

BOROUGH OF TOTOWA
P L A N N I N G B O A R D
PASSAIC COUNTY
NEW JERSEY



MINUTES – JUNE 12, 2025

Vice Chairman Coiro called the Planning Board meeting of Thursday, June 12, 2025 to order at 7:30 p.m. for the Borough of Totowa.

PRESENT:

Commissioner Zarek	Mayor Coiro	Commissioner Murphy	Vice Chairman Coiro
Councilman D'Angelo	Commissioner Schell	Commissioner Coyle	Mike Cristaldi, PE
Commissioner Festa	Paul Danner, ESQ	Tom Czerniecki, Planner	

The clerk read the statement of the meeting as follows: The meeting of the Planning Board to be held on the 12th day of June 2025 is in accordance with the Schedule of Annual Notice, which is posted, and in accordance with Chapter 231 P.L. 1975 of the State of New Jersey. The agenda for this meeting has been prepared and distributed to the members of the Planning Board, posted on the Borough's website and a copy has been on file in the Construction Official's Office. The Planning Board Agenda has also been posted on the entrance doors to the Municipal Building including the entranceway for handicapped individuals.

ITEM #1

KLA Corporation		Preliminary & Final
40 Gordon Drive	Block 179 – Lot 2.06	Site Plan Approval
60 Gordon Drive	Block 179 – Lot 2.04	

Mr. Steven Tripp, Attorney for the applicant and Mr. Joseph Bleau, Sr., Regional East Coast Facilities Project Manager, appeared to present an application for a preliminary and final site plan approval with "c" variance and design waiver relief for properties both located in the I-3 Zoning District, for purposes of expanding its current microchip manufacturing processing business located at 60 Gordon Drive to include new leased space at 40 Gordon Drive, which will require certain exterior modifications.

The following was submitted to support the application; a set of engineering plans titled, "KLA-Totowa-40 Gordon Lab/Office T.I.", a Parking Study, a topographic and boundary survey, and an Applicant document submittal rider letter with proposed changes from Steven J. Tripp, Esq.

The Applicant currently occupies 60 Gordon Drive, which contains a two-story building comprised of approximately 35,252 square feet of floor area. KLA occupies the entire building, which includes manufacturing facilities, laboratories, warehouse space, and offices. There are one hundred and forty employees, and it has one hundred and twenty-six parking spaces. The Applicant has now leased the adjacent property located at 40 Gordon Drive, which contains a one and one-half story building with approximately 31,654 square feet of gross floor space. The owner of 40 Gordon uses 12,500 square feet to operate a scooter assembly, warehouse, and shipping business, and employs a total of eight individuals. KLA will be leasing the residual 19,024 square feet for a combination of research and development, laboratory, warehouse, and office space.

40 Gordon currently has forty-nine parking spaces, which the Applicant seeks to reduce to forty-four spaces as part of certain proposed site modifications. KLA does not anticipate that it will hire more employees but will instead move approximately sixty employees from 60 Gordon to 40 Gordon. The other current eighty employees will remain at 60 Gordon. The Applicant proposes that its employees will share parking at both locations, which would by totality satisfy local ordinances.

The Applicant proposes to install a fenced containment area on the north side of 40 Gordon, which will contain an argon gas tank, gas storage cabinets, a heat pump, and a diesel generator. It seeks design relief due to the proposed twelve-foot height of the fence, which exceeds the permissible eight (8) foot limit. This, along with the parking, are design waiver relief requests by the Applicant. Next, the final design waiver relief sought is to allow the Applicant to install a transformer in the front of 40 Gordon. Accessory structures are not otherwise permitted in any front yard. In addition, a "c" variance is sought because the proposed transformer sits within the permissible front setback. The remaining proposed site modifications, which do not require relief, include a sidewalk to provide pedestrian traffic between 60 Gordon and 40 Gordon, a new entry area at the front of the norther side of 40 Gordon, and new HVAC and mechanical equipment on the roof of 40 Gordon, which will add height to the building but still not exceed the permissible height limit.

Mr. Bleau testified that the Applicant manufactures tools intricate to engineering and building microchips. The Applicant acquired 60 Gordon approximately three years ago, and occupies the entire building, totaling approximately 31,654 square feet. Mr. Bleau testified that the Applicant has a strong research and development (R&D) program, which operates at 60 Gordon. It also uses the space for warehousing and offices. Parking at 60 Gordon is for employees only. The site has only a few deliveries and/or pick-ups each week mainly by UPS and/or FedEx.

