

The Township of Haddon Planning/Zoning Board

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 2nd, 2026

A regular meeting of the planning/zoning board of the Township of Haddon was held on Thursday, April 2nd, 2026, in the municipal building court room (2nd floor), located at 135 Haddon Ave, Haddon Township, New Jersey was called to Order by Richard Rotz.

Flag Salute

Confirmation of Sunshine Law

Roll Call

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

Also

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by Ms. D'Alessandro and seconded by Ms. Downham to approve the minutes of the March 5, 2026 meeting. Motion carried.

Abstained: Mr. Foley

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Application 26-04 – Block 18.02 Lot 1 – Zone R-G – 210 W. Crystal Lake Avenue – Haddon Hills Associates, LLC

A request for postponement was presented for Application 26-04. It was stated that there had been an issue with notice and the applicant would re-notice the matter for the May 7, 2026 meeting. No testimony was taken and no public comment was entertained on the application.

Application 25-30 – Block 14.07 Lot 9 – Zone R-1 – 911 W. Mount Vernon Avenue – Ryan Carmone – Applicant is seeking to convert the garage into living space. Seeking relief for front yard parking, Lot Area relief of 3,125 sq ft, Lot Frontage relief of 20 ft, Lot Width relief of 20 ft, Side Yard Setback relief of 3.15 ft, Total Side Yard Setback Relief of 8.03 ft and an Accessory Building relief of 1.56 ft. With any and all variances deemed necessary to approve this application. Solicitor Lou Garty stated that she reviewed the notice provided by the applicant and confirmed that it was properly published and served in a timely manner and that the Board had jurisdiction to hear the application.

The applicant, Ryan Carmone, was sworn in and testified regarding his proposal to convert an existing half-car garage into living space to be used as a home office. He explained that the garage is not a full-size garage and is not practical for vehicle storage.

Chairman Rotz, marked the exhibits:

- **A1: Survey, Walter H. Macnamara, dated 8/26/25**
- **A2: Photo Array, Lee Palo, dated 3/17/26**
- **A3: Plans (Elevations Sketch)**
- **A4: Extra marked Survey**

The applicant testified that the exterior of the converted garage would be modified to appear consistent with the remainder of the home, including removal of the garage door, installation of windows with matching shutters, and refinishing of the exterior materials. Following questions from the Board, the applicant agreed that the entire front wall of the former garage would be finished so that it would appear as though the living space had always been part of the home, rather than resembling a modified garage.

The applicant testified that two vehicles can comfortably park in the driveway, with a third vehicle possible if necessary. He stated that the proposed garage conversion would be consistent with the character of the neighborhood and noted that there are several nearby homes without garages, including one that had been converted recently.

Testimony was also provided regarding the requested bulk variance relief. The applicant sought relief for lot area, lot frontage, lot width, side yard setback, aggregate side yard setback, and an existing shed setback. It was established that these conditions were pre-existing nonconformities not created by the applicant. The applicant also testified that the existing shed was present when he purchased the property and that relocation of the shed would be impractical.

Public Comment:

The application was opened to the public. Hearing no comment, Ms. Downham made a motion to close the public portion and seconded by Mr. Wells. Motion carried.

As conditions of approval, the applicant agreed to obtain all required permits and inspections for the work, to use the converted garage solely as a residential home office and not as a commercial office, and to complete the exterior renovations in substantial accordance with the testimony presented to the Board. The applicant also acknowledged that the additional living area may affect the assessment of the property.

A motion was made by Mr. Foley and seconded by Mr. Wells to approve the application, including the requested bulk variance relief for the pre-existing nonconforming conditions and the shed setback, subject to the testimony and conditions stated on the record.

Motion carried. Application approved.

The applicant was advised that a memorializing resolution would be presented at the May 7, 2026 meeting and that he would be required to publish notice of the Board's decision.

Application 26-08 – Block 27.09 Lot 32-35 – Zone C-1 – 15 Haddon Avenue – The Whitman Five, LLC –

Applicant is seeking a Bulk and USE variances for the bakery on the 1st floor and apartments on the 2nd floor. With any and all variances deemed necessary to approve this application. The Board attorney confirmed that proper notice had been provided and that the Board had jurisdiction to hear the application. A motion was made by Mr. Foley and seconded by Mr. Rotz to deem the application complete, subject to the requested submission waivers. Motion carried.

