

**BOROUGH OF ROOSEVELT  
PLANNING BOARD  
JANUARY 21, 2026**

Present: Arielle Debira, Tina Kaufman-Marut, Allison Petrilla, Mayor Peggy Malkin, Fred Septak, Tim Hartley, Ron Scibetti, John Impellizeri, and Heidi Mendies

Absent: Esther Psarakis, June Ord, and Margaret Katz

Also, Present: Board Attorney Michele Donato, Board Engineer Carmela Roberts, Board Planner Andy Thomas, and Board Secretary April Claudio

Pursuant to the Sunshine Law, adequate notice in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act was provided to this meeting's date, time, place and agenda was mailed to the news media, posted on the Borough bulletin board, mailed to those requesting personal notice, and filed with the Municipal Clerk.

Ms. Donato administered the Oath of Office to Arielle Debira and Tina Kaufman-Marut.

Mr. Hartley offered some changes to the December 11, 2025 meeting minutes.

Mr. Petrilla made a motion to approve the amended minutes of the December 11, 2025 meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Hartley and approved by the following vote:

Ayes: Petrilla, Malkin, Septak, Hartley, Scibetti, Impellizari, and Mendies.

Mr. Hartley nominated Ms. Petrilla as Chair, seconded by Mr. Impellizari. Mayor Malkin nominated Mr. Septak as Chair, which was seconded by Mr. Scibetti. Ms. Petrilla received one vote and Mr. Septak received four votes. Ms. Debira abstained. Mr. Septak was appointed Chair.

There were no nominations made for Vice Chair. Mr. Hartley volunteered to take the role.

Mayor & Council Update: No report.

Environmental Commission: No report.

Mayor Malkin made a motion to approve the resolution establishing the 2026 designated newspapers, which was seconded by Mr. Septak and approved unanimously.

Mr. Hartley made a motion to approve the resolution appointing the Board's professionals for 2026, which was seconded by Ms. Petrilla and approved unanimously.

JCP&L APPLICATION: Attorney Ben Nadell gave a summary of the application from last month's meeting. The application left off discussing the issue of the tree clearing. Michael Haines, Supervisor of Transmission and Vegetation Maintenance, stated they had internal meetings, met with Mr. Hartley and the Board's engineer to try to come up with an offset to the tree clearing. JCP&L proposed a pollinator habitat in the right of way. He explained the importance of having an open tree corridor is to allow for public and employee safety; they don't want the trees to get too close. They are required to maintain a certain distance per federal regulations. JCP&L's transmission and vegetation maintenance plan provides for clearing the right of way to meet the minimum clearance of 25 feet. They will evaluate priority trees: dead, damaged, leaning, encroaching and address those as well.

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All vegetation and trees will be removed in the corridor to meet the federal regulations. The proposed tree clearing is the minimum required. Their plan complies with the FERC and NERC standards.

Mr. Hartley questioned the FAC003 clearance chart. Mr. Haines explained First Energy has greater clearances to make sure they comply with the minimum requirements in the chart. Mr. Hartley created his own exhibits to show his view of the tree clearances to the transmission lines.

Ms. Debira asked Mr. Hartley what he wants from the applicant. Mr. Hartley felt they had not proven their point that the tree removal being proposed is necessary. He felt it is more of a convenience for JCP&L.

Mr. Haines stated they are following the standards of what is required for safety and their plan is reviewed and approved by FERC and NERC.

Mr. Hartley reiterated that he felt they had not proven the tree removal to be necessary.

Mr. Thomas asked how often the vegetation in the right of way is inspected. Mr. Haines stated there is a four year maintenance cycle with annual inspections.

Amy Jones spoke about the proposed pollinator habitat. All areas that are cleared, will be restored with native wildflower pollinator seeds to help with regrowth in the corridor. The seed mixes will vary by habitat and will be completed post construction.

Mr. Hartley asked her to provide a summary of her comments from the last meeting regarding invasive species. Ms. Jones explained their vegetation management plan addresses how invasive species are handled. Mr. Haines explained the invasive species are monitored but not always addressed.

Ms. Debira asked if the pollinator habitat is comparable to the tree removal. Ms. Jones stated it is not however it offers an alternative to help with the wildlife habitat. She clarified the pollinator habitats would only be in the areas disturbed by construction. Mr. Thomas suggested those locations be identified on the site plan. Ms. Debira asked if JCP&L would subsidize planting trees somewhere else in town. Mr. Nadell stated the Borough's ordinance does not require them to replace the trees so he felt the Board could not require them to make a contribution.

**Public Comments:**

Lawrence Mendies, 65 N. Rochdale Avenue, asked to object to having a pollinator habitat within his easement with JCP&L. Mr. Haines stated property owners can do what they want in their easements however they must stabilize the areas disturbed during construction, post construction. Mr. Nadell suggested a condition of the approvals be that all three property owners affected would need to provide consent for the pollinator habitats.

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Claudia Longo, 20 Pine Drive, asked about pesticides and fertilization. Mr. Haines stated they use herbicides based on the species and site characteristics. Property owners are notified before herbicides are distributed.

Ken Maffel, 20 Pine Drive, asked how the herbicides are distributed.

At approximately 8:50 pm Ms. Debira left the meeting.

Christine Cafone, Planner, went over the variance proofs for the application. The variances being requested are: D1 for being a non-permitted use and D6 for height. The proposal is for a substantial infrastructure upgrade that will provide greater resiliency and capacity to JCP&L and the public. There is no obligation under Borough Ordinance for them to replace the trees. The Board engineer's review letter agreed it was not prudent to replace the trees, however she felt the pollinator habits are a great offset if the owners agree. She felt they have met the burden of proof required for granting the variances. The site can accommodate the additional height, as the existing structures already exceed 35 feet. The benefits of the application outweigh the detriments as this project is completely in the right of way.

Mr. Nadell requested holding the vote on the application until the next meeting in the hopes of having seven members present.

Mr. Hartley felt the capacity may be better but the negative aspect is the tree removal.

Ms. Cafone reiterated that the Borough Ordinance exempts utilities from replanting trees and that is something the Board cannot ignore. She felt it is difficult to say it is a detriment when the ordinance exempts them.

Public Comments: Mr. Mendes stated the power is getting upgraded and their easements allow them to clear the trees. He cares about trees but this is more about the power. He wants the land clear to have safety and security for his farm.

The application was carried to the February 18<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Public Comment on other matters: None

Mr. Hartley offered a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Mr. Scibetti and approved unanimously.