Mr. Bleau testified that it will install 8,000 square feet of dedicated high technology laboratories for quality control and R&D. Mr. Bleau explained that with use of the new facility, the Applicant seeks to install an equipment containment area on the side of 40 Gordon between the two buildings. It will contain compressed gas(es), which are already present at 60 Gordon, as well as a new generator for life safety, R&D, and Information Technology (IT). As per Mr. Bleau, the area will be fenced in with bollards to further protect the area. Mr. Bleau also testified that a new electrical transformer will be needed at 40 Gordon. It is proposed to be placed at the front of 40 Gordon, which was a location exclusively selected by PSE&G.

The anticipated hours of operation for 40 Gordon will be 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, with no weekend hours. Mr. Bleau testified that the Applicant does not have any of its own trucks and that any third-party trucks will arrive at the location only during business hours.

Mr. Hoyt, a licensed engineer provided testimony on behalf of the Applicant regarding, among other things, the requested relief. Mr. Hoyt started his testimony by discussing the existing conditions at 40 Gordon, with reference to CS0201 of the engineering plans dated April 15, 2025 (marked as Exhibit A-1). He testified that there are several pre-existing non-conformities on the property, including the minimum lot area and width, minimum front and side yard setbacks of the building, and maximum building coverage. Mr. Hoyt testified that there are other design non-conforming items on both properties, including landscaping, drive isle width, buffer setback, and 90-degree parking stall dimensions. The Applicant does not seek to disturb or expand these non-conforming items.

Exhibit A-2 was a color rendering of the properties. Mr. Hoyt testified that the proposed modifications would increase the impervious surface on 40 Gordon, although below the permissible limit. New curbing and a sidewalk around the building would be installed. He also testified that the Applicant plans to install a sidewalk from 60 Gordon to 40 Gordon.

As for the equipment containment area, Mr. Hoyt testified that the proposed tank(s) are ten feet high, which requires a twelve foot fence to enclose it. The newly proposed transformer at the front of the building will be screened by two trees and nine shrubs. The existing transformer will be replaced. The dimensions of the new transformer will be ten feet by ten feet and six feet high. The new mechanicals on the roof of 40 Gordon will add five feet in height but remain below the permissible height limit.

Mr. Hoyt provided extensive testimony related to parking. He testified that the parking for Applicant's employees will be shared between the two properties. As per Mr. Hoyt, 40 Gordon currently has forty-nine spaces, which will be reduced to forty-four spaces, and the owner of 40 Gordon utilizes eight (8) space. It technically requires sixty-eight spaces. However, as Mr. Hoyt testified, 60 Gordon has one hundred and twenty-six spaces, and only eighty are required. This brings the Applicant's total available spaces between to the two properties to one hundred and seventy, which is twenty-two spaces more than the requisite one hundred and forty-eight.

There was a discussion with the Planning Board concerning two containers which are currently on the property. Mr. Bleau returned to testify that the containers are for overflow and will be removed from the property.

Mr. Hoyt further testified as to the setback of the transformer at the front of 40 Gordon. After the proposed transformer is installed, it will sit 31.1 feet from the property line when fifty (50) feet are required. There was discussion with the Planning Board whether this required design waiver relief or a variance. To address the Planning Board's concerns, Mr. Tripp presented Paul Ricci, a licensed planner, to testify. Mr. Ricci testified that there are many positives to permitting setback relief. Specifically, he explained that the Applicant is a high-quality business who has a long-standing presence in the community providing, among other things, R&D. The Applicant's presence, as Mr. Ricci testified, advances the economic purposes, and without such relief, the Applicant could not expand and would be forced to relocate altogether. In addition, Mr. Ricci testified that the location of the new transformer was selected by Utilities Company and thus, constituted a hardship on the Applicant. The Applicant submitted that variance relief was warranted under c(1) and a flexible "c" as the benefits outweigh the detriments. The Applicant further noted that the transformer would cover less than one percent of the front yard and would be screened from the roadway.

Mr. Ricci testified as to the request for design relief regarding the height of the fence. He stated that while the proposed fence will be twelve feet high, it will be situated between 40 Gordon and 60 Gordon, both of which are much higher. He also reiterated that bollards will be installed to protect the area. He next testified as to the requested parking relief. He stated that there will be adequate parking between the two properties. After discussion with the Planning Board, the Applicant agreed that if the relief was granted, it would be as to this Applicant only and no future tenant(s) of either space could utilize the shared parking between the two buildings.

A motion was offered by Commissioner Murphy and seconded by Commissioner Zarek to open the public portion of the meeting.

Eight agreed to a roll call vote... 8-0

NO PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

A motion was offered by Commissioner Murphy and seconded by Commissioner Zarek to close the public portion of the meeting.

