

## The Township of Haddon Planning/Zoning Board

### Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July, 10<sup>th</sup> 2025

A regular meeting of the planning/zoning board of the Township of Haddon was held on Thursday, July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, in the municipal building court room (2nd floor), located at 135 Haddon Ave, Haddon Township, New Jersey was called to Order by Gregory Wells.

### Flag Salute

### Confirmation of Sunshine Law

### Roll Call

Richard Rotz	Excused
John Foley	Present
Renee Bergmann	Present
Marguerite Downham	Present
Joe Buono	Excused
Frank Ryan	Present
James Stevenson	Present
Commissioner Mulroy	Excused
Gregory Wells	Present
Jose Calves	Excused
Meredith Kirschner	Excused
Maryrita D'Alessandro	Present

Also

M. Lou Garty – Solicitor  
Greg Fusco – Township Planner & Engineer  
Lee Palo – Zoning Officer

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion by Foley to approve the minutes from June 4th, 2025, and seconded by Frank Ryan. (Kirschner, Downham, Stevenson, Bergmann abstained). Motion carried.

Solicitor Lou Garty announced the adjournment of **Application 25-18, block 8.10 Lots 26 & 27 – Zone C-1 – 931 White Horse Pike – UK Brothers 11, Inc.**, to the next meeting on August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

Foley made a motion to grant the adjournment, which was seconded by Downham.

### NEW BUSINESS:

**Application 25-19- Block 14.02 Lot 24 – Zone R-1- 716 Graisbury Avenue-** Anne Kappel is seeking to convert garage into living space. Seeking front yard variance. Need lot area relief of 4,100 sq ft, lot frontage relief of 16ft, lot width relief 16 ft, rear yard set-back relief of 13 ft, side yard set-back relief of 3.02 ft and total side yard relief of 9.74 ft. With any and all variances deemed necessary to approve this application. Solicitor, Lou Garty, stated that after review of the notices they are in compliance.

Homeowner, Anne Kappel sworn in, confirmed the accuracy of the pre-existing conditions and variances and states that no changes will be made. Anne plans to park in the front yard, which is common in the neighborhood. The board discussed the variances, including lot size, frontage width, rear yard setback, side yard setback, and total side yard in the aggregate.

Gregory Wells assigned and confirmed exhibits:

A1: Survey, dated 5/1/25, Walter H. Macnamara Assoc., Inc. exhibited the current as-built conditions.

A2: Photo Array, taken by Lee Palo, demonstrated the current conditions of the home where the new project is intended.

A3: Elevation and Floor Plans, dated 4/30/25, John Gibson Martin, demonstrated the elevation and floor plans for the proposed improvements to the property.

Lou Garty explains about style, conditions, taxes, permits, inspections, assessments, next steps, etc., and Anne Agrees to construct the addition consistent with the elevation plan submitted. The board discussed the potential impact on property taxes and the overall improvement of the property. Gregory Wells opened the application to the public.

**Public Comment:** None.

Foley made a motion to close public comment, and seconded by Downham.

Stevenson made a motion to approve this application and seconded by Foley. Motion Approved. The homeowner will be responsible for publishing the decision in the local paper.

**Application 25-20, Block 28.01 Lot 7- Zone R-1 - 505 Strawbridge Ave** – Megan Chase is seeking to construct a rear yard 1 story sunroom addition. Seeking variances for lot area relief of 1,027.80 sq ft, front yard set-back relief of 4ft, side yard set-back relief of 2.5 ft, total side yards relief of 3.62 ft and an accessory structure relief of 2ft and 3ft respectively. With any and all variances deemed necessary to approve this application. Solicitor, Lou Garty, stated that after review of the notices they are in compliance.

Homeowner, Megan Chase, sworn in and confirmed the variances, including lot area relief, front yard setback relief, and side yard setback relief.

Gregory Wells assigned and confirmed exhibits:

A1: Survey, dated 6/3/25, Al Floyd Surveying, LLC exhibited the current as-built conditions.

A2: Photo Array, Lee Palo, demonstrated the current conditions of the home where the new project is intended.

A3: Site Plans, dated 5/15/25, Harris Architect, LLC demonstrated the elevation plans for the proposed improvements to the property.