Mr. Frank Ryan recused himself from this application.

The applicant was represented by counsel, Attorney Thomas Coleman stated that the applicant seeks minor site plan approval and associated variance relief in connection with the reopening of the historic bakery on the first floor of the property, together with continued residential use of the two apartment units on the second floor. The applicant is not proposing to expand the building footprint. Proposed site improvements include accessible parking, barrier-free access, paving improvements, enclosure of the solid waste and recycling area, signage, landscaping, and lighting improvements.

Exhibits were marked:

- A1: Site Concept Plan, Brian Zobel, dated 11/25/25
- A2: Revised Sign Package
- A3: Revised Sign Package (Color)
- A4: Plan of Survey – F.A. Draves, dated 10/20/25
- Additional: Photo Array of current conditions & Current/Proposed Signage

The applicant's architect Brian Zobel was sworn in and testified regarding the existing conditions of the property. He described the site as a first-floor retail bakery with two second-floor residential apartment units above. He testified that the apartments remain configured as residential units, each with a kitchen, bathroom, living area, bedroom space, and closets, and that there was no evidence that the residential use had ever been actively abandoned or converted to another use.

Testimony was provided that the surrounding area includes Wawa adjacent to the property, residential uses to the rear, a mixed-use building across Strawbridge Avenue, and Walgreens across the street. The architect then reviewed the proposed site improvements, including closure of the Haddon Avenue parking area to general customer traffic except for one ADA-accessible parking space, installation of four residential parking spaces on the Strawbridge Avenue side, paving of the loading area, landscaping along adjoining residential areas, screening of the trash enclosure, and improved lighting. The applicant agreed to comply with the Board Engineer's review comments, including lighting controls, ADA striping and signage, replacement or repair of curbs, sidewalks, and aprons as necessary, and removal of the existing no-parking loading zone on Strawbridge Avenue as all loading is proposed to occur on site.

The applicant's operations manager Joseph March was then sworn in and testified regarding the bakery operations. He explained that the first-floor retail area would be fully renovated, including all new

cabinetry, flooring, plumbing, electrical, mechanical systems, and equipment. Baking operations would occur in the one-story portion of the building adjacent to the Wawa side, while the retail bakery space would occupy the Haddon Avenue and Strawbridge Avenue frontage.

The applicant testified that the bakery is proposed to operate seven days per week, with initial retail hours anticipated to be 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. He stated that if those hours change, they would be reduced rather than expanded. Baking operations would begin earlier, with approximately three to six baking employees working from 4:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Retail staffing is expected to range from four to seven employees depending on the time of day and customer demand. It was represented that the overall activity level would be less intensive than the prior historical bakery operation.

Further testimony was presented regarding parking, deliveries, and trash handling. The applicant testified that the Haddon Avenue side would contain one ADA-accessible space, while the Strawbridge Avenue side would contain four residential parking spaces and an on-site loading area. Deliveries between Del Buono locations would occur during off-hours, generally between 4:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. Supplier deliveries would be scheduled to minimize impact on neighboring properties. It was represented that no tractor trailer deliveries are proposed and that wholesale deliveries to outside businesses would not occur from this location. The applicant also testified that DoorDash, Uber Eats, and similar app-based ordering services may be used, but only during non-peak hours, with such services shut off during busy times to reduce traffic and congestion.

With respect to recycling and solid waste, the applicant testified that cardboard and recyclables would be collected on site and taken to another Del Buono location for processing. Solid waste would be stored in a screened dumpster enclosure on site in accordance with Camden County Board of Health requirements. Trash pickup was anticipated to occur approximately twice per week initially, with flexibility to increase pickups if needed. The applicant further testified that efforts would be made to schedule trash collection during early afternoon hours to minimize disturbance to neighboring residential properties. The applicant also agreed to provide a contact person to the Township in the event operational issues arise.

Additional testimony was presented regarding the proposed signage. Revised sign plans were submitted which eliminated the previously proposed digital LED sign and one façade sign. The remaining signage included a main façade sign above the principal entry elevation and various window signs identifying bakery products. The applicant testified that the revised signs had been reduced in scale from the original submission and that the color had been revised to a more traditional red. It was also explained that one larger decal proposed for the window would be a mesh-style vinyl applied to the inside of the glass, intended in part to reduce glare from the morning sun.

