

MANTUA TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL LAND USE BOARD
July 15, 2025 7:00 P.M.
MINUTES

The Mantua Township Municipal Land Use Board meeting was called to order on July 15, 2025 at 7:00 P.M. The Board Secretary called the meeting to order, led the Board members in a flag salute. The open public meeting statement was read: adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in the following manner: by providing written notice to the Clerk of the Township of Mantua on January 6, 2025, by posting notice on the official bulletin board on January 6, 2025 and by notifying the South Jersey Times and Courier Post.

Roll Call:

Present: deMers, Moyer, Huston, Moscatelli, Wilkinson Shast, J. Moore, Rainier, K. Moore
Absent: Berenato, Legge, Lukens

Minutes:

A motion was made by Mr. Huston to approve the June 15, 2025 minutes, the motion was seconded by Mr. J. Moore. Roll Call Vote: 5 yes, 0 no.

The Chairman announced that Application 2024-003 for 120 Woodlawn Avenue will be adjourned to the August 19th Land Use Board meeting, with no further notice required.

Solicitor Hyatt swore in the Board Professionals.

Old Business:

Application 2025-006 Bulk Variance -Approved

James Capate 865 Bridgeton Pike, Block 273, Lot 2.05, Tax Map 50, Zone PC

Action Requested: Approval of a bulk variance to allow the construction of a wood frame pole barn measuring 84 feet by 40 feet in the rear yard. The structure will consist of a 60-foot by 40 foot main building with two 12-foot overhangs, one at each end. This building would constitute a third accessory structure on the property, exceeding the maximum allowed number of two. The applicant also requests any additional variances or waivers that may be deemed necessary.

Mr. Capate was sworn in by Solicitor Hyatt. He testified that the pole barn is intended solely for personal use, including storage and the potential addition of a small office area. Access will be provided by an existing stone driveway, and the building will have a concrete floor. The overhangs are planned to provide shade and accommodate RV storage.

As a condition of approval, Mr. Capate agreed to remove one small shed, maintaining the number of accessory structures at three. The pole barn is also intended to help clean up the yard by storing vehicles out of public view.

He further noted the possibility of removing a tree that may have been damaged by a lightning strike. If the tree is determined to be a landmark tree, he acknowledged that a permit would be required for its removal.

The meeting was opened to the public following a motion made by Mr. J. Moore, which was seconded by Mr. Moscatelli. All board members voted in favor. Since no one came forward to address the board, Mr. J. Moore made a motion to close the public portion of the meeting, and Mr. Wilkinson seconded it.

After concluding the testimony, Mr. J. Moore motioned to approve Application 2025-006 with a condition to removed one of the small sheds, which was seconded by Mr. deMers.
The Roll Call Vote: 9 yes, 0 no.

New Business:

Application 2025-010 Bulk Variance - Approved

Charles Dougherty 35 Bear Creek Drive, Block 52.01, Lot 37, Tax Map 13.02, Zone PRC
Action Requested: Approval of a bulk variance from Section 230-67. B5(a)1[g] to permit a 12x24 deck with patio underneath with a reduced rear yard setback of 20 feet where a minimum requirement is 25feet. The applicant also requests any additional variances or waivers that may be deemed necessary.

Mr. Dougherty was sworn in by Solicitor Hyatt. He purchased the home in the Silver Creek community, an age-restricted (55+) development, in March 2025. The property is situated on a hill at the edge of the community, backing to wooded common area owned by the HOA.

Mr. Dougherty seeks to construct a 12' x 24' deck at the main floor level, which, due to the slope of the lot, would be approximately eight feet above ground level. The deck would include stairs leading down to a new concrete patio beneath it. The existing basement has a single door that currently opens to a small 4-foot concrete pad, which will be removed. A retaining wall will be added to level out the new patio area.

The proposed deck would be located 20 feet from the rear property line, requiring a variance for a five-foot rear yard setback relief. The land directly behind the property is owned and maintained by the HOA, and the home is located on a cul-de-sac. Mr. Dougherty has discussed the plan with the HOA but requires Land Use Board approval before proceeding.

The meeting was opened to the public following a motion made by Mr. Huston, which was seconded by Mr. Moscatelli. All board members voted in favor. Since no one came forward to address the board, Mr. Wilkinson made a motion to close the public portion of the meeting, and Mr. Moscatelli seconded it.

After concluding the testimony, Mr. J. Moore made a motion to approve Application 2025-010, with the condition that the deck and concrete pad shall not exceed the requested five-foot rear yard setback relief. The motion was seconded by Mr. Moscatelli.
The Roll Call Vote: 8 yes, 0 no, 1 abstain.

