

BOROUGH OF RARITAN
Planning Board Reorganization & Regular Meeting
MINUTES
January 28, 2026

OATHS OF OFFICE

Mr. Flynn conducted the oaths of office for the following members that were being appointed/reappointed: Mayor Tozzi (Class 1); Councilman Harwood (Class 3) Lou Gara (Class 2) Barrett Windrem (Class 4); Christopher Gussman (Class 4) Debra Thomas (Alternate 3)
The Board Attorney swore them in.

CALL TO ORDER & FLAG SALUTE

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Borough of Raritan Municipal Building. The Open Public Meetings statement was read into the record.

REORGANIZATION MEETING

• **ROLL CALL**

PRESENT: Mr. LoPresti, Mayor Tozzi, Councilman Harwood, Ms. Windrem, Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Gara, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Brown, Mr. Gussman, Ms. Liptak, Mr. Jayaraj, Ms. Thomas

ABSENT:

ALSO PRESENT: Matthew Flynn, Esq., Board Attorney; Joseph Brosnan, PE, PP, AICP, Board Engineer Planner; Lou Gara, Construction Official, Zoning Officer, Board Secretary

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

• **CHAIRPERSON**

Motion by Mayor Tozzi, **seconded** by Mr. Cunningham and unanimously carried to nominate Tony LoPresti as Chairman. Seeing no further nominations, Mr. LoPresti was designated Chairperson.

ROLL CALL:

AYE: Mr. LoPresti, Mayor Tozzi, Councilman Harwood, Ms. Windrem, Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Gara, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Brown, Mr. Gussman, Ms. Liptak, Mr. Jayaraj, Ms. Thomas

NAY:

ABSTAIN:

• **VICE CHAIRPERSON**

Motion by Mr. Cunningham, **seconded** by Ms. Liptak to nominate Tom Brown as Vice Chairperson; **Motion** by Mr. Murphy, **seconded** by Mayor Tozzi to nominate Barrett Windrem as Vice Chairperson. Ms. Windrem was designated Vice Chairperson

ROLL CALL: Mr. Brown

AYE: Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Brown, Ms. Liptak

NAY: Mr. LoPresti, Mayor Tozzi, Ms. Windrem, Mr. Murphy, Ms. Thomas

ABSTAIN: Councilman Harwood, Mr. Gara, Mr. Gussman, Mr. Jayaraj

ROLL CALL: Ms. Windrem

AYE: Mr. LoPresti, Mayor Tozzi, Councilman Harwood, Ms. Windrem, Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Gara, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Jayaraj, Ms. Thomas

NAY: Ms. Liptak
ABSTAIN: Mr. Brown, Mr. Gussman

RESOLUTIONS

- **PB-2026-01 (Appointing Board Professionals)**

1. **Motion** by Mayor Tozzi, **seconded** by Mr. Murphy and unanimously carried to adopt a resolution appointing Matt Flynn of Savo, Schalk, Corsini, Warner, Gillespie, O'Grodnick & Fisher, P.A., 56 E. Main St, Suite 301, Somerville, NJ 08876 as Board Attorney. The Board also appointed Mark Peck, Esq., of Florio, Perucci, Steinhardt, Cappelli & Tipton, LLC, 404 Third Street, Belvidere, N.J. 07823 as Conflict Attorney, Joseph Brosnan, PE, PP, CME, of Van Cleef Engineering Associates, LLC, 755 Memorial Pkwy, Suite 110, Phillipsburg, N.J. 08865 as Board Engineer/Planner and Lou Gara as Board Administrative Officer/Secretary and adopt the resolution, as presented.

ROLL CALL:

AYE: Mr. LoPresti, Mayor Tozzi, Councilman Harwood, Ms. Windrem, Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Gara, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Brown, Mr. Gussman, Ms. Liptak, Mr. Jayaraj, Ms. Thomas

NAY:

ABSTAIN:

- **PB-2026-02 (Setting 2026 Meeting Dates)**

Motion by Mr. Cunningham, **seconded** by Ms. Windrem and unanimously carried to designate the meeting dates for 2026 and adopt the resolution, as presented.

