

# BOROUGH OF RARITAN

## PLANNING BOARD

### REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

**May 27, 2026**

*A YouTube video of the meeting is available on the Borough website.*

---

### CALL TO ORDER AND FLAG SALUTE

The regular meeting of the Borough of Raritan Planning Board was called to order at **6:34 p.m.** in the Borough of Raritan Municipal Building. Chairwoman Windrem read the Open Public Meetings Act statement into the record and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

---

### ROLL CALL

#### Present

- Chairwoman Windrem
- Mayor Tozzi
- Councilman Harwood
- Mr. Cunningham
- Mr. Gara
- Mr. Murphy
- Mr. Brown
- Mr. Gussman
- Mr. Jayaraj

## Also Present

- Chris Sobieski, Acting Board Attorney
- Joe Brosnan, Board Engineer/Planner
- Lou Gara, Construction/Zoning Official / Board Secretary

## Absent

- Ms. Thomas

Chairwoman Windrem reviewed the procedures to be followed during the meeting. She stated that the Board is required to remain neutral and to base its decisions solely upon the record established during the hearing process. She advised that public comment would be accepted at the appropriate times and reminded members of the public that, when recognized, they must state their name and address for the record. She further advised that comments would be limited to five minutes per speaker and that time may not be transferred or shared. Chairwoman Windrem also noted that the meeting had a firm adjournment target of **10:00 p.m.** and reminded all attendees that respectful conduct was expected at all times. Interruptions, outbursts, and inappropriate behavior would not be tolerated and could result in removal from the meeting in order to maintain decorum.

---

## APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**Motion** by Mr. Cunningham, seconded by Mr. Murphy, to approve the minutes of the **April 22, 2026** Planning Board meeting, as presented.

## Roll Call Vote

**Ayes:** Windrem, Tozzi, Harwood, Cunningham, Gara, Murphy, Brown, Gussman, Jayaraj

**Nays:** None

**Abstentions:** None

**Motion carried.**

---

## PROFESSIONAL REPORTS

Mr. Brosnan reported on the progress of the **Richard Street road paving project** and the **21 Orlando Drive construction project**. In response to an inquiry from Mr. Cunningham, Mr. Brosnan also discussed planning related to the proposed sewer work on **Busky Lane**.

Mr. Gara reported that the sports training facility formerly located in the old pharmacy building on **Somerset Street** had relocated to the **TD Bank building**, and that a new Pilates

studio would be occupying its former space. He further advised that the new coffee shop located at the corner of **Thompson Street and Somerset Street** was expected to open the following week. In response to an inquiry from Chairwoman Windrem concerning **Pizzawalla on Route 206**, Mr. Gara stated that permits had been issued several weeks earlier and that the project was approved to proceed with construction. In response to an inquiry from Mr. Murphy, Mr. Gara clarified that **TD Bank would remain in operation** and that the training facility had moved into another tenant space within the same building.

Chairwoman Windrem proposed the creation of a **Technical Review Committee** to provide additional review and coordination on development-related matters. The proposed committee membership would include:

- Chairwoman Windrem
- Mr. Gussman, as Environmental Commission representative
- Mr. Gara, as Zoning Official and Planning Board member
- Mr. Brosnan, Borough Planner/Engineer
- Matt Flynn, Board Attorney, as needed
- Vince LoMedico, DPW Director
- Brian Kredatus, Fire Chief
- Thomas Fisher, Police Chief

Mr. Murphy was proposed as an alternate Planning Board member for committee meetings in the event one of the Planning Board representatives was unable to attend.

A discussion followed regarding the role of the proposed Technical Review Committee as compared to the Redevelopment Advisory Committee, and whether the need for technical site plan review should be determined at the discretion of the Borough Planner/Engineer.

**Motion** by Mr. Murphy, seconded by Mayor Tozzi, to establish a **Technical Review Committee** as discussed.

### Roll Call Vote

**Ayes:** Windrem, Tozzi, Harwood, Cunningham, Gara, Murphy, Brown, Gussman, Jayaraj

**Nays:** None

**Abstentions:** None

**Motion carried.**

---

## RESOLUTIONS

### Raritan Mall LLC – Application No. 25-005

**166 Orlando Drive**

**Block 116.01, Lot 11.01**

**Preliminary and Final Site Plan with Conditions**

The Board considered a resolution memorializing approval of the above-referenced application. Discussion took place regarding environmental concerns associated with the site.

