

Councilman, resident sue each other in 2025 campaign-signs flap

BY MICHAEL OLOHAN
OF PASCACK PRESS
PARK RIDGE

A councilman and a resident have filed complaints against each other in municipal court stemming from disputes over campaign signs during the 2025 election season.

Councilman Gregory Hoffman filed a complaint Nov. 2, 2025, alleging resident Lori Fredrics placed removable stickers on campaign signs supporting Hoffman and running mate Bruce Goldsmith. Fredrics denies the allegation.

According to the complaint, the stickers challenged the candidates' positions on overdevelopment and Hoffman's choice of running mate. Hoffman alleged the signs were defaced when the stickers were attached and again when they were removed.

The matter was originally filed in Pascack Joint Municipal Court and later transferred to Westwood-Hillsdale Municipal Court.

In April and May, Fredrics filed separate complaints alleging Hoffman violated borough ordinances by placing campaign signs in a public right-of-way and by using a cell-phone while driving. Hoffman said he was recording video of Fredrics allegedly defacing one of his campaign signs.

A hearing date had not been announced as of press time.

Hoffman told Pascack Press he observed a woman near campaign signs while driving home from work during the 2025 campaign season and recorded video on his cellphone before contacting police. He said campaign signs were repeatedly targeted during the election season, including incidents in which signs were damaged or removed.

Fredrics, through statements provided to Pascack Press, denied placing stickers on Hoffman campaign signs and said the matter involves political expression protected under the First Amendment.

Hoffman disputed that characterization, saying his complaint was intended to address repeated sign defacement during the campaign season.

The dispute has drawn attention to Park Ridge's local sign ordinance, including provisions governing political signs placed on public property. Hoffman told Pascack Press the ordinance historically has not been consistently enforced. Fredrics separately alleged Hoffman violated the ordinance by placing campaign

signs near the borough's electronic sign board.

The Borough Council recently discussed possible revisions to portions of the sign ordinance, though Hoffman said any future ordinance changes would not affect the pending complaints.

The Park Ridge matter comes as Howard Fredrics, Lori Fredrics' husband, is separately pursuing litigation against Montvale Mayor Michael Ghassali over access to and comments on a mayoral Facebook page. That case alleges Ghassali violated Fredrics' free speech rights by deleting comments and blocking

him from the page. Ghassali, through borough counsel, has disputed that characterization, saying the page is personal and political rather than an official borough account.

Howard Fredrics told Pascack Press recently that Montvale was granted an extension to June 1 to reply to the brief in his complaint seeking access to Ghassali's Facebook page. He said a new attorney for Ghassali requested the extension.

Attorneys representing Lori Fredrics said they have sought to resolve the Park Ridge matter out-

side court. Hoffman told Pascack Press he remains open to discussions

regarding resolution. Court proceedings remain pending.