks would stop to collect garbage, and where delivery services like UberEats or DoorDash would park. He sought clarification on whether the automated parking lift would produce noise that might affect neighbors. Attorney Alonso explained that trash collection would operate like any other residential property, with a superintendent placing cans outside at pickup time; the hauler would briefly stop in front of the building, collect trash, and leave. There would be no permanent parking spot for the hauler or delivery vehicles, similar to a two-family home. Regarding noise, architect Albert Arencibia stated the parking lift would be fully enclosed inside the building with no nearby openings, so mechanical sounds would not be heard from outside.

14. Clara Herrera – 6312 Jackson Street, Apt. 2:

Ms. Clara Brito-Herrera, a 44-year resident living next to the proposed site, opposed the project, citing safety, environmental, and quality-of-life concerns. She recalled a past fire at the property caused by a previous owner and said no one from the current development team consulted her. She contended the plan requires six major variances, including reduced side yard setbacks that would place parking and vehicle emissions just feet from her home, block sunlight, and restrict air circulation. She cautioned that rooftop mechanical units would create noise and that traffic from 16 units, plus guests and deliveries, would worsen congestion, endanger children, and strain parking. Emphasizing the neighborhood's unique double-lot character and family-oriented nature, she urged the board to reject the proposal in favor of two-family homes that match the area's scale and preserve livability. The applicant's attorney responded that the building's density meets zoning requirements and does not require a variance, and that the safety issues she cited already exist under current conditions. He argued the project could improve safety through head-first vehicle exits and pedestrian alerts, and noted that a by-right two-family home could be built to the same height and length with similar impacts. Addressing her claim of no prior contact, he stated that after a previous zoning board application was carried, the development team met with Ms. Brito-Herrera to discuss

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New Business (Cont'd):

Public Portion (Cont'd):

incorporating her property into the project, including a potential joint venture, but negotiations failed. Ms. Brito-Herrera rebutted, clarifying that she was approached years ago only by the previous property owner about selling her home and never engaged in business partnership discussions. She stressed that no one from the current team consulted her on the 16-unit proposal or earlier 27-unit plans. She described the past conversation as solely a sales pitch from the former owner, not a collaborative project discussion, and maintained her opposition. The applicant's attorney reiterated that past meetings addressed her concerns, but Ms. Brito-Herrera maintained they were only about purchasing her property, which she declined to sell because she intended to remain in West New York.

It was regularly moved by **Acting Chairman Fuentez**, seconded by **Member Castañeda** to **deny** the foregoing application. The motion was carried by the following vote:

AYES	- Members Castaneda, Comm. Marcos Arroyo, Ferrales, Gomez, Yanez, Burgos, and Acting Chairman Fuentez
NAYS	- None
ABSENT	- Members Rehfield, Gutierrez, Vice-Chair Bounsiar, and Chair Brito-Herrera

11. Privilege of the Floor: None

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12. Adjournment:

It was regularly moved by **Member Jonathan Castañeda**, seconded by **Acting Chairman Fuentez**, to **adjourn at 8:31 p.m.** The motion was carried by the following vote:

AYES - Members Castaneda, Comm. Marcos Arroyo, Ferrales, Gomez, Yanez,
Burgos, and Acting Chairman Fuentez
NAYS - None
ABSENT - Members Rehfield, Gutierrez, Vice-Chair Bounsiar, and Chair Brito-Herrera

Chairwoman Clara Brito-Herrera

Attest: _____
Joseph E. Roque
Board Secretary