



TOWNSHIP OF FRANKLIN
Planning Board
Agenda
Wednesday, April 15, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

SUNSHINE LAW

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

MINUTES

Regular Meeting – March 04, 2026

APPROVED

[PLANNING BOARD - 03-4-2026.rtf](#)

RESOLUTION

789 Hamilton, LLC / PLN-20-00008 ext of time

APPROVED

[RESOLUTION ext of time 04.16.26.docx](#)

DISCUSSION

PUBLIC COMMENTS

HEARING

CONCORE REALTY, LLC / PLN-23-00006

Preliminary & Final Major Subdivision w/C Variances in which applicant seeks approval to construct a 15,425sqft warehouse at 403 Elizabeth Avenue, Somerset; Block 502.02 Lot 9.01 in zone B-I

DL 10/31/2026

CARRIED to OCTOBER 21, 2026 – notification needed

COUNTY OF SOMERSET / PLN-26-00003

Minor Subdivision w/C Variance in which the applicant seeks to subdivide the property into two lots. One lot will be added to Franklin Township's Open Space inventory. The address is 1452 Canal Road, Somerset; Block 9 Lot 2.04 in zone CP

DL 06/19/2026

<https://www.franklintwpnj.org/committees-commissions/planning-board/application-material/county-of-somerset-pln-26-00003/-fsiteid-1#!/>

CARRIED to MAY 06, 2026 - with no further notification needed

[SCPb 3.26.26.pdf](#)

[D&R Jurisdictional determination 02.10.26.pdf](#)

[TRC report 03.10.26.pdf](#)

[EC report 03.03.26 ok.docx](#)

IONNA, LLC / PLN-26-00002

Site Plan w/C Variance in which the applicant seeks to convert 13 existing parking stalls into 10 EV charging stalls, including two ADA compliant at 607 Somerset Street, Somerset; Block 164 Lot 1.01 in zone R-C

DL 06/27/2026

<https://www.franklintwpnj.org/committees-commissions/planning-board/application-material/ionna-llc-pln-26-00002/-fsiteid-1#!/>

APPROVED

[SCPb 04.06.26.pdf](#)

[EC report 03.17.26 ok.docx](#)

[TRC report 03.11.26.pdf](#)

[D&R 02.19.26.pdf](#)

BOARD COMMENTS

WORK SESSION / NEW BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT

**TOWNSHIP OF FRANKLIN
PLANNING BOARD
COUNTY OF SOMERSET, NEW JERSEY**

**REGULAR MEETING
March 4, 2026**

The regular meeting of the Township of Franklin Planning Board was held at the Franklin Township Municipal Building, located at 475 DeMott Lane, Somerset, NJ, and was called to order by Chairman Orsini, at 7:30 p.m. The Sunshine Law was read, the Pledge of Allegiance said, and the roll was taken as follows:

PRESENT: Councilman Anbarasan, Theodore Chase, Robert LaCorte, Marc Dancy, Jennifer Rangnow, Meher Rafiq, Charles Brown, Robert Thomas, Sami Shaban, and Chairman Orsini

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. Peter Vignuolo, Board Attorney, Mark Healey, Planning Director, and Christine Woodbury, Planning & Zoning Secretary

OATH OF OFFICE:

- **Sami Shaban**

Mr. Vignuolo, Board Attorney, administered the Oath of Office just prior to the meeting's start.

MINUTES:

- **Regular Meeting – January 14, 2026**

Chairman Orsini made a motion to approve the Minutes, as submitted. Ms. Rafiq seconded the motion, and the roll was called as follows:

FOR: Dr. Chase, Mr. LaCorte, Ms. Rafiq, Mr. Thomas, and Chairman Orsini

AGAINST: None

- **Regular Meeting – January 21, 2026**

Chairman Orsini made a motion to approve the Minutes, as submitted. Ms. Rafiq seconded the motion, and the roll was called as follows:

FOR: Dr. Chase, Mr. LaCorte, Ms. Rafiq, Mr. Thomas, and Chairman Orsini

AGAINST: None

RESOLUTIONS:

- **Amended Affordable Housing Development Fee Ordinance**

Chairman Orsini made a motion to approve the Resolution, as submitted. Vice Chair Brown seconded the motion, and the roll was called as follows:

