

# **MANTUA TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL LAND USE BOARD**

**August 19, 2025 7:00 P.M.**

## **MINUTES**

The Mantua Township Municipal Land Use Board meeting was called to order on August 19, 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: Berenato, deMers, Moyer, Huston, Lukens, Moscatelli, Wilkinson, Shast, J. Moore  
Absent: Rainier, K. Moore

### **Minutes:**

A motion was made by Mr. J. Moore to approve the July 15, 2025 minutes, the motion was seconded by Mr. deMers. Roll Call Vote: 7 yes, 0 no.

**The Chairman announced that Application 2024-014 concerning 18 Springhill Rd, will be rescheduled to a later date, with new notice to be provided.**

**Solicitor Hyatt swore in the Board Professionals.**

### **Old Business:**

#### **Application 2024-003 Final Major Subdivision – Continued**

Karen Salerno 120 Woodlawn Ave, Block 65, Lot 1, Tax Map 17, Zone R-11

Action Requested: Seeking final approval for a major subdivision of Lot 1 into 13 individual lots, consisting of twelve (12) single-family residential lots (each approximately 0.332± acres) and one (1) stormwater basin lot. Discussion of conditions related to the Tree Report and Traffic Study. Any necessary variances or waivers that may be deemed necessary.

Thomas North, representing the applicant Karen Salerno, provided an overview of the traffic study, noting that it contained no recommendations. He also testified that a certified arborist had measured every tree on the property by caliper. Mr. North referenced the Township ordinance, which requires tree replacement or compensation based on the measurement in inches, and requested a waiver for the sidewalk requirement.

Scott Brown, an engineer and surveyor with Pinchin, was sworn in by Solicitor Hyatt. Mr. Brown testified that the traffic study was conducted by Shropshire Associates and indicated minimal impact, with 11 trips projected during the morning peak hours (7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.) and 14 trips during the afternoon peak hours (2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.). The report also confirmed that the posted speed limit on Berkley Road is 25 miles per hour.

Mr. Brown also provided testimony regarding the trees on the property. A total of 70 trees are proposed for removal, including five landmark trees. He explained that a waiver was being requested for one landmark tree located along the roadway adjacent to sidewalk, as grading around

it would be unsafe for pedestrians and the tree, although currently in fair condition, would likely not survive. Mr. Brown noted that within the development zone there are 61 specimen trees, with five landmark trees in poor condition and unsuitable for preservation. Additionally, two specimen trees are proposed for removal within the protection zone, along with one non-specimen tree within the disturbance zone. Trees designated for removal will be compensated for based on trunk diameter.

In total, 64 trees are proposed for removal, while 106 new trees, each with a 3-inch caliper, will be planted. Due to limited space on the site, the number of replacement trees is reduced, though some existing trees will be transplanted within the development zone. Mr. Brown submitted Exhibit A-1, the Tree Management Plan, and explained that newly planted trees will be covered by a two-year warranty, requiring replacement if they fail to survive. A two-year maintenance bond will also be provided following construction.

Ashton Jones, the Board's Professional Planner, reviewed the resubmitted plans and the tree report prepared by Bartlett. He explained that dying or diseased trees do not require compensation and may be removed. He noted that one landmark tree in fair condition, located adjacent to the sidewalk, requires Board approval either for removal or for compensation. Additionally, one tree outside the disturbance area must be removed to allow for grading and the installation of an easement pipe.

Mr. Jones emphasized the general rule that trees over six inches in diameter should be preserved. He also stated a \$1,000 fine, in addition to replacement based on diameter measurements. For example, the removal of 32.5 inches in total diameter (such as four trees measuring 8 inches each) would require rounding up to five replacement trees.

He further addressed compliance with right-of-way access and the proposed lot gate across the Township road, noting that the Homeowners' Association (HOA) would be responsible for ongoing maintenance, including irrigation around the basin lot.

Blake Fitzgerald, the Board's Professional Engineer, reviewed the traffic report that no impose impact. Questions were raised regarding the stormwater management calculations regarding outflow and holding 100 year stormwater which will be discussed further amongst themselves.

Blake Fitzgerald, the Board's Professional Engineer, reviewed the traffic report and concluded that it showed no significant impact.

Questions were raised regarding the stormwater management calculations, specifically related to outflow capacity verses the ability to accommodate a 100-year storm event. These issues would be further reviewed and discussed internally.

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

Ira Powers (129 Woodlawn Avenue) was sworn in by Solicitor Hyatt. Mr. Powers testified and requested a delay of Final Approval for 120 Woodlawn Avenue to allow for a thorough review of the proposed development in accordance with the Mantua Township Open Space & Recreation Plan (2008) and the Mantua Township Master Plan (2018). He submitted two letters as exhibits:

Exhibit P-1, citing inconsistencies with the Mantua Township Master Plan (2018) and the Open Space & Recreation Plan (2008), and Exhibit P-2, addressing requests for traffic compliance, public safety review, and best practices.

Mr. Powers further requested due diligence regarding traffic and safety concerns, including the speed limit on Berkley Road, pedestrian and child safety, buffers, circulation flow versus cul-de-sac design, and accommodation for larger vehicles such as Amazon and UPS delivery trucks. He recommended that a traffic study be conducted over multiple days.