ROLL CALL:

AYE: Mr. LoPresti, Mayor Tozzi, Councilman Harwood, Ms. Windrem, Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Gara, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Brown, Mr. Gussman, Ms. Liptak, Mr. Jayaraj, Ms. Thomas

NAY:

ABSTAIN:

- **PB-2026-03 (Designating Official Newspapers)**

Motion by Ms. Windrem, **seconded** by Mayor Tozzi and unanimously carried to designate the Courier News of Bridgewater and the Star Ledger as the official newspapers of the Planning Board for 2026 and adopt the resolution, as presented.

ROLL CALL:

AYE: Mr. LoPresti, Mayor Tozzi, Councilman Harwood, Ms. Windrem, Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Gara, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Brown, Mr. Gussman, Ms. Liptak, Mr. Jayaraj, Ms. Thomas

NAY:

ABSTAIN:

ADJOURNMENT TO REGULAR MEETING

Mr. Murphy made a **Motion** which was **seconded** by Mr. Jayaraj and unanimously carried by voice vote to adjourn the Reorganization Meeting and proceed to the Regular Meeting.

REGULAR MEETING

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting was called to order.

MINUTES

Motion by Mr. Brown, **seconded** by Ms. Windrem to adopt the Minutes of **December 3, 2026**, as presented.

ROLL CALL:

AYE: Mr. LoPresti, Mayor Tozzi, Councilman Harwood, Ms. Windrem, Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Gara, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Brown, Mr. Gussman, Ms. Liptak, Mr. Jayaraj

NAY:

ABSTAIN: Councilman Harwood, Ms. Thomas

ENGINEERING/PLANNING REPORT

Mr. Brosnan provided status updates on the Richard Street project and the paving. He also provided updates on Orlando Dr apartments, affordable housing plan compliance actions that will be coming to the board and an area in need of redevelopment and overlay zoning for the Busky Lane property.

CONSTRUCTION/ZONING OFFICIAL REPORT

Mr. Gara advised that with the new Borough Hall opening there is sufficient room in his office and stated board members and members of the public are welcome to stop in with any questions or concerns. Mr. Gara provided updates on the Orlando Dr Apartments, reopening of the Café' on the corner of Somerset St. and Thompson St., the Italian deli coming to W Somerset St., a youth soccer training facility coming to Raritan Crossing on Route 206, the Colfax Apartments progress, and the delay in construction of the former Francesco's building.

Matt Flynn discussed the proposed billboard ordinance recommendations with the board members and stated he will investigate the current zone along Route 28 and draft an ordinance to send to the Mayor and Council.

Board members questioned the progress of the Lagrange St. townhome project and a discussion proceeded regarding the demolition and application process.

RESOLUTIONS

APPLICATIONS/HEARINGS

Raritan Mall 25-005 Site Plan

Block 116.01 Lot 11.01

166 Orlando Drive

Mr. Cunningham recused and left the dais as he resides within 200' of the project

Attorney Derrick Orth addressed the board and stated the site architect, Angela Kostelecky would be joining the meeting via zoom. Mr. Brown requested more detailed information be provided on the demolition procedures and Mr. Orth advised that the site engineer will be providing additional details during his testimony. Mr. Flynn swore in Joseph Brosnan, board engineer/planner, and Sean Delaney, project engineer, the planning board members accepted Mr. Delaney's credentials. Mr. Delaney testified to the existing elevations and the proposed elevations of the site and the building, complies with the flood hazard requirements and the flood hazard permit from NJ DEP, and the redevelopment plan. Mr. Delaney stated the proposed development consists of 274 residential apartments, consisting of 156 one bedroom, 110 two bedroom, 10 three bedroom including 42 COAH units, and 20,000 square feet of commercial retail space. All the three-bedroom units will be in the COAH units; all market rate units will be one and two bedrooms. The site also contains an existing 10,000 square feet commercial retail stand alone building that is to remain. The existing retail center will be demolished along with the existing parking area and curbing, and the amount of existing impervious coverage will be reduced and green spaces added. The existing access points into the site will remain in the same locations. Mr. Delaney