FOR: Councilman Anbarasan, Dr. Chase, Mr. LaCorte, Mr. Dancy, Ms. Rangnow, Vice Chair Brown, Mr. Thomas, and Chairman Orsini

AGAINST: None

- **Master Plan Re-Examination Report**

Chairman Orsini made a motion to approve the Resolution, as submitted. Mr. LaCorte seconded the motion, and the roll was called as follows:

FOR: Councilman Anbarasan, Dr. Chase, Mr. LaCorte, Mr. Dancy, Ms. Rangnow, Vice Chair Brown, Mr. Thomas, and Chairman Orsini

AGAINST: None

- **Fourth Round Affordable Housing Obligations**

Chairman Orsini made a motion to approve the Resolution, as submitted. The motion was seconded, and the roll was called as follows:

FOR: Councilman Anbarasan, Dr. Chase, Mr. LaCorte, Mr. Dancy, Ms. Rangnow, Vice Chair Brown, Mr. Thomas, and Chairman Orsini

AGAINST: None

- **Planning Board Attorney – Special Counsel – Eric Bernstein**

Chairman Orsini made a motion to appoint Mr. Eric Bernstein as Special Counsel. Vice Chair Brown seconded the motion, and the roll was called as follows:

FOR: Councilman Anbarasan, Dr. Chase, Mr. LaCorte, Mr. Dancy, Ms. Rangnow, Ms. Rafiq, Vice Chair Brown, Mr. Thomas, and Chairman Orsini

AGAINST: None

Chairman Orsini then made a motion to memorialize the Resolution before the Board that evening. Vice Chair Brown seconded the motion, and the roll was called as follows:

FOR: Councilman Anbarasan, Dr. Chase, Mr. LaCorte, Mr. Dancy, Ms. Rangnow, Ms. Rafiq, Vice Chair Brown, Mr. Thomas, and Chairman Orsini

AGAINST: None

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Chairman Orsini opened the meeting to the public for any general Planning comments. Vice Chair Brown seconded the motion, and all were in favor. Seeing no one coming forward, the meeting was then closed to the public, Vice Chair Brown seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

HEARING:

- **CONCORE REALTY, LLC / PLN-23-00006**

Preliminary & Final Major Subdivision w/“C” Variances in which the Applicant seeks approval to construct a 15,425 sq. ft. warehouse at 403 Elizabeth Avenue, Somerset; Block 502.02, Lot 9.01, in the Business & Industry (B-I) Zone – **CARRIED TO APRIL 15, 2026 – with no further notification required.**

- **ODIN DHUN, LLC / PLN-24-00007**

Mr. Tim Arch, Esq., Attorney, appeared before the Board on behalf of the Applicant, Odin Dhun, LLC. Preliminary & Final Major Subdivision w/"C" Variances in which the Applicant sought approval for the construction of a 16-lot subdivision consisting of 14 buildable lots for single-family homes at 295 Cedar Grove Lane; Block 508.02, Lot 12, in an R-40 Zone - **CARRIED FROM JANUARY 21, 2026 – with no further notification required.**

Mr. Arch indicated that they had had two previous hearings before the Board, with the last one taking place in January of 2026. He added that at that time, they did not have their engineer present and knew that the Board had some additional questions and requests for some exhibits which they were hoping to provide the Board with that evening. Mr. Arch then noted that they were given some updated and revised reports from Mr. Healey, the Township Director of Planning, Mr. Mazzei, the Township Engineer as well as from the Environmental Commission. He then told the Board that the Applicant had again significantly reduced the number of trees on-site to be removed, and the Environmental Commission was pleased that the number of trees to be removed and the deficit in actual planting of required trees was significantly less than what was proposed in the previous submission.

