

BOROUGH OF RARITAN PLANNING BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

June 24, 2026

A recording of this meeting is available on the Borough's YouTube channel and website.

CALL TO ORDER AND FLAG SALUTE

The regular meeting of the Borough of Raritan Planning Board was called to order at **6:30 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. Jayaraj
- Ms. Thomas

Absent

- Mr. Gussman

Also Present

- Matt Flynn, Board Attorney

- Joe Brosnan, Board Engineer/Planner
- Lou Gara, Construction/Zoning Official / Board Secretary

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: Mr. Harwood

Second: Mr. Jayaraj

To approve the minutes of the **May 27, 2026** Planning Board meeting, as presented.

Roll Call Vote

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

Nays: None

Abstentions: Ms. Thomas

Motion carried.

PROFESSIONAL REPORTS

Mr. Brosnan reported on the progress of the sanitary sewer assessment in the Busky Lane, Granetz Place, Glaser Avenue, and Wyckoff Avenue area. He also advised that the New Jersey Department of Transportation grant application for sidewalks and curbing had been submitted.

Mr. Brosnan further provided an update on the environmental testing at the LaGrange Street site and reported on the continued progress of construction at **21 Orlando Drive**.

Mr. Gara reported that a new tanning salon had opened at the Raritan Crossing shopping center on Route 206.

Chairwoman Windrem stated that she wished to discuss data centers and battery storage facilities. She proposed that the Planning Board recommend to the Borough Council that these uses be prohibited in all zoning districts within the Borough.

Motion: Mr. Cunningham

Second: Ms. Thomas

To recommend to the Borough Council that data centers and battery storage facilities be added as prohibited uses in all zoning districts within the Borough.

The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

Chairwoman Windrem then introduced **Resolution No. 2026-15**, establishing a Technical Review Committee (TRC), and advised that there would be no public comment on the resolution.

Motion: Mr. Murphy

Second: Mr. Harwood

Mr. Cunningham requested clarification as to whether the proposed Technical Review Committee would replace the existing Redevelopment Advisory Committee (RAC) or function in addition to it.

Chairwoman Windrem explained that the Redevelopment Advisory Committee is established by the Mayor and Council, whereas the Technical Review Committee would be a committee of the Planning Board and would operate independently of the RAC.

Mr. Cunningham stated that he requested the clarification so the public would better understand the distinction.

Mr. Brown asked whether meetings of the Technical Review Committee would be open to the public.

Mr. Gara and Chairwoman Windrem responded that the meetings would not be publicly advertised.

Mr. Brown further asked whether members of the public who appeared at a meeting would be permitted to attend and suggested that the Board establish a clear policy on the matter.

Mr. Flynn explained that members of the public would not be prohibited from attending. He further stated that Technical Review Committees are commonly used by municipalities to allow municipal professionals to review engineering, planning, and public safety issues before an application proceeds to a public hearing. The committee generally includes one or two Planning Board members so they remain informed regarding the review process. The purpose of the TRC is to identify technical issues early and help ensure applications are procedurally complete before formal Board review.

Mr. Brown stated that the procedures governing the Technical Review Committee should be clearly defined. He also commented on how the Technical Review Committee functioned when he previously served as a member.

Members of the public began asking questions and offering comments from the audience. A discussion followed among members of the public, the Board's professionals, and members of the Planning Board.

Chairwoman Windrem suggested that the Board table consideration of Resolution No. 2026-15 in order to further develop and clarify the procedures governing the Technical Review Committee.

Mr. Cunningham stated that the Board should provide additional opportunities for public comment on matters before it.

Mr. Timms, a member of the public, discussed the formation of Board committees and stated that the purpose and function of each committee should be clearly defined and should include public participation where appropriate.

Mr. Timms also discussed escrow requirements and questioned how escrow-related invoices are paid.

Mr. Gara and Mr. Flynn explained that the Borough does not pay invoices for applications requiring escrow deposits. Rather, those invoices are paid from the applicant's escrow account.

Following discussion, the Board agreed to table consideration of Resolution No. 2026-15 establishing a Technical Review Committee.

Roll Call Vote

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

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

Motion carried.

RESOLUTIONS

Maxwell Field – Application No. 26-002

608 Route 202

Block 2, Lot 15.03

The Board considered a resolution memorializing approval of the above-referenced application.

Motion: Mayor Tozzi

Second: Mr. Cunningham

To approve the resolution as presented.

Roll Call Vote

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

Nays: None

Abstentions: Ms. Thomas

Motion carried.

APPLICATIONS / HEARINGS

LaGrange Street, LLC – Application No. 25-004

Final Site Plan (Continued from April 22, 2026)

57 & 59 LaGrange Street

Block 93, Lots 1 & 2

Mr. Flynn announced that the hearing would be carried to the **July 22, 2026** Planning Board meeting, without further notice, in order to allow additional environmental testing at the site.

IAAT Services, LLC – Application No. 26-001

1137 Route 202

Block 31, Lot 2

Mr. Brown expressed concern that the Borough is currently involved in litigation initiated by the applicant concerning a separate matter. He made a motion to postpone consideration of the application until the litigation had been withdrawn or adjudicated.

Chairwoman Windrem requested that Mr. Flynn respond.

Mr. Flynn explained that the applicant had previously received a denial on a similar application involving another property and had appealed against that decision through the court system.

He further advised that the Planning Board was not precluded from hearing the present application and that the Municipal Land Use Law requires the Board to render a decision within **120 days** of the application being deemed complete. The application was deemed complete on **May 27, 2026**. Mr. Flynn stated that postponing the hearing until the litigation concluded could place the Board at risk of exceeding the statutory time frame.

