

# BOROUGH OF TOTOWA PLANNING BOARD

PASSAIC COUNTY  
NEW JERSEY



## MINUTES – AUGUST 14, 2025

Vice Chairman Coiro called the Planning Board meeting of Thursday, August 14, 2025 to order at 7:30 p.m. for the Borough of Totowa.

### **PRESENT:**

|                     |                         |                       |                     |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Commissioner Schell | Mayor Coiro             | Commissioner Sabatino | Commissioner Niland |
| Councilman D'Angelo | Commissioner Festa      | Commissioner Coyle    | Vice Chairman Coiro |
| 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 14th day of August 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**

|                                                 |                      |                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| BC International Group Inc<br>110 Maltese Drive | Block 170.03 – Lot 6 | Minor Site Plan Approval<br>Certificate of Occupancy |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------|

Gregory Mascera, ESQ and Joseph Baiada, VP Director of Operations for BCI, appeared requesting approval for the occupancy of approximately 22,147 square feet operates a high-end goods distribution business.

Mr. Baiada testified the space will contain small offices in the front and a warehouse. The Applicant will have between 18-20 employees at any one time. The hours of operation will be approximately 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and Saturday and Sunday, as needed. The Applicant has been allocated 23 parking spaces, although some workers will carpool. Either way, there will be no on-site customers.

Two exhibits were marked during Mr. Baiada's testimony. Exhibit A-1 was a photograph of BCI's directional signage, which comprised two pages – page one (former signage) and page two (proposed new signage). There are presently three signs: (1) front door; (2) side door; and (3) loading dock area. The Applicant seeks to replace all three signs with new signage of the same scale and size(s). Exhibit A-2 were photographs taken by Mr. Baiada of the front door area. Mr. Baiada testified that there will be no adverse effects on traffic, and the Applicant will use the same 10-yard dumpster existing on the premises. There will be no outside storage, but the Applicant may keep three small empty vans on the premises overnight. Most deliveries to the site are via UPS and/or FEDEX.

A motion was offered by Commissioner Festa and seconded by Commissioner Niland 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 #2**

Seclen Services LLC  
335 Union Blvd

Block 92 – Lot 1

Minor Site Plan Approval  
Certificate of Occupancy

Ms. Mariela Seclen, owner and operator appeared requesting the approval of approximately 700 square feet to provide accounting, bookkeeping, notary, and travel tour services to the public.

Ms. Seclan testified that they will have one employee. The anticipated hours of operation will be 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday through Sunday. The Applicant has been allocated 2 parking spaces. The Applicant plans to replace the existing exterior projection signage. Board members discussed the approved signage colors with the Applicant and she agreed to comply.

A motion was offered by Commissioner Festa and seconded by Commissioner Niland 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**

Hotform Fitness  
320 Union Blvd

Block 106 – Lot 1

Minor Site Plan Approval  
Certificate of Occupancy

Ms. Kim Conforti, one of the three owners appeared requesting the approval of approximately 2,000 square feet to operate a heated studio offering Pilates, yoga and other fitness-based services to the public. The total leased space is approximately 2,000 square feet of which approximately 1,100 square feet will be a studio.

Ms. Conforti testified there will be six total employees with 1-2 employees working at any one time. Each class will have space for about 30 people with 18-25 being average attendance. The Applicant will offer one class at a time. The hours of operation will be 5:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 5:00 a.m. to 3:00 Friday through Sunday. The Applicant has been allocated 6 parking spaces.

An extended discussion over proposed signage. The landlord requires that the existing façade sign (identifying the building) remain, so the Applicant intends to use the front window(s) of the leased space for its signage. Because the leased space is in B-2 zone, the Board advised the Applicant that no more than 20% of the window(s) can be covered and that the sign cannot exceed 15 square feet. The Applicant understood and agreed to comply with the requirements.

A motion was offered by Commissioner Festa and seconded by Commissioner Niland 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 #4**

AAA Northeast  
465 Route 46

Block 174 – Lots 1, 3.02,  
4.02, 5 & 6

Preliminary & Final Site Plan  
Design Waiver

Mark Semeraro, Esq. and Julie Barrett, Director of Real Estate Operations for AAA Northeast appeared as a witness on behalf of Applicant providing testimony. Mr. Semeraro introduced the application explaining that the Applicant seeks approval to operate a AAA Northeast retail branch, a permitted use, in the former Midas shop on the property, providing a range of products and services to AAA members or clients, including, but not limited to, registry and identity credentialing services, financial, travel, insurance, driver training services, and third-party vendor package delivery and pickup services. Midas was operating as a conditional use. The total square footage is 3,590 square feet within the Totowa Square Mall, which has a total 261,380 square feet.