Megan explained that the addition will not be visible from the front and that the current patio will be larger than the proposed screen deck. The board discussed the additions design and its compatibility with the neighborhoods character. Lou Garty explained about style, conditions, taxes, permits, Inspections, assessments, next steps, etc. Megan confirmed that the addition will be constructed consistent with the plans submitted and that all required permits and inspections will be obtained. Gregory Wells opened the application to the public.

**Public Comment:** None.

Foley made a motion to close public comment, and seconded by Downham.

Foley made a motion to approve the application and seconded by Stevenson. Motion approved. The homeowner will be responsible for publishing the decision in the local paper.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Application 25-02 – Block 4.16 Lot 10 – Zone C-3 – 400 Black Horse Pike – Quick Buds, LLC** – Applicant is seeking to establish and maintain a class 5 Cannabis Retail store within the existing commercial building. With any and all variances deemed necessary to approve this application. Lou Garty confirmed the presence of seven eligible members and stated that after review, they are in compliance. The mayor's representative, Frank Ryan recused himself and verification was provided that certification forms were filed confirming that absent members had reviewed the audio recording of the May 1 meeting.

Michael Lario, introduced himself as the attorney representing Quick Buds, LLC and gave an overview. The application seeks minor site plan approval, conditional use variance relief, and all variances for a class five cannabis retail facility at 400 Black Horse Pike. The site is located within the C3 commercial zone, which allows for the proposed use as a conditional use. Mr. Lario outlined the site improvements, including refacing the existing building, repaving the parking lot and adding directional signage and site lighting. The applicant adheres to most conditions but has non-compliance issues with parking and bulk standards. The proposed site improvements aim to bring the property into modern standards. Mr. Patterson and Mr. Hammel have provided site civil engineer and architectural testimony. Mr. Kuchta will testify on the operation of class five cannabis dispensaries and the site's compliance with local and state regulations. Nathan Mosely, traffic engineer, will testify on traffic generation and parking demands, confirming that the proposed use does not significantly increase traffic. Steven Hawk, the planner will provide professional planning testimony in support of the conditional use variance relief and bulk variances. Mr. Lario passed out updated packets and confirmed exhibits:

A1: Aerial Map exhibit, dated 4/30/25, Patterson Surveying & Engineering, LLC

A2: Enlarged Site & Circulation Plans, dated 4/30/25, Patterson Surveying & Engineering, LLC

A3: Circulation & Lighting Plan, dated 4/30/25, Patterson Surveying & Engineering, LLC

A4: Elevations & Floor Plan, dated 12/8/24, Hammel Architectural Group

A5: Exterior Rendering & Signs, dated 12/8/24, Hammel Architectural Group

A6: Cannabis Retail Stores Map Exhibit

A7: Tax Map Exhibit, Remington & Vernick Engineers

## A8: Site Photographs

Russell Kuchta, Operations Consultant, sworn in and introduced himself as a cannabis consultant familiar with local and state licensing requirements. The proposed use is a class five microbusiness, which has specific size and employee limitations. The site will operate with proposed hours of 10 AM to 10 PM on weekdays and 10 AM to 6 PM on Sundays, with a staff of four to five employees. Mr. Kuchta described the interior floor plan, including a check-in counter, security check, and two lines for online pickup and in-store assistance. The delivery van will access the site through a designated area, and the product will be stored in a secure vault. The site will have internal and external camera networks monitored by the operator, the cannabis regulatory commission, and local police. Access to secure areas will be based on employee roles, and a security guard will be present during all hours of operation. Mr. Kuchta confirmed that the site will not generate unique noise or odors, as all products come pre-packaged and there is no on-site consumption. The site will have air filtration systems to manage any potential odors. The applicant agreed to limit special events to avoid reducing on site parking or increasing approved signage and agreed to not hold events that could reduce on-site parking.

Nathan Mosely, Traffic Engineer, sworn in and described the existing site conditions and the proposed improvements for traffic circulation and parking. The site will maintain existing access points, with inbound traffic on Marlborough Ave and outbound traffic on Route 168. The proposed parking layout includes 14 lineated parking spaces, exceeding the minimum standards for the site. A parking study was conducted at an existing retail cannabis facility, showing a peak demand of 6 spaces during peak times, which justifies the proposed parking variances.