Mr. Greg Oman, Engineer and Principal of Menlo Engineering, 261 Cleveland Avenue, Highland Park, NJ, came forward and was sworn in. The Board accepted his qualifications. Mr. Oman then explained the exhibits that he brought with him that evening. He told the Board that he was able to watch the videos of the first two (2) public hearings that occurred for the Application. Mr. Oman then stated that they were going to introduce an aerial photo that was about a year or two old and superimposed the property outline over it and showed the current conditions that included the single-family house with the access out to Cedar Grove Lane along with the wooded areas in the back that had been discussed. He then introduced the next exhibit, entitled Limit of Disturbance showing the same aerial photo with a red line that delineated the limit of disturbance and followed the 40 ft. landscape buffer on the north and south sides, along with the 25 ft. buffer on the westerly side. Mr. Oman then added that it also showed the 16 inch or greater trees that the Applicant's arborist had highlighted and identified on the site and showing the ones within the red line to be eliminated and removed as well as the ones outside of the red line along the buffer and property lines to remain.

After the last hearing, Mr. Oman indicated that his office started to update the plans based on the expansion of the landscape buffer, with the original application having a 15 ft. buffer along the property line and he stated that they expanded that to 40 ft. that was testified to at the last hearing. He then noted that they started by looking at the arborist's report because the plans that were submitted did not have the arborist's report at that time. Mr. Oman stated that the arborist actually found a few additional 16-inch trees on site that were not picked up on the original survey. He told the Board that his office re-analyzed how many existing trees were on the site today, and utilizing the arborist's updated numbers, there were a total of 2,649 trees on-site. He then indicated

that 95% of those trees were 4-inch to 15-inch in caliper, with the remaining 140 or about 5% being 16 inches or larger. Once this determination was made, Mr. Oman stated that they determined how many of those trees were going to be removed within the area of disturbance. He then indicated that they would be removing 1,597 trees within the red limit of disturbance area, approximately 60% of the existing trees on-site. Mr. Oman told the Board that the previous plans showed an 82.4% removal rate, showing almost 2,200 trees being removed and reduced that removal number by approximately 600 trees. He then discussed the numbers to calculate what the tree replacement requirement would be, to include 1,230 replacement trees to be planted on-site. After that was accomplished, Mr. Oman indicated that they updated their landscaping plan, eliminated any of the proposed trees that were previously shown within that 40 ft. buffer area and looked at that, especially to the north side of the property, and found that there were a lot of gaps within that tree canopy. He then described what they showed on their landscape plan, and that was to include an additional 75 evergreen trees to be supplemented within those gaps to enhance that buffer and bring it to a full 40 ft. along the northerly and southerly sides of the property. Mr. Oman then stated that they were proposing a total of 895 trees on-site, with 30 of those required based on the Township ordinance, two (2) per lot. He added that when you remove 30 from the 895 trees, they were proposing 865 of those trees to be counted towards their replacement requirement. Mr. Oman then indicated that they would be a mixture of deciduous trees that had been upsized to 2-1/2 inches in caliper, the evergreen trees were at 6-7 ft. tall, and the flowering trees had been upsized to a planting height of 12-14 ft. He then testified that it left them with a deficit of 365 trees in which the Applicant would have to pay towards the Township Tree Fund

Mr. Vignuolo, Board Attorney, indicated that they were calling these exhibits, but were submitted in advance of the hearing and did not have to be marked into evidence. Mr. Oman then indicated that the next exhibit was a revised exhibit, Exhibit A-3, entitled Overall Plan Exhibit, and one of the exhibits that was shown at the first hearing. He indicated that the updated plan was dated February 12, 2026 and was an updated aerial photo and development plan that changed the 15 ft. buffer to the full 40 ft. on the north and westerly side.

Dr. Chase then opened a discussion regarding nothing being shown on the southern border. Mr. Oman stated that the southerly side was pretty dense and they did not find many gaps on the southerly side of fill in.

Mr. Oman then spoke about trees between the buildings, noting that they were proposing landscaping between the lots with fully evergreen plantings to include Norway Spruce, East Red Cedars, etc. so there would be no need for fencing between the homes. In total, he indicated that they were proposing 895 tree, 392 shrubs, and 939 ground cover plantings with a combination of day lilies and grasses. He noted that most of the shrubs and ground cover is being promoted along the right-of-way along Cedar Grove Lane to give a nice visual aspect as one would approach the subdivision.