discussed the procedures to be followed regarding the demolition of the existing structure. Mr. Delany discussed the ingress and egress to the site, travel lanes, and the design waiver requested for the commercial parking spaces. Mr. Delany discussed the location and access for the trash and recycling collection. Mr. Delany stated the site is compliant with the parking requirements for commercial space and the RSIS standards for residential, including 52 electric vehicle charging stations. Landscaping, including significant increase of plantings and green space, reduction of impervious coverage, site lighting and utilities (to be installed underground) storm water management and flood hazard area were discussed. Mr. Orth presented copies of the redevelopment agreement and the Borough's fourth-round fair share housing agreement to the board members and stated an LSRP will be hired in accordance with regulations and the redevelopment agreement. The board discussed fire hydrant locations, fire apparatus access from Busky Lane, truck traffic along the northern access road, trash and recycling pick and a condition to limit the times for pick up to avoid early morning and late evening pick up of trash and recycling. The applicant agreed to a condition for trash and recycling pickup and deliveries to be made after 8am and not on weekends. Mr. Brosnan discussed the storm water management requirements; the applicant's engineer advised that a storm water management operation and maintenance manual would be submitted and that the property owner is to maintain and take responsibility for the system. The board discussed a condition that the applicant agrees to include a perpetual maintenance agreement for the proposed plantings and green areas and the installation of an irrigation system.

Public questions of the site engineer: Roger Copt Route 202, historic high-water level of the river and what happens to the adjacent building during a flood. Jenny Rose, clarification that the proposed building does not conform to the current flood hazard regulations (their DEP permit was issued in 2023) and parking requirements. Craig Elgard Glaser Ave, where is the water going to go when it comes up? Bob Strauss Vones La, proposed building in same footprint as existing building, the location of the old landfill, structural design and bearing capacity for the proposed building. Mike Patente Glaser Ave, retention basins proposed, sewer impact analysis, site lighting and methane gas venting, shared parking easement with adjacent property, drive exit elevation during flooding conditions. Adam Armahizer Victoria St., elevation of emergency exit drive aisle, parking lot elevation. Ms. Stander First Ave, high and dry exit access and school bus access. Erica Landesberg Meehan Ave, size of parking spaces and parking permits for residents. Patrick Dinsmore, methane gas vents and potential conflict of interest (planning board attorney). Jenny Rose, NJ DEP requirements.

Mr. Delany, Mr. Orth, Mr. Brosnan and Mr. Flynn responded to questions.

Architect Angela Kostelecky prepared to testify via zoom; on a motion and positive voice vote, the board announced a brief recess to allow the applicant to prepare the architects' exhibits. After returning into session Ms. Kostelecky, site architect, discussed the submitted architectural plans including the layout of each floor, details of the apartments including accessibility, amenities, parking garage, bicycle storage rooms, and building codes regarding fire rated separation, electric vehicle charging stations, and sprinkler requirements in the open parking garage. Ms. Kostelecky described the details for the trash collection, trash chutes, trash compactor, separate elevator for tenants during move in/out, and stated there will not be grills on the terraces and balconies. Ms. Kostelecky discussed the details of the exterior design elements of the building, including the retail commercial spaces.

Before concluding, the board members asked for additional information at the next hearing for the demolition activities including a summary report with timelines, a colorized materials board, additional detail on the terraces and balconies, and safety and incident information on the proposed electric vehicle charging stations. Mr. Flynn announced that the hearing will be continued at the February 25, 2026, meeting.

On a motion by Mr. Murphy, seconded by Mayor Tozzi, and unanimously carried the meeting was adjourned at 10:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Lou Gara
Board Administrator/Secretary

Approved: 2 / 25 / 2026