Stephen Hawk, professional planner, sworn in and provided testimony in support of the conditional use variance and bulk relief. He emphasized that the proposed use is consistent with the intent of the C-3 Zoning district and that the applicant is taking reasonable steps to mitigate any negative impacts. Mr. Hawk, noted that the requested relief is due to existing non-conforming conditions and site restraints rather than any proposed expansion of use or intensity. He concluded that the positive criteria for granting the variance outweigh any potential negative criteria, especially given the upgrades to the site and the strict regulation of the cannabis industry.

Gregory Wells opened the application to the public.

### **Public Comment:**

Dan Conway of 10 Pershing Ave, sworn in and expressed concern about traffic and inadequate parking, stated that only 6 useable spots exist and emphasized that a dispensary near the Walt Whitman Bridge would draw high-volume regional traffic, particularly from Philadelphia, impacting an already congested intersection. He requested denial of the application based on parking issues alone.

David Woloszyn of 118 Grandview Ave, sworn in and questioned whether soil testing had been completed, given the site's long-standing use as an auto business. The board responded that the applicant had provided testimony of DEP clearance. He opposed the application due to uncertainty over long-term effects on the neighborhood.

Christopher Markulic of 25 Berwick Ave, sworn in and stated support for cannabis in general but as strongly opposed to this location. He criticized the project as incompatible with the character of West Collingswood Heights. He highlighted the removal of setback protections in C3 zones (including their

neighborhood), which he said unfairly targeted the area. He stressed that the location would become the closest dispensary to Philadelphia, likely increasing traffic and cannabis tourism. He recommended denial and called for reevaluation of the zoning ordinance.

Craig Bell of 12 Nicholson Rd, sworn in and stated that he lives at the intersection of the Black horse Pike and Nicholson. He noted that the area already suffers from traffic confusion and unsafe driving patterns. He believes that increased traffic will worsen existing safety issues.

Allison Kless of 7 Nicholson Rd, sworn in and stated that she is a long-time resident. She highlighted the proximity of the dispensary to school bus stops and emphasized safety concerns for children. She criticized traffic study for not accounting for neighborhood cut-throughs. She strongly opposed the variance.

Julia Parks of 212 Nicholson Rd, sworn in and questioned why two dispensaries would be located just eight blocks apart. She cited safety concerns, noise, loitering, property devaluation, and the dispensary's proximity to homes and youth sports fields. She believes the neighborhood is unfairly burdened being used as a dumping ground.

Jennifer Scirratto of 12 Howell Ave, sworn in and stated that her home is one block away and adjacent to existing problematic business. She shared first-hand experiences of illegal parking, threats from individuals, lack of enforcement by township or police, and current loitering issues. She expressed fear that similar or worse behavior would occur if the dispensary opens.

Gabrielle Scirratto, 18 years old, 12 Howell Ave, sworn in and described ongoing issues with loitering, crime, noise, and threats. She urged the board not to allow the dispensary, arguing it disrespects the community's character and poses safety risks, especially to children.

Ellen Barton, 12 Marlborough Ave, sworn in and expressed concern about the facility's proximity to her home, citing potential issues with parking overflow, loitering, and odor. She noted that her adult children pay to park on the street and fears that the dispensary customers will displace residents. She also raised concerns about traffic cutting through the neighborhood and referenced a recent hit-and-run involving her daughter's vehicle.

Laura Flanagan, 23 Valley Rd. Mt Ephraim, sworn in and stated that although she is not a resident, her brother lives on Marlborough Ave and she spends considerable time there. She compared the situation to the Brotherly Bud dispensary near her own home, where increased traffic, the need for speed bumps, and permit parking have been consistent issues.

Matthew Conway, 10 Pershing Ave, sworn in and noted that he regularly runs along the Black Horse Pike and has witnessed numerous unsafe driving behaviors, including vehicles traveling the wrong direction on the divided highway. He questioned the assertion that demand for cannabis is decreasing and argues that residents in his neighborhood have historically been overlooked. He urged the board to consider the disproportionate impact on West Collingswood Heights.

John Kendall, 120 Washington Ave, sworn in and stated he has lived in the area for 67 years. He praised residents for voicing their concerns and cited the long-standing principle that the benefit to the applicant must outweigh the detriment to the neighborhood. He did not believe that standard had been met.

Dominique Scirratto, 12 Howell Ave, sworn in and described longstanding issues with crime, traffic, and undesirable activity in the neighborhood. She expressed concern that the dispensary would further degrade the area and argued that this part of town is already burdened with negative commercial uses.