Eight agreed to a roll call vote... 8-0

A motion was offered by Commissioner Murphy and seconded by Commissioner Zarek to approve preliminary and final site plan approval with “c” variance and design waiver relief as presented. This approval is subject to and contingent upon the following conditions and will be memorialized in a Resolution at a future date:

1. The construction of internal partitions, exits, entrances and fire safety devices are subject to and requires the approval of the fire sub-code official, the fire inspector, and the building inspector.
2. The applicant will supply the Chief of Police with an emergency contact list and will also obtain the approval of the Police Chief pertaining to all alarms and security devices.
3. Applicant shall comply with any terms and conditions set forth in either the Borough Board Engineer, Michael Cristaldi’s report, from Alaimo Engineering or testimony regarding this application.
4. The Applicant is responsible for maintaining a safe parking lot area, including safeguarding the area from any carts being unaccompanied.
5. The Planning Board’s decision applies to this Applicant *only*, and this decision cannot be assigned to any other entity or individual.

Eight agreed to a roll call vote... 8-0

ITEM #2

Karako Suits
544 Rt. 46

Block 172 – Lot 3

Minor Site Plan Approval
Certificate of Occupancy

Ms. Brooke Reddin, attorney for the applicant, and Mr. Amato, Regional Manager appeared requesting the occupancy of approximately 7,500 sq. ft. of space to be used for the retail sale of Men’s, Women’s, Children’s clothing and accessories.

Mr. Amato testified that the anticipated hours of operation would be Monday thru Saturday from 10:00am to 8:00pm, and Sunday from 10:00am to 6:00pm. There will be 5-8 employees. Mr. Amato further testified there will be interior changes to construct five dressing rooms and a Taylor’s area.

Ms. Reddin indicated the proposed sign for the building façade is 41 sq. ft. and will require a design waiver. The pylon sign would have a text change only.

A motion was offered by Commissioner Murphy and seconded by Commissioner Zarek to approve the minor site plan as presented. This approval is subject to and contingent upon the following conditions and will be memorialized in a Resolution at a future date:

1. The construction of internal partitions, exits, entrances and fire safety devices are subject to and requires the approval of the fire sub-code official, the fire inspector, and the building inspector.
2. The applicant will supply the Chief of Police with an emergency contact list and will also obtain the approval of the Police Chief pertaining to all alarms and security devices.
3. The applicant states proposed signage will be consistent in size to the existing signage, as applicable, and comply with the ordinance requirements.
4. There will be no outside storage of equipment or materials and that any such existing stored equipment and materials.

Eight agreed to a roll call vote... 8-0

ITEM #3

Minnisink Road Urban Renewal, LLC Block 154, Lot 19.07
205-222 Minnisink Road

One Year Extension Request
Preliminary & Final Site
Plan Approval

Vice Chairman Coiro read a letter from the attorney requesting the Board grant the second one-year extension of the Board's approval affording the Application protection(s) in connection with this Project. This is the Applicant's second such request.

Applicant received approval from the Board on July 14, 2022, and memorialized on August 11, 2022, for preliminary and final major site plan approval with "c" variance relief, pursuant to the provisions of the Board's Resolution. The initial two-year period of protection expired on August 11, 2024, the extension began on at that date and the one-year expiration date was extended to August 11, 2025.

In considering the extension request, the Board engaged in a balancing test weighing both factors for and against the extension, including the complexity of the Project. After considering all such factors, the Board determined an extension would be appropriate.

A motion was offered by Commissioner Murphy and seconded by Commissioner Zarek to approve the request for the second one-year extension which will begin on August 11, 2025 and end August 11, 2026.

Eight agreed to a roll call vote... 8-0

MINUTES:

A motion was offered by Commissioner Murphy and seconded by Commissioner Zarek to approve the Planning Board regular Meeting Minutes of May 22, 2025 as presented.

Seven agreed to a roll call vote... 7-0

Commissioner Festa abstained

RESOLUTIONS:

A motion was offered by Commissioner Murphy and seconded by Commissioner Zarek to approve the resolution for UPS Store, Block 91 – Lot 14 as prepared.

Seven agreed to a roll call vote... 7-0

A motion was offered by Commissioner Murphy and seconded by Commissioner Zarek to approve the resolution for PAL Pro Builders, Block 158 – Lot 3.01 as prepared.

Seven agreed to a roll call vote... 7-0

There being no other business, a motion was offered by Commissioner Murphy and seconded by Commissioner Zarek to adjourn the meeting.

All in favor.....8-0

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony Murphy, Secretary

Patricia Paulson
Board Clerk

Date Approved