**Motion** by Mayor Tozzi, seconded by Councilman Harwood, to approve the resolution as presented.

### Roll Call Vote

**Ayes:** Windrem, Tozzi, Harwood, Murphy, Jayaraj

**Nays:** None

**Abstentions:** None

**Motion carried.**

---

## APPLICATIONS / HEARINGS

### IAAT Services LLC – Application No. 26-001

**1137 Route 202**

**Block 31, Lot 2**

**Completeness Review Only**

Mr. Brosnan reviewed the application materials and the items identified in his review memorandum, and recommended that the application be deemed complete.

**Motion** by Councilman Harwood, seconded by Mr. Brown, to deem the application complete.

### Roll Call Vote

**Ayes:** Windrem, Tozzi, Harwood, Cunningham, Gara, Murphy, Brown, Gussman, Jayaraj

**Nays:** None

**Abstentions:** None

**Motion carried.**

---

## Maxwell Field – Application No. 26-002

### 608 Route 202

### Block 2, Lot 15.03

Mr. Gideon Gelber, project architect, appeared on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Gelber stated his professional credentials and was accepted by the Board as an expert in architecture. He advised that he was authorized by the property owner, **Max Field**, to present the application and to accept conditions imposed by the Board and its professionals.

Mr. Gelber testified that the application sought approval to expand the driveway area in order to permit vehicles to turn around on-site and avoid backing onto **Route 28**. He explained that the proposed driveway expansion would increase impervious coverage from the permitted **30%** to **36.44%**, thereby requiring variance relief.

Mr. Gelber described the property as triangular in shape and noted that the existing curb cut onto Route 28 limited options for driveway design and circulation. He testified that the requested variance could be justified under the **C(2) criteria**, as the proposed improvement would advance public safety by allowing vehicles to turn around on-site rather than back directly onto Route 28.

Mr. Brosnan reviewed the application and requested that the plans be revised to include the slope and diameter of the proposed piping, a landscaping plan, and the locations of water and sewer lines. Mr. Gelber also testified that the residence was constructed of concrete because the owner desired a very quiet living environment.

With respect to stormwater management, Mr. Gelber testified that the applicant proposed to install **two dry wells** to address the increase in impervious coverage. He stated that, due to the slope of the lot, a rain garden was not a feasible alternative. Mr. Brosnan recommended that additional plantings be provided at the outflow of the dry wells and that a maintenance schedule for the dry wells be submitted. Mr. Gelber agreed to those conditions.

### Public Comment

**Ms. Stander, 977 First Avenue**, asked whether, in light of the potential for a 100-year storm event, a retaining wall at the front of the property had been considered. Mr. Gelber responded that there was insufficient room at the front of the property and that such a wall would not be permitted within the State right-of-way. He stated that the proposed riprap and landscaping constituted a reasonable and viable alternative.

Mr. Sobieski reviewed the requested variance relief and the proposed conditions of approval, including compliance with the testimony presented at the hearing and with the items set forth in Mr. Brosnan's memorandum dated **May 21, 2026**. He further noted that

the stormwater system, additional landscaping, and revised plans would be subject to review and approval by Mr. Brosnan.

**Motion** by Mr. Cunningham, seconded by Mr. Murphy, to approve Application No. **26-002**, subject to the conditions stated on the record.

### Roll Call Vote

**Ayes:** Windrem, Tozzi, Harwood, Cunningham, Gara, Murphy, Brown, Gussman, Jayaraj

**Nays:** None

**Abstentions:** None

**Motion carried.**

---

## RESOLUTION APPOINTING RT ENVIRONMENTAL

The Board considered a resolution appointing **RT Environmental** to provide oversight of the environmental testing and reporting associated with the **Lagrange Street project**.