Mr. Oman stated that, in terms of outside approvals, they had obtained the sign-off from the Police, Health and Fire Prevention and were required to submit an application to Somerset County Planning Board and Somerset County Soil Conservation District because they were disturbing over 5,000 sq. ft., as well as the Delaware & Raritan Canal Commission (DRCC) who did have review over the drainage for the property. He then stated that they spoke about the sewerage and that there were two (2) options; i.e., they could tie right into the system that goes out to the Amwell Pump Station and would not require a NJDEP permit, but if they did go out to the Wilson Road Pump Station, they would require a treatment works approval from NJDEP.

Mr. Ash stated that one (1) of the things that they wanted to highlight is that until they received those outside agency approvals, they were built into the approval. He added that they were not going to clear or grade the site if they did not have those approvals and they would not be able to.

Chairman Orsini reminded Mr. Ash that, based on the letter from the Sewerage Authority, they needed to replenish their escrow, and Mr. Ash agreed. The Chairman also indicated that if they brought the sewer system to the Amwell Pump Station that that would require an upgraded pump station. Mr. Ash understood that

Chairman Orsini then stated that he felt that the Environmental Commission report spoke for itself. Mr. Orman then indicated that they had reviewed the February 26th, 2026 of the Township Engineer, Mr. Darren Mazzei (Center State) and the February 10, 2026 letter from Mr. Mark Healey and indicated that the Applicant could comply with all the comments noted in those reports and any discrepancies on the plan and details would be provided as necessary.

Mr. Healey then stated that all of the items in his report he believed that they had discussed to one (1) degree or another. Under the title of Tree Replacement, Mr. Healey indicated that he had made a few suggestions, so it might be a good idea to get the response from the Applicant. They spoke about putting a fence around the trees in the field, and the Applicant agreed to that. Mr. Healey spoke about testimony about the Applicant indicated that the number of trees that were going to be placed on each one (1) of the lots. As such, Mr. Healey indicated that they would have to show those trees on the plan and the tree preservation that was reflected on the plan that was being shown to the Board that evening. Mr. Oman agreed to that as a condition. To the degree that the buffer was being proposed, Mr. Healey stated that he thought the intent was that this would be a perpetual buffer to remain. He then suggested that the Board might want to consider some type of conservation easement to make sure that that remains so. Mr. Oman indicated that they would be happy to do that. Mr. Healey then went over the discussion they had about the size of the homes and the coverages, but he thought that, generally, the intent of the developer seems to be to build large homes. To the degree they approach those coverages, he stated that he would recommend that there be some note in the chain of Title alerting future homeowners that if these homes were to be built at the max coverage, both building and impervious, they would need to know that they were locked in.

Mr. Ash opened a discussion regarding deed restrictions that talk about current zoning standards, but the homes were built and conforming, and there was a deed restriction that said that the homeowner should be aware that they were right at the limit of the coverage. He then added that there might be a problem in the future if there was a change in the zoning standards, then they might be at odds with the deed restriction. Mr. Vignuolo, Board Attorney, then stated that it would not be a restriction so much as a notice. He added that it would be something that advises that at the time the deed was being filed, such as the coverages were X and Y, the standards were A and B, and should you wish to exceed those coverages, when someone might want to make improvements, those homeowners need to file for an application to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. A discussion ensued, and the Applicant agreed that it would be something that would be beneficial to avoid problems in the future, but not tying anyone's hands.

They then discussed having the HOA handle those issues with coverage, but Dr. Chase felt that homeowners would have to get the HOA's approval to exceed the coverage where it was really a matter of Township regulations that would direct it to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Dr. Chase suggested that if the developer was pre-selling the homes, that the buyer should have a choice whether to have that large patio and no flexibility or not have the large patio and have flexibility. Mr. Ash indicated that as each individual house is put in for permitting, they would know exactly what the floor area ratio and all the requirements could then be reflected in a deed notice for that specific lot. He added that it would go with the home and a future buyer would know what they were restricted from doing on their property or they would have to go before the Board. Mr. Ash then stated that they would be agreeable to that condition. A discussion ensued among the Board.

Mr. Healey then stated that the rest of his comments in his Planning report were detailed in nature, so if the Applicant had any objection to any of the rest of the comments, they could point them out. Otherwise, Mr. Healey indicated that those comments would be conditions of any approval.