Mr. Brown reiterated his motion.

Mayor Tozzi asked whether the 120-day period could be extended and stated that he was uncomfortable hearing an application submitted by an applicant that is currently pursuing litigation against the Borough.

Mr. Flynn responded that he would research whether the statutory deadline could be extended under these circumstances and report his findings to the Board at its **July 22, 2026** meeting.

The applicant's attorney stated that the applicant would not consent to extending the statutory deadline for that reason and emphasized that the present application should be evaluated on **its own merits**.

The attorney requested a brief recess to confer with his client and the professionals present to testify.

Following the recess, the attorney advised that the applicant had appeared before the Board intending to proceed with the hearing. Although the applicant did not consent to carrying the application, the applicant would abide by the Board's decision.

Motion: Mayor Tozzi

Second: Mr. Murphy

To carry the application to the **July 22, 2026** Planning Board meeting, without further notice.

The motion was approved unanimously by voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mike Patente, Glaser Avenue, expressed his appreciation for the Board allowing public comment during the discussion concerning the Technical Review Committee. He stated

that the proposed billboard complies with the 500-foot separation requirement contained in the Borough's ordinance. Mr. Patente further commented that, if the application is denied, the Borough could face additional litigation. Although the Borough has insurance coverage, he stated that another lawsuit would be unnecessary and undesirable.

Patrick Dinsmore, Victoria Street, expressed concern regarding the resolution adopted at the previous Planning Board meeting. He stated that the resolution contained factual inaccuracies, specifically noting that it indicated he had expressed an overall objection to the application, which he stated was not accurate. He stated he asked the applicant if they were going to notify perspective residents that they would be living over a closed landfill, the applicant replied that they were not unless they were required by law. Mr. Flynn stated that it is up to the board if they would like the resolution amended, the inaccuracy does not have a material impact. Chairwoman Windrem recommended the resolution be revised.

Roger Copt, Route 202, stated that he was confused about the pending litigation involving the billboard application and the current application before the Board for a billboard at the body shop property. He questioned whether approval of the current application, together with a successful outcome in the litigation, could result in two billboards being erected on Route 202 less than one mile apart.

Ms. Wheeler, Charlotte Drive, stated that this was the most exciting Planning Board meeting she had attended, noting that she had attended many meetings over the years.

She explained that she had originally come to ask questions of the professionals scheduled to testify on the IAAT Services application and had not anticipated making public comments.

Ms. Wheeler stated that her parents reside on Charlotte Drive in Bridgewater and that she had lived there for twenty-seven (27) years.

She expressed concerns regarding traffic safety along Route 202, stating that motorists exiting Charlotte Drive already encounter difficulty entering the roadway safely. She asserted that a digital billboard would create an additional distraction for drivers and increase the likelihood of traffic accidents.

Ms. Wheeler further stated that taking one's eyes off the roadway for only a few seconds could impair a driver's ability to stop safely at the traffic signal near Ortho Drive and could adversely affect motorists, including employees traveling to and from the nearby Johnson & Johnson facility.

She also stated that the applicant was requesting numerous variances, which she believed were excessive, and discussed the percentage by which each requested variance exceeded the requirements of the Borough's zoning ordinance.

In response to a question from a Board member regarding the sight line from her parents' residence to the proposed billboard, Ms. Wheeler explained that her parents' home is located farther down Charlotte Drive. However, she noted that several residences are located approximately forty (40) yards from the proposed billboard location.

Mr. Mutek, Vones Lane, stated that numerous traffic accidents already occur along the Route 202 corridor between the subject property and Milltown Road. He commented that entering Route 202 has become increasingly difficult due to traffic generated by nearby commercial development, including Wegmans and Chick-fil-A.

Mr. Mutek expressed concern that the addition of a double-sided digital billboard would create an unnecessary distraction for motorists and would increase safety risks within an already congested corridor.

He also cited statistics regarding distracted driving and concluded that installation of the proposed billboard would only exacerbate existing traffic hazards.

For these reasons, Mr. Mutek stated that he urges the planning board to prioritize the safety of the residents, he feels the variances requested are extreme, and he opposes the proposed application.

Mr. King, Vones Lane, stated that if Route 202 is widened to three travel lanes in the future, the proposed billboard would be located directly over the roadway because of the setback variances requested by the applicant. He also commented that planned improvements to the nearby jughandle and roadway widening project would eliminate portions of the existing shoulder, bringing the roadway even closer to the proposed billboard structure.

Ms. [Name Unclear], Vones Lane, stated that turning from Route 202 onto Vones Lane is already hazardous because motorists frequently strike vehicles waiting to make the turn.

She expressed concern that the addition of a digital billboard would further distract drivers, increasing the likelihood of rear-end collisions.

She also stated that motorists exiting Vones Lane onto Route 202 would be distracted by the billboard, thereby increasing the potential for additional traffic accidents.

Mr. Timms, LaGrange Street, thanked everyone who attended the meeting and commented that "democracy is alive." He stated that he intends to attend the July meeting to comment on the IAAT Services application that was carried.

Mr. Timms also expressed his appreciation for the opportunity afforded to members of the public to comment on the proposed Technical Review Committee resolution. He suggested that the Board consider allowing time for public comment immediately prior to adjournment to allow residents an additional opportunity to address matters discussed during the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Planning Board, a motion was made by **Mr. Cunningham**, seconded by **Mr. Jayaraj**, to adjourn the meeting.

The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

Chairwoman Windrem declared the meeting adjourned at **8:03 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Lou Gara 
Board Administrator/Secretary

Approved: 7 / 22 / 2026

AI was used to format and edit these minutes