Application 2025-013 Bulk Variance - Approved

Gloucester County Property Management LLC Mt. Royal Rd, Block 150, Lot 2.04, Tax Map 27, Zone R-40

Action Requested: Approval of a bulk variance to construct a new 2-Story Single Family Dwelling for lot area .678 acre where a minimum of 1 acre is required, street frontage of 100 feet where a minimum of 150 feet is required, lot width of 100 feet where 175 feet is required. A waiver is

being requested for sidewalks, curbing, and any other variances, waivers, or approvals deemed necessary by the Land Use Board.

Craig Klayman appeared on behalf of the applicant, Gus Caruso. Mr. Caruso was sworn in by Solicitor Hyatt. Mr. Caruso owns the adjacent property and is proposing to construct a two-story single-family home of approximately 2,200–2,500 square feet.

Mr. Caruso described the lot, noting that it features a crosswalk from Mt. Royal Road to the center island at the traffic light, as well as an existing apron for driveway access. There are no sidewalks along the frontage of the property. The lot has historically existed as two separate lots, previously subdivided.

The proposal includes removal of the existing 24' x 38' pole barn. The lot is currently overgrown, and the applicant intends to clear and improve it. Mr. Caruso has met with the MUA and plans to connect the new home to the public sewer line located in the rear yard. No tree removal is proposed as part of this application.

The following bulk variances are requested:

- Lot area of 0.678 acres, where 1 acre is required;
- Lot frontage of 100 feet, where 150 feet is required;
- Lot width of 100 feet, where 175 feet is required.

Additionally, county approval will be needed for access from the county road.

The meeting was opened to the public following a motion made by Mr. Wilkinson, which was seconded by Mr. J. Moore. All board members voted in favor.

Donald Trevett (690 Main Street) expressed concerns regarding the potential removal of trees in front of the property.

Since no one else came forward to address the board, Mr. Huston made a motion to close the public portion of the meeting, and Mr. J. Moore seconded it.

After concluding the testimony, Mr. Huston motioned to approve Application 2025-013, which was seconded by Mr. deMers. The Roll Call Vote: 8 yes, 1 no (J.Moore).

Board Member Mr. Moscatelli recused himself from participation in the meeting.

Application 2024-022 Major Site Plan (Final) - Approved

Driscoll Mantua LLC & Driscoll South Jersey LLC 320, 340, & 380 Columbia Drive, Block 250, Lot 4.02, 4.03, & 4.04, Tax Map 42.01, Zone I

Action Requested: Major Site Plan Final Approval and is submitting a full tree survey and management plan accordingly. The applicant is also submitting revised site plans and architectural renderings reflecting the changes to the plans in accordance with the Preliminary Approval and comments received from the board engineer and board planner, which includes the updated building square footages, the sound wall, and the pedestrian path between the buildings. Any variances or waivers that may deemed necessary.

Ryan Duffy of Stark & Stark appeared on behalf of the applicants, Driscoll Mantua LLC and Driscoll South Jersey LLC. Solicitor Hyatt administered the oath to the following individuals:

- Ronald Pereen, Executive Vice President of Driscoll Foods
- Jacquelyn Gordano, Engineer with Dynamic Engineering
- Marla Roller, Landscape Architect with Dynamic Engineering
- John Mannino, Architect with Cerminara Architects
- Lance Landgraf, Planner

Mr. Pereen testified that he owns Lots 4.03 and 4.04, while Lot 4.02 is owned by Driscoll South Jersey LLC. He represents Driscoll Foods, a wholesale food distribution company currently expanding its operations along the Philadelphia-to-Baltimore corridor. The company has outgrown its existing facilities and acquired these lots to establish a new distribution hub in the region.

Driscoll Foods services approximately 288 food distribution facilities, handling frozen, refrigerated, and dry goods. The company plans to employ around 50 drivers, 50 night-shift workers, and additional day-shift staff. Operations run five days per week, with occasional half-day operations on a sixth day. The facility will operate 24 hours a day. Approximately 90% of deliveries are made using box trucks.

Mr. Pereen also noted that the company is coordinating with Conrail to potentially receive two train car deliveries per week, likely during nighttime hours.

Jacquelyn Giordano presented Exhibit A1, an overall site plan rendering showing a reduction in loading docks from 16 to 10 on Building B, along with 83 parking spaces. The circulation paths for both Buildings A and B were outlined.

Landmark trees are located within the building footprint, basin area, and circulation paths. To accommodate a new water tank with a maximum height of 22 feet, 10 parking spaces will be eliminated. The team is coordinating with the MUA and the Fire Marshal to ensure adequate water pressure and capacity.

Applications for wetlands and NJDEP approvals are pending, and the project is being reviewed by the Gloucester County Planning Board.

Building A will remain the same size. A fire suppression water tank will serve the entire site, with one fire hydrant planned to serve both buildings; however, current water supply is insufficient.

A sound wall will be installed on the southwest island adjacent to the loading docks to mitigate noise affecting Building A. The site will also include a fully enclosed trash compactor.