**Motion** by Mayor Tozzi, seconded by Mr. Jayaraj, to approve the resolution.

### Roll Call Vote

**Ayes:** Windrem, Tozzi, Harwood, Cunningham, Gara, Murphy, Brown, Gussman, Jayaraj

**Nays:** None

**Abstentions:** None

**Motion carried.**

Chairwoman Windrem discussed the reasons for appointing RT Environmental to provide oversight. In response to an inquiry from Mr. Cunningham concerning the selection of testing locations, Mr. Brosnan stated that the developer's **Licensed Site Remediation Professional (LSRP)** would prepare a proposed testing plan, which would then be reviewed by RT Environmental. In response to an inquiry from Mr. Gussman concerning groundwater testing, Mr. Brosnan stated that, now that RT Environmental had been appointed, he would consult with RT regarding what additional testing or oversight may be appropriate.

---

## PUBLIC COMMENT

**Ms. Brown, Elmer Street**, stated that she had spoken with an employee of the **New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP)** regarding the **Lagrange Street project** and had been advised of inconsistencies in reports submitted by the project's Licensed Site Remediation Professional. Ms. Brown stated that this underscored the need for careful

review of the environmental reports, even if the underlying testing had been properly performed. She expressed the view that RT Environmental would provide independent and professional oversight in the interest of the Borough and its residents.

**Mr. King** stated that the creation of the Technical Review Committee would be a benefit to the Borough. He asked Mr. Brosnan how long it would take to receive bids and commence work on the **Richard Street project**. Mr. Brosnan discussed the bidding and vetting process and stated that it was possible the process could be completed by the middle of **July**.

Mr. King also inquired about the sewer issue on **Vones Lane**. Mr. Brosnan explained that, while attempting to clear a blockage, the Borough's sewer snake became lodged in the line and had to be removed by excavating the line and replacing several feet of deteriorated pipe.

**Mr. Dinsmore, Victoria Street**, stated that the quality of the Planning Board minutes being approved by the Board was inadequate and did not provide a sufficient record of proceedings. He emphasized that Planning Board minutes constitute the official permanent public record and stated that YouTube videos and recordings are not official records. He urged the Board to appoint a secretary with sufficient capacity to prepare accurate minutes in order to protect the Borough from potential litigation.

An **unnamed resident of First Avenue** asked about the status of the **Burns Street Bespoke project**. Chairwoman Windrem responded that nothing further had come before the Board regarding that matter.

**Ms. Stander, First Avenue**, stated that she supported the prior comments made regarding RT Environmental and was pleased that the Board had retained the firm. She stated that she would like to see RT Environmental involved in additional projects as needed and requested that the **Environmental Commission** be invited to meetings with the LSRP, noting that members of the Commission have significant education and expertise in environmental matters and could provide valuable input to the Borough.

**Ms. Eriksson, Lagrange Street**, asked whether the **200-foot public notice** for the billboard application would include residents of **Bridgewater**, and Mr. Brosnan confirmed that it would. Ms. Eriksson further stated that she believed there was an overreliance on professionals and that she would like to see greater public input and transparency in Technical Review Committee meetings. She also stated that some municipalities, including **Somerville**, require political contribution disclosure forms as part of the application process and preclude applications by developers who have made certain political contributions within the preceding four years. She stated that **IAAT Services** had made a political contribution to a local political figure that, in her view, would have been subject to disclosure under such a policy. Ms. Eriksson requested greater public involvement in Planning Board and Council matters, stating that she lacked confidence in the actions of those bodies over the prior two years.

**Mr. Timms, Lagrange Street**, commented on the Technical Review Committee and recommended that the costs associated with its review be borne by applicants. Mr. Sobieski stated that the Board would be forwarding a recommendation to the Borough Council that ordinance language be adopted requiring applicants to be responsible for such fees. Mr. Timms also requested that the Board ensure that the scope of RT Environmental's oversight, including documentation requirements and chain-of-custody procedures, be clearly established in order to protect residents.

---

## ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Board, **motion** was made by Chairwoman Windrem, seconded by Mayor Tozzi, and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at **8:18 p.m.**

---

Respectfully submitted,

---

**Lou Gara**   
Board Administrator/Secretary

Approved: 6 / 24 / 2026

These minutes have been formatted and edited using AI