

September 18, 2026

Board Chair Barret Windrem
Borough of Raritan Planning Board
9 West Somerset Street
Raritan, New Jersey 08869

**RE: Technical Review I
Joseph Cortese
Minor Site Plan Application
19 East Somerset Street, Raritan, New Jersey
Block 96, Lot 14
Our Project Number: 3330117**

Dear Board Chair Windrem and Board Members:

This office is in receipt of the following items pertaining to the above-referenced application:

- A. *Borough of Raritan Application for Site plan – Subdivision Plan – Variance.*
- B. *Cover Letter entitled “Zoning Board Application – 19 E Somerset Street, Raritan, NJ”, dated July 28, 2026, prepared by Michael Higgins, Esq (Applicants Attorney).*
- C. *Land Use Development – Checklist 2 – For Determining Completeness of Application for Minor Site Plan – Land Use Ordinance – Borough of Raritan, Somerset County, New Jersey.*
- D. *Borough of Raritan – Certified List of Property owners within 200-Foot Radius, prepared by Borough Tax Collector, dated May 26, 2026.*
- E. *Somerset County planning Board – Land Development Application Form – Checklist & Review Fee Schedule, dated July 22, 2026.*
- F. *W-9 for the Applicant, dated July 16, 2026. ‘*
- G. *Certifications of Taxes Paid, prepared by Borough of Raritan tax Collector, dated July 16, 2026.*
- H. *Plan entitled “19 E. Somerset Street, Variance Plan, Lot 14, Block 96, Borough of Raritan, Somerset County, New Jersey”, prepared by Craig W. Stires PE, dated March 24, 2026, consisting of four sheets.*

I. Project Summary:

A. Project History

In August of 2026, this office received the subject application and associated materials in order to conduct an initial completeness review.

B. Project Description

The subject application has been submitted to the Board in order to receive minor site plan approval for the construction of an asphalt driveway, and associated site improvements. In order to permit the construction of the improvements, “D” variance relief will be required by the Board. The subject tract is located at 19 E. Somerset Street (CR 626), also identified as Block 96, Lot 14, and is located within the Borough of Raritan

OFFICE LOCATIONS

www.vancleefengineering.com

Lebanon, NJ
908-735-9500

Hamilton, NJ
609-689-1100

Toms River, NJ
732-573-0490

Freehold, NJ
732-303-8700

Bethlehem, PA
610-332-1772

Hillsborough, NJ
908-359-8291

Mt. Arlington, NJ
862-284-1100

Phillipsburg, NJ
908-454-3080

Doylestown, PA
215-345-1876

Leesport, PA
610-670-6630

B-1 zone. The existing tract consists of 6,420 square feet, or approximately .15 acres. The tract is currently developed with an existing 2.5 story frame dwelling. It should be noted by the Board that this dwelling currently serves a multi-family residential use, a non-permitted use within the Borough of Raritan B-1 zoning district. Along with the principle dwelling, the tract also features a rear yard wooden deck, and shed. Within the front yard of the dwelling is a concrete walkway extending to the front entrance of the dwelling. This walkway further extends along the eastern face of the dwelling, connecting to the existing wooden deck. The remaining area of the tract is open and sparsely vegetated.

Applicant is proposing the construction of an asphalt driveway and parking area. This asphalt driveway will be constructed along the eastern tract boundary, extending into the rear yard of the dwelling. The driveway will have a width of ten (10) feet, and the proposed parking area will have a width of 18.12 feet. In order to make way for the driveway, the Applicant proposes to remove a portion of the existing deck, and concrete walkway within the eastern side yard of the tract. In order to permit access to the driveway, the Applicant will construct a 13-foot-wide curb opening, as well as install a concrete apron in the location of the existing sidewalk within the Borough right-of-way. In the location that the concrete apron is to be constructed there is an existing tree and grate, both scheduled to be removed by the Applicant. No further site improvements are proposed at this time.