If approved, construction is expected to begin in September with an estimated 14 to 16 months until the facility opens.

Marla Roller provided an overview of the tree survey, which categorizes trees into two groups: non-landmark and landmark trees.

Non-Landmark Trees:

- Trees between 6 and 16 inches in diameter are considered non-specimen and do not require compensation.
- Trees between 16 and 30 inches located in tree protection areas are classified as specimen trees.
- A total of 582 non-landmark trees, ranging from 6 to 29 inches in diameter, are proposed to be removed.
- The total diameter removed equals 8,945 inches. Divided by 4 inches (per replacement calculation), this equates to 2,236 replacement inches.
- Using a 2.5-inch caliper for new trees, 895 replacement trees are required.
- The applicant proposes planting 596 new trees, including:
 - 298 shade trees
 - 298 evergreen trees
 - 299 ornamental trees

To help meet the requirement, additional compensation will be made through the Township Tree Fund:

- 167 shade trees will be planted, with 135 provided through compensatory plantings.
- 59 ornamental trees will be planted, with 249 provided through compensatory plantings.
- 370 evergreen trees are proposed, with an additional 72 offset trees provided to balance the tree fund requirement.

Landmark Trees (30 inches or more):

- Ms. Roller referenced Exhibit A2, the Landmark Tree Survey dated July 10, 2025.
- Landmark trees marked in blue on the exhibit are proposed for removal; those in green will be preserved.
- A total of 54 landmark trees are proposed to be removed. A mitigation fee of \$1,000 for inches will be paid for each removed landmark tree.
- The total inches removed from landmark trees equals 895 inches. Dividing by 8 inches (per the ordinance) requires 237 replacement trees.
- To compensate, shade trees will be upsized from 2.5-inch to 3.5–4-inch caliper to meet ordinance requirements. Ms. Roller explained the advantage of planting 4-inch caliper trees, which have a stronger root structure and higher survivability compared to smaller-caliper trees.

Additional Landscape Improvements:

- A total of 636 trees will be removed, with 596 trees proposed for replacement.
- Tree removal and replanting will not impact the site's drainage.
- A total of 370 evergreen trees will be planted along the perimeter as a buffer, particularly along Lambs Road.
- Additionally, 2,300 shrubs and grasses will be planted to enhance wildlife habitat.
- The project will preserve approximately 44% of the site as green space.

Tree fund calculations were reviewed in coordination with the Township Engineer.

John Mannino presented Exhibit A4, the revised submission for Building B.

- Building A: No changes are proposed.
- Building B: Several modifications and improvements were presented:
 - The number of loading docks has been reduced from 16 to 10.
 - The full rail-side loading area has been reduced by two-thirds, with the remaining one-third designated for rail car access.
 - Building B will include freezer and cooler storage areas, as well as office space.
 - The building footprint has increased from 67,500 square feet to 73,120 square feet.

Mr. Mannino also referenced Exhibit A3, which shows the updated building elevation renderings for Building B.

Lance Landgraf spoke in support of the requested tree waiver, citing the submitted tree survey and explaining that preserving all trees within the designated development zones would create an undue hardship for the project.

Jenniza Corbin, the Board Planner, commented that the applicant's testimony addressed the proposed removal of 54 landmark trees, including both non-specimen and specimen varieties. She noted that a waiver has been requested for their removal; however, the required cash contribution for mitigation cannot be waived.

The following waivers were identified:

- Section 387-5A
- Section 387-9A(2)
- Section 387-8D

Blake Fitzgerald, the Board Engineer, referenced his review letter dated July 11, 2025. He stated that the applicant will continue working with his office to address the remaining open comments, including items related to stormwater management, lighting, and other technical aspects, as well as obtaining approvals from outside agencies.

Mr. Fitzgerald also noted that any site changes required by Conrail will necessitate the applicant returning to the Board for further review and approval.

The meeting was opened to the public following a motion made by Mr. J. Moore, which was seconded by Mr. Wilkinson. All board members voted in favor. Since no one came forward to address the board, Mr. Wilkinson made a motion to close the public portion of the meeting, and Mr. J. Moore seconded it.

After concluding the testimony, Mr. Huston motioned to approve Application 2024-022, which was seconded by Mr. deMers. The Roll Call Vote: 8 yes, 0 no.

Correspondence: None

Public Portion: None

Resolutions:

Resolution 2025-20, memorializing Jeffrey Clauss, 31 Maryland Ave, was motioned by Mr. deMers, seconded by Mr. Wilkinson.
Roll Call Vote: 4 yes, 0 no.

Resolution 2025-21, 11 Enterprise LLC, 1090 Main St will be memorialized on August 19, 2025 to allow for additional comments.

With no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Shast to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Rainier. All Board Members were in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jessica Taylor
Land Use Board Secretary

Adopted on: 8-19-25