

## **Hawthorne Planning Board Minutes of January 2025 Meeting**

The January 6, 2026 meeting of the Hawthorne Planning Board was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Chairman Lucibello. After recital of the Pledge of Allegiance, Chairman Lucibello called the roll. All members were present. Chairman Lucibello announced that the notice of the meeting had been published and posted in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

The Board then conducted its annual reorganization. Robert Lucibello was nominated and unanimously re-elected to serve as Board Chairman. Tiffany Della Croce was nominated and unanimously re-elected to serve as Board Vice Chairman. A motion was made and unanimously approved to appoint Boswell Engineering as engineers for the Board for the calendar year 2026. A motion was made and unanimously approved to appoint Burgis Associates, Inc. as planner for the Board for the calendar year 2026. A motion was made and unanimously approved to appoint Sophy Sedarat, Esq. as Board attorney for the calendar year 2026.

### **MINUTES**

1. On a motion made by Mr. Matthews, and seconded by Mr. Meier the Board approved the minutes of the September 16, 2025 meeting.

### **BILLS-**

1. On a motion made by Mr. Matthews, and seconded by Mr. DiBella, and approved by a vote of 6-1 to approve payment of a bill of the Herald News for invoice No. 117076 in the amount of 15.84.

### **RESOLUTION-None**

### **CORRESPONDENCE-**

Re: Zoning Ordinance No. 2376-25, the Planning Board reviewed the ordinance and determined that the Ordinance is not inconsistent with the Borough's Master Plan and made no comments or recommendations.

### **TENANCY REVIEW-**

1. With regard to the application Izabella Learning Center-Hawthorne, Al Acquaviva, Esq. appeared as attorney for the applicant. Mr. Acquaviva made a brief opening statement

giving an overview of the application. He indicated that the applicant is seeking tenancy approval to use the property located at 258 Hawthorne Avenue as a learning / child care center located in the R2 Zone. He has two witnesses, the applicants architect Matthew Evans to testify as to what little construction is to be done, and the owner Izabella Garcia. A safety check list from the state was passed out to all the Board members. He stated that the application only needs one variance which would be a parking variance. They have three parking spaces on site.

He called as his first witness Matthew Evans, the applicant's architect. After being sworn, he was offered and accepted as an expert witness. He indicated that he prepared the plans submitted in support of the application. He then went on to describe sheet S1 which shows existing basement and existing first floor plan, basically the demolition of what they are proposing. They also have existing pictures of the front of the building, the side of Warburton and Hawthorne Avenue, the tax map, the site plan. They are not proposing any new foundation or addition, no increase to the foot print of the building; only interior alterations. The building was built as a commercial building; it's been through different commercial uses. The building is in the R2 Zone. They are proposing three parking spaces off Warburton Avenue, the area in the front will be used for pick up and drop off, with a proposed fenced in play area along Warburton Avenue, the rest of the site will remain the same.

Sheet SK1 shows the proposed basement plan, the addition to the basement, kitchen, pantry, storage area, employee lockers, recycle area and power room. The rest of the basement would be for the pre school children, a total of 32 children for this area. They originally had a central stair case but moved the stairs to the side. They have a fire stair in the front and new fire stairs in the back, having two means of egress. The first floor shows the improvements. Hawthorne Avenue would be the main entrance; the drop off area with a waiting area, reception area, new bathroom and the stairs going down to the lower level. The front half dedicated to the pre school a total of 20 for this area. Then in the back they have the toddler and infant section with a total of 17 children that would be an open area. They would create an access to the play ground area from inside. The front would remain with the planters. They have diagonal parking on the side for the use. Their attorney then asked if they had reviewed the safety check list from the state and if the design of the interior of the center meets the standards of the state check list and the answer was yes. He then questioned the type of fence they are proposing which would be a stockade.

Sheet SK2 shows the proposed front elevation, the Hawthorne Avenue side new restoration, stucco, sign, a canopy. The sign will comply with the Borough ordinance. He went on to state that this type of use for daycare would be a beneficial use to the Borough and would not negatively impact the neighborhood or surrounding area as it is a residential R2 Zone.

Discussion then took place among Board members and the applicant's architect to address some of the concerns raised by Board members, questioning if the building is

going to be sprinklered, the safety of the outside play ground area, (how will it be protected), the amount of traffic in that vicinity and the parking.

Mr. Acquaviva called his next witness Izabella Garcia the principal owner of the center. After being sworn, she testified she has two other learning centers in West New York, the first center has 56 children with 6 employees, the second has 40 children also with 6 employees. They plan to have 50 children at the Hawthorne site with 6 employees. Hours of operation would be 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM. She expects them to be dropped off between 7:00 AM and 7:45 AM so we can avoid traffic from the school. She stated that the other school open at 7:00 AM also to avoid school traffic. She stated that they like to hire locally so that they can car pool or use public transportation or walk. The parents would drop off on the Hawthorne side and bring the child into the waiting area instead of the employees going out to receive the children. This should not take more than 7 minutes; it's a very quick process.

The Board members had several concerns over the amount of parking spaces on site, the fence in playground and how the children are being dropped off; there major concern is the amount of traffic from the middle school. After a brief discussion, a motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to adjourn the hearing to the February 17, 2026 Board meeting.

**Minor Site Plan**-None

**Major Site Plan**-None

**Old Business**-

1. With regard to the application of 1 Broadway Auto Body- 150 Goffle Road, the application could not be heard due to the summons that were issued to the applicant. This application was carried to the January 20<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS**-

1. The Board unanimously approved the meeting dates for the upcoming year 2026. Ms. Patmos will provide a copy to the Borough Clerk for posting and will make arrangements for publication in the newspaper.

**PUBLIC**

The meeting was then opened for public comment without response.  
The meeting was then adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Patmos  
Board Secretary