Chairman Orsini then brought up a discussion regarding fencing on the property that was discussed at the first hearing. Mr. Oman indicated that there would be trees planted between the homes, but that there would still be perimeter fencing around the rear of the yards. Mr. Ash stated that he thought he remembered that they were proposing a solid PVC fence, but someone had mentioned that they preferred a chain link fence. The Chairman asked if the fence would be placed in front of or behind the 40 ft. buffer, and Mr. Ash indicated that the fencing would be behind the 40 ft. buffer. Mr. Thomas then interjected that he would prefer to see anything but a bright white PVC fence around an area like that would stand out. Mr. Oman indicated that they have many colors now and have many colors and could choose an earth tone color to blend in and could work with staff to choose a color/style. Chairman Orsini agreed that a PVC fence was prone to damage with winds and snow, and Mr. Oman suggested a black coated chain link fence as he thought it looked fairly nice looking and would allow to be

seen through it from either side. The Chairman agreed that he thought it was a good choice.

Dr. Chase then drew the Board's attention to additional comments on Page 4 on Mr. Healey's report suggesting that the Board might want to require the placement of a conservation easement in the area of the proposed landscape buffer, prohibiting future tree removal and limiting modifications to the proposed fencing and tree plantings. Dr. Chase stated that it would preclude the homeowner from cutting down all the trees. Mr. Ash indicated that they would agree to that condition. Mr. Ash stated that they would agree to work with the Township professionals to make sure that if there is a situation where something could be "jogged" over a foot and that preserved a tree, they would agree to do that.

Dr. Chase then brought up the topic of the operation of the gate that seemed to be unresolved. Mr. Ash stated that the Applicant would like to address the gate and wanted to make sure that they could answer any of the questions that the Board may have. He added that they could talk through things if there was any potential conditions that can be added there.

Mr. Darren Mazzei, Township Engineer, spoke about the wall they were putting in and stated that it would require fencing or guard of some kind because it was over 30 inches in multiple areas and would be required by code. Mr. Mazzei stated that it did not have to be a fence, and that there were multiple opportunities and the Applicant would have to work with the Building Dept.

Mr. Mazzei then addressed some of the comments in his reports, noting that the Planner mentioned that the rear patio was going to be an at-grade patio. He added that the Site Plan still showed it as a below grade patio with stairs down. Mr. Oman stated that it would be revised. Mr. Mazzei stated that should the Board act favorably here, all approvals, including FT Sewerage Authority would be required before the signing of any plats to make sure that the lot not be subdivided until they were sure of this going forward. Mr. Oman stated that they readily agree to that. Related to the redesign of the area and bringing down and revising the basin, the mounting analysis changed. He added that it would be a minor revision, but thought that they could work critical test, but wanted to mention it as well. Mr. Oman stated that they would either get the Geotech back out there to re-do those two or they would reconfigure the basin slightly to get them out. He then added that the mounting analysis was going to have to be addressed to comply with NJDEP regulations.

Chairman Orsini indicated that at the very outset and as stated in Mark Healey's report, multiple times, we had asked the Applicant to consider a cluster and they said they did not want to. He stated that Mr. Mazzei had even provided an overlay for a cluster. The Chairman then asked the Applicant to show them and not just tell them that what they were doing in extending the buffers was essentially accomplishing what a cluster would in terms of preservation of trees, etc., in accordance with Chapter 222 of the

development ordinance trees. He then added that it would have been nice if they had shown the Board. The Chairman then stated that what was still lacking for him was if the evidence necessary to prove to the Board that they were accomplishing essentially the same thing as cluster would do. He really just asked if there was something they could show the Board that shows that the development shown was equivalent to the kind of preservation that one would see if they did cluster.