Additional concerns raised by Mr. Powers included the proposed homeowners' association (HOA)—specifically whether it could extend beyond the development, the nature of fees and restrictions, and clarification on the outcome should the HOA fail. He also addressed issues related to tree preservation, the maintenance bond, and wastewater management.

Tatyana Lazar and Nicola Hlushko (24 Linden Avenue) along with Cherie Pearson (22 Linden Avenue) were sworn in by Solicitor Hyatt. Ms. Lazar and Ms. Pearson expressed concerns regarding discrepancies between the tree inventory and the new tree plan, and raised questions about spray-painted trees located within the utility easement. Mr. Hlushko testified regarding fill that had been deposited on the property, raising concerns about the need for a hauling license and noting that both Mantua Township and NJDEP had been contacted about the issue. During testimony, it was revealed that a revised tree plan—prepared to present the same information in a clearer format—had not been provided to Mantua Township, but was instead submitted to Professional Planner Ashton Jones, dated July 8, 2025.

Nicholas Salerno was also sworn in by Solicitor Hyatt. Mr. Salerno testified regarding the fill, stating that he had contacted NJDEP but had not yet received a response. He further noted that the fill will be filtered prior to use and that a hauling permit is not required.

Dr. Gail Corso (24 Creek Lane) inquired whether any Tree of Heaven species were present on the property, noting that they serve as hosts for lantern flies, which are harmful to native trees. She described the Tree of Heaven as having dark bark and emphasized that lantern flies inhabit and ultimately kill these trees.

Curtis Rucker (159 Woodlawn Avenue) raised concerns regarding traffic and inquired about the repaving of Woodlawn Avenue.

Since no one else came forward to address the board, Dr. Berenato made a motion to close the public portion of the meeting, and Mr. Moscatelli seconded it. All board members voted in favor.

After concluding the testimony, Mr. Wilkinson motioned for Application 2024-003 to be continued to next month September 16, 2025 for more information to be provided, which was seconded by Mr. Moscatelli.

The Roll Call Vote: 9 yes, 0 no.

#### **New Business:**

#### **Application 2025-015 Bulk Variance - Approved**

Joseph Villari 419 Mantua Blvd, Block 160, Lot 2, Tax Map 31, Zone R-40

Action Requested: Approval of a bulk variance to permit a 6 foot high fence with a 19 foot wide gate in the front yard, where such placement is not allowed. Any variances or waivers that may be deemed necessary.

Joseph Villari was sworn in by Solicitor Hyatt. He testified that he intends to install landscaping to enhance the aesthetic appearance of his property and to construct a six-foot aluminum, powder-coated iron fence with pillars and a gate set approximately 10–20 feet from the right-of-way. The purpose of the fence is both to improve the property's appearance and to prevent trespassing. The proposed gate would swing outward toward the street and, while not closed at all times, would allow visitors to pull off the road to enter if it were closed. The gate would be electronic, installed primarily for aesthetic appeal. Mr. Villari explained that he has two small children and, given the limited backyard space, the fence would also provide additional safety for his family.

Mr. Villari submitted photographs of the proposed fence, which were marked as Exhibit A1.

The meeting was opened to the public following a motion made by Mr. J. Moore, which was seconded by Mr. Shast. All board members voted in favor. Since no one 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.

Upon conclusion of testimony, Mr. J. Moore motioned to approve Application 2025-015 with the condition that a six-foot fence be installed 15 feet from the right-of-way and that no privacy fence would be allowed, the motion was seconded by Mr. deMers.

The Roll Call Vote: 8 yes, 1 no (Shast).

**Correspondence:** None

**Public Portion:**

The meeting was opened to the public following a motion made by Dr. Berenato, which was seconded by Mr. Moscatelli. All board members voted in favor. Since no one 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.

**Resolutions:**

Resolution 2025-21, memorializing 11 Enterprise LLC, 1090 Main St was motioned by Mr. Wilkinson, seconded by Mr. Huston.

Roll Call Vote: 5 yes, 0 no.

Resolution 2025-22, memorializing James Capate, 865 Bridgeton Pike was motioned by Mr. deMers, seconded by Mr. Wilkinson.

Roll Call Vote: 7 yes, 0 no.

Resolution 2025-23, memorializing Charles Dougherty, 35 Bear Creek Dr was motioned by Mr. Wilkinson, seconded by Mr. Moscatelli.

Roll Call Vote: 7 yes, 0 no.

Resolution 2025-24, memorializing Gloucester County Property Management LLC, Mt. Royal was motioned by Mr. Shast, seconded by Mr. Wilkinson.

Roll Call Vote: 6 yes, 1 no.

Resolution 2025-25, memorializing Driscoll Mantua LLC & Driscoll South Jersey LLC, 320, 340, 380 Columbia Dr was motioned by Mr. deMers, seconded by Mr. Wilkinson.

Roll Call Vote: 6 yes, 0 no, 1 abstain.

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

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jessica Taylor  
Land Use Board Secretary

Adopted on: 9-16-25