Ms. Barrett testified that the Applicant, a member services organization which currently operates in six states, plans to open a new location at the property. The anticipated hours of operation will be 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Saturday. There will be a maximum of fifteen (15) employees at any one time. Deliveries to the location are almost always via UPS (and generally not more than one per day). The Applicant will have use of a dumpster located at the rear of the building, which will be emptied twice per week.

Mr. Taylor, who has been a licensed architect in New Jersey for 30+ years, testified as an expert on behalf of the Applicant. He referenced the elevation and floor plans (PH-100) he prepared, which showed the removal of garage doors from the former Midas store, and a new façade. He explained that the interior of the space will be completely renovated, and a new HVAC system will be placed on the roof. Mr. Taylor also referenced, and discussed, A-300, which showed the newly proposed awnings, windows, façade with EIFS, new door, and side entrance. In addition, he discussed the planned installation of ten parking spaces on the side of the building, which, as more fully described below, engendered significant discussion with the Planning Board.

As for signage, Mr. Taylor testified the Applicant seeks to install four signs: (1) façade sign measuring 26.5 square feet; (2) door sign with name and hours totaling less than 4 square feet; (3) a side size measuring 9.7 square feet; and (4) a 60 square foot sign on the existing pylon. The Applicant seeks waiver relief for the number and/or size(s) of the proposed signage, as needed.

Mr. Miskov, an expert P.E., was the Applicant's third witness. He prepared the site plan and survey and reviewed the existing site conditions. He explained that the Applicant does not seek to make any changes to the footprint of the existing leased space. It will remove the garage doors and add awning(s) and new signage. The Applicant will have a dumpster at the rear of the building.

Mr. Miskov also testified as to the parking for the entire shopping center. The site technically requires 1,692 spaces and only 1,198 are currently present. The switch from the Midas automotive shop to the Applicant will reduce the required number of spaces to 1,680 thereby improving the parking deficient at the property. Mr. Miskov further discussed the recent Traffic and Parking Assessment Report, dated January 10, 2024, which was previously submitted to the Planning Board in connection with the application(s) by other tenants, Jinya and Applebee's. In sum, he testified that there is no anticipated negative impact(s) on traffic with the Applicant's application.

There was considerable discussion with Mr. Miskov over the Applicant's proposal to have ten (10) parking spaces on the side of the building. The Applicant proposed the spaces to assist in reducing the parking deficit. However, the Board expressed concern about pedestrian and vehicle safety on the side of the building, which is utilized by many individuals as a thoroughfare. After back and forth, the Applicant, by and through its attorney, agreed to withdraw the request to install the parking spaces on the side of the building, and install crosshatching in that area. As a condition of approval, if granted by the Board, the Applicant agreed to revise the plans to reflect the location of the dumpster and changes to the proposed parking.

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

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

A motion was offered by Commissioner Festa and seconded by Commissioner Niland to approve the preliminary and final site plan, approval for sign relief, and parking 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. 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.
2. The Applicant is responsible for maintaining a safe parking lot area.
3. The granting of this application is subject to and conditioned upon the review and approval of the Borough Fire Inspector, Fire Sub Code Official and Building Inspector with respect to any internal partitions, exits, entrances and fire safety devices.
4. The granting of this application is subject to and conditioned upon Applicant supplying the Borough of Totowa Police Chief or his designee with an emergency contact list. The Police Chief or his designee shall also review and approve the installation of all alarms and security devices.
5. Subject to all other applicable rules, regulations, ordinances and statutes of the Borough of Totowa Planning Board, County of Passaic, State of New Jersey, or any other agency having jurisdiction hereunder.
6. All internal construction by Applicant will be submitted by and through the normal building process for the Borough of Totowa.

7. As a condition of approval, the Applicant shall provide revised plans reflecting the location of the dumpster, the removal of the proposed side parking, and the installation of the crosshatching lines on the pavement on the side of the building.

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

**MINUTES:**

A motion was offered by Commissioner Festa and seconded by Commissioner Niland to approve the Planning Board regular Meeting Minutes of July 17, 2025 as presented.

Five agreed to a roll call vote... 5-0

Commissioners Schell, Sabatino & Vice Chairman Coiro abstained

**RESOLUTIONS:**

A motion was offered by Commissioner Festa and seconded by Commissioner Niland to approve the resolution for Adult Housing District Overlay Zone – Ordinance 11-2025 as prepared.

Five agreed to a roll call vote... 5-0

A motion was offered by Commissioner Festa and seconded by Commissioner Niland to approve the resolution for Signed Up, Block 43 – Lot 23 as prepared.

Five agreed to a roll call vote... 5-0

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

All in favor.....8-0

Respectfully submitted,

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Anthony Murphy, Secretary

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Patricia Paulson  
Board Clerk

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Date Approved