Mr. Ash explained how they were actually going in and plotting individual trees and were agreeing to go out with your professionals to make individual site modifications to move things one way or another to save individual trees and to really assess those trees in a much more comprehensive way than even a cluster plan would. He noted that a cluster plan would essentially carve out a large swath and then it did not get touched, not allowing for the same level of care and attention to individual trees

Mr. Oman indicated that they looked at the plot that accompanied the arborist's report, showing that 50%-60% of all those dots, signifying more mature healthy trees in the front of the property, would be eliminated because they would go full property line to property line. He noted that the rear portion would be preserved, but in the center of the rear property where all of the 16-inch trees on site were the highest amount of dead trees, critical trees, and really poor trees. Most of the healthy trees were along the property lines, mostly the northerly side and then the westerly. He went on to state that it would make more sense to keep the healthy trees. He then discussed the other cluster options shown in Mark Healey's report, with the exception of the one across from Cedar Grove Lane. He noted that all of those were constructed and approved prior to 2002/2003. Mr. Oman then discussed the BMP Manual that was released in April of 2004, by the NJDEP, which made engineers' lives hectic for storm water. He went on to state that in 2009, the DRCC updated their regulations, and so on. None of those sites would even come close to conformance with the storm water management regulations. He then spoke of the green infrastructure regulations that were implemented in 2021 and 2023 and felt like the NJDEP and he noted that clustering would, in his opinion, go completely against what the NJDEP regulations have forced down on people and putting everything into a small area. NJDEP wants area all over the site not just in one area when it came to storm water regulations in case the one area fails, something else can function. He then spoke of NJDEP wanting extended time of concentration and swales around the property that the plan they submitted provided. Mr. Oman indicated that he was not saying that the cluster option would not be possible, but the lots would still be $\frac{3}{4}$ acre lots in order to make that work and not that much different than what they were submitting.

Councilman Anbarasan then asked if they were going to utilize porous driveways, and Mr. Oman stated that there were five (5) or six (6) driveways in which they were showing a porous area and those would be paver driveways. That would allow water to percolate into the ground. The Councilman then stated that if they were including porous driveways, then you should let the HOA maintain that, and they agreed. Mr. Shaban then asked if they were going to favor porous pavement that the Site Plan reflected that. The Applicant agreed.

Vice Chair Brown asked how they would accommodate for on-street parking when people have parties and entertain alongside deliveries and emergencies. Mr. Oman explained that there was actually enough parking in the driveways to have guests and still comply with the requirement. He added that they were including an oversize driveway where 28 ft. was required and they were doing 30 ft. and would also allow on-street parking for any guests. The Vice Chair then brought up Lots 1201 and 1202 and asked if they considered flipping 1202's driveway entrance because there was a lot of potential queuing with on-street parking should it happen at the entrance. Mr. Oman stated that they could probably mirror 1203 to avoid any conflict and thanks Vice Chair Brown for the suggestion and something that they could definitely do.

Dr. Chase then discussed the 40 ft. buffer area and the benefits that come with it over clustering.

Mr. Akshay Joshi, 29 Willocks Circle, Somerset, NJ, came forward and was sworn in. Mr. VJ Raju, 36 Willocks Circle, Somerset, NJ, came forward and was sworn in.

Mr. Joshi discussed the signature product they were wanting to build here, given the R40 zoning and a beautiful Cedar Grove Lane with great access. He included the 40,000 sq. ft. lot, big homes with about 5,000 to 5,550 sq. ft. can look at and be proud of. He added that the gate was going to be an essential part of this product by providing a sense of safety and security to the residents. He told the Board that they appreciated their comments and suggestions. He indicated that they went to UPS and Amazon and FEDEX, Door Dash, etc. as well as the over 55 active communities to see how they would function better and, specifically where there were unmanned gates. He then spoke glowingly about the gate being a desirable feature for the subdivision and future residents. He explained that the vendor that was going to provide the gate had been used at multiple properties in our Township as well as in other states and feel that the gate could provide a failsafe operation. Hence, he was asking the Board members to reconsider an unmanned gate for this property.

Mr. Raju then spoke about both of them being long-time Franklin Township residents and was a victim of a carjacking in Somerset, NJ. He felt that the gate would help when the development has these types of large size homes and would add value to have that kind of level of security would make it more palatable to the homeowner. He also added that this community was going to be one of their signature products for the Township and hope they could impress upon the Board to see the value that the gate would add. Mr. Raju reiterated Mr. Joshi's confidence in the gate product after multiple validations that this would work

Mr. Arch then added that there're were failsafe's built into the proposed gate if there was power lots, if there was any issue, the default is that it would remain open to allow ingress and egress. He stated that he and the Applicants talked about adding conditions where they would keep the gate open during the day, and utilize it for security overnight. He also added that they would be agreeable, should the Board look favorably on the Application, to any condition give control and power to Franklin

Township to be able to dictate what happens to it should there be issues, allowing the Township, Police, or Fire Prevention would have a mechanism to say "you have to keep the gate unlocked and open, and they stated that they would abide by that condition. Mr. Arch stated that they were asking for the opportunity to show the township that the gate would work.