II. Completeness Review

The Applicant has submitted this application for preliminary major site plan Approval. Based upon review of the provided documentation and checklists, it is the recommendation of this office that the Board deem this application **complete** based on the following commentary:

1. **Minor Site Plan Checklist**

- a. §207-47.B(2)(3) – Protective covenants and deed restrictions applying to lands being subdivided.
*Waiver Requested – Applicant is not proposing a subdivision of land in connection to the subject application. This office recommends that the Board **grant** this waiver.*
(2026-09-18) – Deemed Administratively Complete.
- b. §207-47.B(2)(7) – Disclosure form pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-48, providing the names and the address of all persons owning 10% of the stock in a corporate application or 10% interest in any partnership application.
*Waiver Requested – Applicant is the sole owner of the property for which the subject application has been submitted. Therefore, this office recommends that the Board **grant** this waiver.*
(2026-09-18) – Deemed Administratively Complete.
- c. §207-47.B(2)(18) – Preliminary building plans, conceptual floor plans and elevations.
*Waiver Required – Applicant is not proposing the construction of any structure, or modifications to the existing principle structure within the tract. Therefore, this information has no relevance to the subject application. This office recommends that the Board **grant** this waiver.*
(2026-09-18) – Deemed Administratively Complete.
- d. §207-47.B(2)(21) – Existing sewer and water lines to serve the tract.
*Waiver Required – Applicant is not proposing the installation, or modification of existing utilities serving the tract. This office recommends that the Board **grant** this waiver.*
(2026-09-18) – Deemed Administratively Complete.

III. Zoning Review:

All municipalities in the State of New Jersey have active zoning codes effectuated by their Land Use Plans, an element of each municipality's Master Plan. The zoning codes provide legally enforceable, standardized schedules of bulk requirements, outlining the maximum and minimum distances from lot lines, percentage of impervious coverage, and other various attributes of each parcel based on the location of that parcel

within the municipality. This also includes permitted, conditional, accessory and prohibited uses. Strict adherence to this code is required.

However, pursuant to the Municipal Land Use Law (M.L.U.L.)’s, N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70, the Board of Adjustment may: “a. Hear and decide appeals where it is alleged by the appellant that there is error, in any order, requirement, decision or refusal made by an administrative officer based on or made in the enforcement of the zoning ordinance;” and “b. Hear and decide requests for interpretation of the zoning map or ordinance or for decisions upon other special questions upon which such Board is authorized to pass by any zoning or official map ordinance...”

As such, the Applicant has requested variances in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70. The following table summarizes the existing and proposed conditions juxtaposed to the permissions and allowances (requirements) of the zoning code:

Block 96, Lot 14

B1 – Central Business Zoning District

Description	Permitted	Existing	Proposed	Comment
Min. Lot Area	7,500 sf.	6,420 sf.	6,420 sf.	Variance
Min. Lot Width	75 ft.	40 ft.	40 ft.	Variance
Min. Front Yard Setback	N/A	24.66 ft.	24.66 ft.	Complies
Min. Rear Yard Setback	35 ft.	88.09 ft.	88.09 ft.	Complies
Min. Side Yard Setback	N/A	1.59 ft.	1.59 ft.	Complies
Total Side Yard Setback	N/A	14.11 ft.	14.11 ft.	Complies
Max. Building Height (Feet)	40 ft.	<40 ft.	<40 ft.	Complies
Max. Building Height (Stories)	3 stories	2.5 stories	2.5 stories	Complies
Max. Impervious Coverage	95%	25.4%	47.66%	Complies
Residential Density	15 units/acre	N/A	N/A	N/A

Please note that existing non-conformities that require a variance have been identified in this report for proper recordkeeping. This enables the Board to formally acknowledge the site in its current configuration regardless of any prior records of approval, existing or alleged. Any future applications on the subject parcel will be able to reference this document, at this point, as fully compliant.

1. Bulk Schedule (C Variance):

§207-107 – Bulk Schedule (Min. Lot Area) – Variance Requested

The Applicant is proposing improvements within an undersized lot. Within the Borough of Raritan B-1 zoning district, the minimum lot size required by ordinance is 7,500 square feet, whereas the lot has an area of 6,420 square feet. Therefore, variance relief is required in order to permit the proposed improvements. It should be noted by the Board that this is an existing non-conformance that is to be unchanged as a result of this application.

