

BOROUGH OF TOTOWA P L A N N I N G B O A R D

PASSAIC COUNTY
NEW JERSEY



MINUTES – MARCH 27, 2025

Chairman Hanrahan called the Planning Board meeting of Thursday, March 27, 2025, to order at 7:30 p.m. for the Borough of Totowa.

PRESENT:

Commissioner Zarek	Chairman Hanrahan	Commissioner Sabatino	Commissioner Coyle
Commissioner Murphy	Commissioner Niland	Mayor Coiro	Councilman D'Angelo
Commissioner Festa	Commissioner Schell	Vice Chairman Coiro	
Mike Cristaldi, PE	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 27th day of March 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

PAL-Pro Builders 40 Vreeland Avenue	Block 158 – Lot 3.01	Minor Site Plan Approval Certificate of Occupancy Outside Storage
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Ray Reddin, Esq., attorney for the applicant, and Mr. Sinisha Spasovski, President and owner of PAL-Pro Builders (applicant), appeared requesting the approval for occupancy of approximately 4,500 sq. ft of space for the applicant's office. The applicant is a general contractor, who handles among other things, public projects in North Jersey. The office will be used by the applicant's accounting and project management employees. Mr. Spasovski testified that there will be no more than 8 to 10 employees. The anticipated hours of operation will be Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. There will be no weekend hours. Mr. Spasovski stated that the applicant has been allocated 11 parking spaces. Minor interior space renovations to split existing conference rooms into smaller spaces are planned. There are no plans to perform any exterior renovations. The applicant plans to have signage on the entry door to the space. The applicant, which already possesses the leased space, currently has 3' x 2' sign on the gate leading to the rear of the building. The gate is part of a new fence that was erected, creating an enclosed area at the rear of the building.

There was extensive discussion with the Board over the applicant's current use of the exterior space. There are two unapproved 20' x 40' storage containers, which, as Mr. Spasovski testified, are used by the applicant to store and maintain construction tools and equipment. A forklift, skid steer, mini-excavator, and pipe scaffolding are also stored on the exterior of the property inside the fenced area. The applicant acknowledged that the containers have not been previously approved by the Planning Board and that there are restrictions in town regarding outside storage. Thus, as part of the application, the applicant seeks approval for future usage of the container and outside storage in the rear fenced area of the property.

The Planning Board examined the photos of the rear fenced area, which revealed that the two containers currently sit in what appear to be parking spaces. This prompted back-and-forth with the applicant as to whether the 11 spaces allocated to the applicant are even available for daily usage by the applicant's employees. Moreover, the applicant was advised that design standards require one parking space per 200 sq. ft., which means that the applicant technically needs 23 spaces. There was discussion about whether the applicant was seeking a design waiver for the parking and/or a variance. The applicant did not definitely state what relief was sought.

At that time, a motion was offered by Commissioner Murphy and seconded by Commissioner Festa to open the public portion of the meeting to the public.

Nine agreed on a roll call vote ... 9-0

Three members of the public spoke: (1) Frank Ariola on behalf of Patricia Costello, who resides at 303 Winifred Drive; (2) Debra D'Agostino, 70 Vreeland Avenue; and (3) Tony Rillo, 297 Winifred Drive.

Mr. Ariola expressed his concerns over the outside storage. He stated that it is unsightly to look at the containers and there seems to be a lot of traffic coming in and out of the storage area. He stated that if the Board were to consider allowing outside storage it should consider the requisite setbacks from the property line(s).

Mrs. D'Agostino discussed the history of the property in relation to parking, buffer, and lighting. She offered Exhibit 1, which was an email purportedly sent to the building code office, which Mrs. D'Agostino represented went unanswered. She also presented Exhibit 2, which was a map depicting the original parking layout. Mrs. D'Agostino questioned the applicant directly about dumpsters and Mr. Spasovski testified that no additional dumpsters would be brought onto the property.

Mr. Rillo voiced his concern over the dumpster pickup times, noting that they usually occur at 4:30 a.m. He also expressed concerns over a broken fence at the rear of the property and observing individuals he believed to be employees walking through the fence into the wooded area behind his house. He also joined the concerns raised by others over the lighting in the area. The Planning Board noted that the lighting technically is from another property and did not involve the applicant's space.

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

Nine agreed on a roll call vote ... 9-0

The Planning Board members raised their concerns over the application including the lack of a site plan. They also stressed the borough's commitment to preventing outside storage. The lack of a formal site plan and related submissions were discussed with the applicant. Thus, after a discussion, a motion was offered by Commissioner Murphy and seconded by Commissioner Festa to carry this matter to the next regular meeting of April 10, 2025 at or about 7:30pm.

Nine agreed on a roll call vote ... 9-0

MINUTES:

A motion was offered by Commissioner Murphy and seconded by Commissioner Niland to approve the Planning Board regular Meeting Minutes of February 27, 2025 as presented.

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

Commissioner Festa abstained

RESOLUTIONS:

A motion was offered by Commissioner Murphy and seconded by Commissioner Niland to approve the resolution for HungryBird, LLC Block 100 – Lot 1.01 as prepared.

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

A motion was offered by Commissioner Murphy and seconded by Commissioner Niland to approve the resolution for Holu Ventures, LLC Block 100 – Lot 1.01 as prepared.

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

A motion was offered by Commissioner Murphy and seconded by Commissioner Niland to approve the resolution for Family Care Pharmacy Block 100 – Lot 1.01 as prepared.

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

A motion was offered by Commissioner Murphy and seconded by Commissioner Niland to approve the resolution for Flowers Baking Co. of Oxford Inc. Block 170.03 – Lot 5 as prepared.

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

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

All in favor.....9-0

Respectfully submitted,

Anthony Murphy, Secretary

Patricia Paulson
Board Clerk

Date Approved