Ms. Rafiq then asked If they did any studies about crime in the area that was taken into consideration when choosing to include a gate for this project. Mr. Raju indicated that they had added security cameras in their subdivision of Summerfields. He said that they had not done a study, but had been on multiple calls with the Police Commissioner because they were kind enough to be on these calls every two (2) weeks to address these concerns. He noted that crime becomes rampant in September, October and November of each for the past 3-4 years. Ms. Rafiq then asked if they did any studies on equivalent sized large homes that were down on Rte. 27 to include the Princeton Highlands, The Princeton, for crimes there because those communities were not gated. Mr. Ash indicated that they had not done any studies, but he thought that it was more experiential and anecdotal evidence as to what my client's experiences have been.

Mr. Thomas then opened a discussion on the lack of crimes in the Cedar Grove Lane area being a resident for a number of years. He felt that it might be presenting a bad image of the area and, historically, have discouraged gated communities in Franklin Township. Mr. Arch wanted the record to show that they were not proposing a chain link fence with barbed wire on it. He stated they could set the gate to operate only after 10 p.m. or any other parameters the Board wishes.

Mr. Shaban stated that his car was stolen from his driveway in Princeton Highlands and he is on the HOA Board with 500 homes and they were contemplating a similar security system. He said that he would suggest having the gate in operation from 10 p.m. to morning hours to avoid any queuing o Cedar Grove Grove Lane. Mr. Arch stated that they would be agreeable to that time frame and thanked him for sharing his story.

Vice Chair Brown did no think the gate was necessary and not a good look, especially since they did not provide any evidence that the area was crime-filled.

Chairman Orsini stated that there was no residential development requirement in our ordinance for a guard house and they do not have to approve this, so there if very much something they can do about it. He added that if the Board did not favor it, we do not need to give it to them.

Councilman Anbarasan asked if their access road would be a public or private road, and Mr. Healey stated that their Application is that it would be a private road. He added that they were before the Board just like other applications that were coming in for site plan approval and the design and the layout of that roadway/gate was subject to the Board's approval. He stated that part of the concerns that had been raised, and he was not for or against it, was within the jurisdiction of the Board. He added that if it was not going to allow sufficient access by emergency vehicles, or if there was going to be visitors or

parties and queuing in the design might possibly result in queuing onto Cedar Grove Lane, these were both concerns, notwithstanding that it was a private road.

Mr. Ash stated that they understand that it was well within the Board's rights not to approve it, but that they were trying to present to the Board reasons why they feel that it is justified to have it and conditions that the Board could impose that would still allow them to have the gate while also addressing the Board's concerns as to the appearance or to issues that may arise during the day and still be able to have that deterrent quality overnight. Mr. Ash asked to allow them to show the Board that the gate would work, that it will not cause any of the concerns that they were hesitating about and to give the right to the Township to say that queuing had become an issue and would have to eliminate the gate. Mr. Ash then told the Board that there was a siren sensor so that it automatically opens for emergency vehicles. He stated it they would also receive a code that was provided that all emergency services can use and the system that was being used in Somerset Run and Canal Walk. Chairman Orsini reminded the Applicant that those were manned gatehouses in both of those communities, which was a different scenario.

Ms. Rangnow stated that the Applicant has presented the benefit of the gate for the purchasers of any of these homes, but also wanted to know if they could give the Board the benefit to the larger community of the development having a gate on this property. Mr. Joshi explained that they had both come to the Township 20 years ago and love the Township and had made many friends and through their analysis have determined that the gate was a product that many residents wanted and could be manageable if the Township wanted them to keep it closed from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. He added that it was similar to Somerset Run where it was not manned during the night and they keep the gate closed in the night as well. Mr. Raju stated that it was a product that was going to add value, they believed to everyone else's property with the gated subdivision of this scale coming into the community and a premium feel for the Township. Ms. Rangnow indicated that she did not feel that it was a benefit to the community as a whole.

