

**March 26, 2008**  
**For immediate release**

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**Bridgewater Zoning Board of Adjustment Approves  
Memorandum of Understanding with Hindu Temple**

On March 25, 2008, the Township of Bridgewater Zoning Board of Adjustment approved an agreement with the Hindu Temple and Cultural Center of USA regarding its ability to build its cultural center, along with its temple expansion and additional priest housing. The agreement requires that the Board will hold a duly noticed public hearing for consideration of the Temple's variances and site plan applications, and incorporates various modifications of the Temple's plans.

"We are grateful for the zoning board's continuing efforts in working with us to approve a plan that serves the interests of both the Temple and the community," said Temple spokesman Madhusudhan Rao Chava.

The Temple, represented by Storzer & Greene, P.L.L.C. and Frank J. Petrino, of Sterns & Weinroth in Trenton, New Jersey, first applied for the variance in early 2004 in order to accommodate its growing need for a cultural center that could house various religious activities, including Hindu rites, Vedic heritage classes, religious education, Hindu dance and music activities, teaching the Sanskrit language, and more. After the Temple had been repeatedly turned down, it filed a lawsuit in the federal district court for the District of New Jersey in 2007, charging violations of the U.S. and New Jersey Constitutions and the federal Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act of 2000 ("RLUIPA").

"Although it is unfortunate that the Temple was forced to seek redress in the courts, a just result will hopefully be reached soon," said Temple attorney Roman P. Storzer. "The Temple looks forward to being able to provide religious programs to its members, to co-exist harmoniously with its neighbors, and to put this four-year saga behind it."

RLUIPA was passed by Congress five years ago to prevent discrimination against churches in land use applications, and forbids government action that "imposes a substantial burden on the religious exercise of a person, including a religious assembly or institution, unless the government demonstrates that imposition of the burden on that person, assembly, or institution is in furtherance of a compelling governmental interest, and is the least restrictive means of furthering that compelling interest."

The attorneys of Storzer and Greene, P.L.L.C. have represented scores of religious organizations in land use conflicts across the Nation. Mr. Storzer has been described by the Religion Newswriters Association as "one of the country's most experienced litigators" in religious land use law, and has successfully represented Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Native American, Sikh and other faith groups in RLUIPA and First Amendment matters.

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