§207-107 – Bulk Schedule (Min. Lot Width) – Variance Requested

The Applicant is proposing improvements within a lot that has an existing width of 40 feet. Within the Borough of Raritan B-1 zoning district, a minimum lot width of 75 feet is required by ordinance, whereas the existing lot width is 40 feet. Therefore, variance relief is required in order to permit the proposed improvements. It should be noted by the Board that this is an existing non-conformance to remain unchanged as a result of this application.

2. Permitted Use (D Variance):

§207-114.A(4) – Residential Use – Variance Requested

Within the Borough of Raritan B-1 zoning district, a residential units are not permitted by ordinance within the ground floor. The ground floor area may only be utilized for non-residential, commercial uses permitted within the zone. The existing 2.5 story structure serves a multi-family residential use

in its entirety. Therefore, variance relief is required by the Board in order to permit the continuation of this non-conforming use.

IV. **Technical Review:**

1. **Preliminary Technical Review:**

The following are preliminary comments provided during the completeness process, restated here for posterity:

- a. The Applicant is strongly advised to coordinate with the adjacent property owner to maintain and improve the driveway without causing additional disturbance to Somerset Street (CR 626).
- b. In order to construct the proposed driveway apron in compliance with the most recent regulations for ADA compliance established by the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), there may be a need for the Applicant to replace additional sidewalk slabs. Concrete aprons constructed within the Borough right-of-way may not exceed a cross slope of 2%. In order to match the existing sidewalk grade, an additional slab on either side of the apron may require replacement.
- c. Applicant shall acquire a driveway permit from the Borough Construction Code Official prior to construction.
- d. Applicant shall note and abide by §315-85.A(1) of the Borough of Raritan Municipal Code. *“Any person planning to remove a street tree with DBH of 2.5 inches or more or any non-street tree with DBH of six inches or more on their property shall submit a written request outlining the property street address, their contact information, and the size and quantity of the street trees to be removed to the Borough of Raritan Department of Public Works. No tree shall be removed until municipal officials have reviewed and approved the removal.”* Applicant is proposing the removal of one (1) street tree in order to make way for the proposed concrete apron. This street tree shall be replaced in accordance with the Tree Replacement Requirements Table located in §315-85.D.

2. **Site Plan Review Comments:**

- a. Applicant shall provide testimony to the existing drainage pattern within the tract, stating how the proposed improvements may alter the existing runoff pattern. It should be noted that the Applicant has not identified any site grading to occur in connection with the proposed improvements. Upon completion of construction, all runoff generated on the proposed driveway will be conveyed to the adjacent tract to the east. This office recommends that the driveway be graded in a manor that will convey stormwater to the East Somerset Street gutter line, and subsequently into the storm sewer collection system.
- b. Due to the existing impervious coverage being proposed to nearly double as a result of the subject application, this office recommends that additional methods of runoff mitigation be implemented throughout the tract. This may include the installation of plantings throughout the side yard(s) and rear yard of the tract. Installation of additional high and low cover vegetation will increase ground-water infiltration of stormwater, reducing the volume of runoff conveyed onto the adjacent tract. Additional measures of mitigation may be considered by the Applicant as well, including utilizing rain barrels, or installation of a seepage pit within the rear yard of the existing dwelling.
- c. It shall be demonstrated that the proposed asphalt drive is capable of meeting the parking demand within the tract. This office recommends that calculations for the parking requirement be provided within a table on the site plan. This table shall identify the number of spaces required, and number of spaces provided. All calculations shall be performed in accordance with the most recent RSIS standards.

- d. Applicant shall state if parking stalls are to be striped. All parking stalls shall have the dimensions of 9' x 20' in accordance with the Borough of Raritan Municipal Code.
- e. It should be noted by the Applicant that prior to any commencement of construction, the contractor shall verify the location of all underground utilities.
- f. It is acknowledged by this office that the Limit of Disturbance for the proposed site improvements will not exceed 5,000 square feet. Therefore, application to, and approval from the Somerset Union Soil Conservation District is not required. However, the Limit of Disturbance shall be staked out prior to construction, and subsequently be maintained throughout.

Very truly yours,
Van Cleef Engineering Associates



Joseph A. Brosnan, PE, PP, CME
Borough/Planning Board Engineer

cc: All Board Members, via Board Secretary

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