The Board Engineer provided testimony regarding the driveway opening on Strawbridge Avenue and site circulation. He stated that widening the driveway opening and eliminating the on-street parking spaces along Strawbridge Avenue would improve traffic flow and safety by moving deliveries and vehicle movements off the street and improving sight distance near the intersection.

After discussion with the Board regarding the scale of the revised façade sign, the applicant agreed to revise the sign upward slightly so that it would be more proportionate to the building, while still remaining substantially smaller than the originally proposed sign. The revised façade sign was discussed as being approximately 39 square feet in area.

A brief recess was taken.

Following the recess, the public portion of the hearing was opened.

John Rayner, a long-time resident of 26 Strawbridge Ave, was sworn in and expressed concerns regarding the proposed handicap parking arrangement. He stated that he was very familiar with the property and surrounding area and raised concerns that the proposed single accessible parking space would be difficult to safely access and exit due to traffic conditions along Haddon Avenue. He further expressed that the number of accessible parking spaces may be insufficient and suggested that accessible parking should instead be located near the residential parking area on Strawbridge Avenue.

Township Engineer, Mr. Fusco responded by explaining the ADA requirements governing accessible parking placement. He explained that the Americans with Disabilities Act requires the accessible space to be located as close as possible to the primary entrance and that the application complies with those requirements and noted that the proposed plan complies with those standards. The Board and professionals discussed the operational limitations of the site and the ways in which the proposed plan improved existing conditions

With no other members of the public wishing to be heard, Mr. Foley made a motion to close the public portion and seconded by Mr. Wells. Motion Carried.

Counsel for the applicant stated in closing that the proposal represented a substantial improvement over the prior long-standing condition of the property. He argued that the application would improve operations, enhance customer safety, move deliveries and loading activities off the street, provide compliant ADA parking, and continue the historic mixed-use character of the property.

The Board attorney then summarized the requested relief and conditions. She noted that the applicant had sought recognition of the two upstairs apartments as a pre-existing nonconforming use, or alternatively a use variance. Based upon the testimony and the Board Engineer's review, it was determined that the apartments were permitted uses and that in any event there had been no abandonment of the residential use. The Board attorney further noted that any future rental of the apartments would be subject to all Township requirements, including permits, inspections, life safety inspections, and landlord registration.

A motion was made by Mr. Foley and seconded by Ms. D'Alessandro to grant the certificate of pre-existing nonconforming use for the two upstairs apartment units. Motion carried.

The Board then returned to consideration of the minor site plan application and associated waivers and variances. The Board attorney summarized the requested relief, including minor site plan approval, design waivers, parking variance relief, sign variance relief, and lot consolidation as recommended by the Board Engineer. She also reviewed the various conditions discussed during testimony, including compliance with the Board Engineer's review comments, provision of buffering and bollards, screening of the dumpster area, control of lighting spillover, coordination of trash pickup, provision of contact information for the operator, removal of the digital sign request, elimination of one façade sign, revision of the remaining façade sign to approximately 39 square feet, and consolidation of the lot.

A motion was then made by Mr. Foley and seconded by Mr. Wells to approve the application as presented by the applicant and as conditioned by the Board professionals, including the requested minor site plan approval, variances, design waivers, and lot consolidation. In support of the motion, Mr. Foley commented that the proposal would be a significant asset to that portion of the Township and that the mixed-use layout of retail on the first floor and residential above was consistent with the Master Plan.

Motion carried.

RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution 25-05 – 146 Black Horse Pike

Resolution 26-06 – 108 Haddon Avenue

The Board next considered Resolution 25-05 for 146 Black Horse Pike and Resolution 26-06 for 108 Haddon Avenue. The Board attorney briefly described the applications. It was noted that minor revisions had been circulated. A motion by Ms. Downham was made and seconded by Ms. D'Alessandro to approve the resolutions.

Mr. Foley abstained; the resolutions were otherwise approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chairman Rotz opened the meeting to the public.

No members of the public came forward.

A motion was made by Ms. Downham and seconded by Mr. Foley to close the public comment portion. Motion carried.

ZONING OFFICE REPORT – Lee Palo

Mr. Palo reported that there are currently two commercial and two residential applications expected on the next month's agenda.

Next Meeting – May 7, 2026

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further business before the Planning/Zoning Board, a motion was made by Mr. Foley and seconded by Mr. Buono adjourning the meeting. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 9:38 pm.