Nikki Scirratto, 12 Howell Ave, sworn in and echoed her sister's concerns about safety, especially for children in the area. She felt the proposed dispensary sends the wrong message about what the neighborhood represents and feared it would further damage the area's reputation.

Foley made a motion to close public comment, and seconded by Kirshner. Motion carried.

Counsel for the applicant offered a rebuttal to public comments, stating that many concerns raised, such as speeding, off-site consumption, and neighborhood traffic violations are enforcement issues beyond the applicant's control or the jurisdiction of the Planning Board. He emphasized that the cannabis retail facility is a conditionally permitted use in the C-3 zone, as established by the governing body. The applicant intends to bring the site into compliance with modern standards by improving landscaping, lighting, striping, and paving. He argued that the proposed use is one of the most highly regulated commercial uses in New Jersey, subject to both state and local oversight. Annual inspections and license renewals by the Cannabis Regulatory Commission were cited as enforcement mechanisms, and violations – such as on-site consumption- could result in loss of licensure. In terms of parking, the applicant acknowledged the variance from required spaces and offered to work with the board's professionals on reducing one front parking space (bringing to total to 13) to improve circulation and safety. They maintained that real-world demand projections and traffic studies support the adequacy of 13 spaces. The applicant also agreed to prohibit on-site consumption, limit hours of operation, maintain state licensing requirements, use building-mounted lighting due to site constraints, and comply with all conditions outlined by the board planner and township.

The Board expressed mixed views, with some members expressing support due to the regulatory oversight and site upgrades, and others voicing concerns about neighborhood impact and the sufficiency of parking. Some noted the concerns voiced by the public – particularly about neighborhood character, enforcement, and long-term impact. A few members questioned whether sufficient data exists on how nearby dispensaries impact traffic and parking. Others emphasized that the use is conditionally permitted and the application addresses site upgrades, compliance mechanisms, and oversight. It was clarified that a motion must be made in the affirmative to preserve conditional approvals and enforceable conditions if granted. Lou Garty recapped key conditions such as compliance with state CRC and local licensing requirements, annual licensing renewal and inspections, prohibition of on-site consumption, restriction of events and outdoor displays or music, affordable housing development fee, site plan improvements including striping and lighting, possible reduction to 13 parking spaces and a free-standing, non-internally illuminated sign of same size as existing.

A motion was made by Kirshner to approve the application, including all requested variances and site plan approval, subject to the stated conditions and second by Bergmann. Motion Failed (5-3).

The application for conditional use variance, parking variance, and minor site plan approval was denied. A formal resolution memorializing the denial will be prepared and voted on at the next meeting.

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN REVIEW:**

Mr. Fusco, provided an overview of the Affordable Housing Plan, specifically addressing the township's requirement to demonstrate lack of available land to meet the state's affordable housing obligations. His office along with Mary Beth's office, conducted a meticulous vacant land study using tax maps and tax records. The study aimed to identify township-owned land and determine its development potential. He explained that much of the land under review includes rights-of-way, paper streets, and forested or otherwise undevelopable parcels – such as wetlands or flood plains – throughout the township. These areas are unsuitable for development and would be more appropriately designated as open space. He distributed a list of properties along with corresponding tax map sheets and noted some properties already included on the state's Green Acres open space list. Mr. Fusco emphasized that incorporating these properties into the Township's open space inventory would better reflect their actual use and restrictions. Lou Garty, Board Solicitor, commended Mr. Fusco's thorough work and suggested collaborating to draft a formal resolution for the next meeting. The resolution would align the Township's open space list with the State's Green Acres Inventory and be reported back to the governing body. The board agreed this would be a logical next step.

**RESOLUTION:**

Resolution 25-11- 129 Haddon Ave.

A motion to accept this resolution was made by Foley and seconded by Wells. (Kirschner, Downham, Stevenson, Bergmann abstained.) Motion accepted.

Gregory Wells opened the meeting to the public.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** NONE.

Foley made a motion to close public comment, and seconded by Kirshner. Motion carried.

**ZONING REPORT:**

Lee Palo noted the number of residential and commercial applications: Three existing non-conforming applications and one commercial, a carryover - (Nifty Fifties)

With no further business tonight for the Haddon Township Planning/Zoning Board a motion by Foley to close the meeting and seconded by Bergmann. Motion carried.

Next meeting will be on Thursday, August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

Meeting adjourned at 11:09 pm.