Mr. Arch then gave his closing statements.

Chairman Osini made a motion to open to the public for any comment on this Application. Vice Chair Brown seconded the motion, and all were in favor. Seeing no one coming forward, the Chairman made a motion to close the meeting to the public. Vice Chair Brown seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Mr. Thomas stated that he was well aware that they could approve this project and just leave out the gate, and clarified that it was not something that was against the law to have, but at this point, Mr. Thomas felt that they had not convinced him that there was a benefit to any one else except the development to having a gate. He added that he hoped that they could continue the years and years long policy of not having gated developments.

Chairman Orsini then made a motion to approve the development with the two (2) frontage variances as well as the variance for lot coverage for the lot containing the roadway. In addition, a black-coated chain link type fence, changes to Lot 12.01 and 12.02 driveways as well as flipping Lot 12.02's driveway to the west, the buffer to be contained within a conservation easement and the HOA would be responsible for maintaining porous pavement in the driveways. Also, the tree planting would be approved, by lot, and a deed notification for what a homeowner could do given the particular coverage on any given lot. He added that there would be no site work, clearing or signatures on the final plat until all approvals, including Franklin Township Sewerage Authority and all outside agencies were secured. Additionally, the conditions in Mr. Mazzei's Engineering report for the basin, the mounding analysis the test pits, etc., would be adhered to. Lastly, he would propose that the site have access via a regular two (2)-lane full movement road similar to other roads on Cedar Grove Lane, with no guard house/gate and no additional width to the roadway so it would look like any other road on Cedar Grove Lane that lead to a similarly sized subdivision. Vice Chair Brown seconded the motion, and the roll was called as follows:

FOR: Councilman Anbarasan, Dr. Chase, Mr. LaCorte, Mr. Dancy, Ms. Rangnow, Ms. Rafiq, Vice Chair Brown, Mr. Thomas, and Chairman Orsini

AGAINST: None

Chairman Orsini gave his reasons for approving the Application with conditions, as he told the Applicant, he was swayed for their method of utilizing an arborist to make the development even better than a cluster development would have achieved and maintained.

Ms. Woodbury, Board Secretary, asked that all please note, for the record, that the matter had been heard for a number of hearings, and that she could confirm that the individuals who were not present during the previous hearings had listened to the relevant testimony. She added that she always sends an e-mail to the Board Attorney and the Chairman for any individuals who have not

- **Master Plan Action Item Presentation**

Chairman Orsini stated that there were a number of zoning changes, which were either low, high or medium priority, but that they were generally easy and could be sent to Council as a package deal. He added that as they work through this list of priorities through the next number of years before the next Master Plan examination, what was of concern to him was Council desensitization. He then stated that they did not have to prioritize all high priority items first because easy wins have value too. He explained that easy wins to him were zoning ordinances with anything that Mark has provided with a picture in it that says that properties that were preserved that should go back to Agricultural (A) or R-40 or were an overlay that cannot be overlaid anymore should be grouped together as a bundle. The Chairman then explained that that was one (1) tier.

He then wanted to start on Page #1 and group by tiers. He first mentioned loading dock depths that he felt could be bundled as part of a set of easy ordinances. Next he mentioned sidewalks that was a high priority changing the ordinance was easy, so he believed that they should do it. Next he mentioned developing design criteria, which he indicated took more effort, but he thought they could work on the easy part and work on the effort part. The next item on the list was parking lot drive aisle, and his thoughts were that they could make that a lower priority because taking it in a case by case reasoning gave some flexibility.

The Chairman then talked about items noted as “important to staff” could be bundle #2. He then spoke about anything that came from the Renaissance redevelopment plan or the Hamilton Street Business District design standards needed to come from them to come to the Planning Board. He then brought up signage, noting that he considered that a “third rail” and felt it could be taken care of application by application. The Chairman then spoke about clustering, noting that he thought they should take care of that, but maybe not the highest priority, but should take care of redoing the standards because he indicated that there was way too much density bonus in some of this. He noted that it did not need to be the highest priority. He then discussed indoor recreation uses in commercial zones and have that coming with the bounce house on the horizon. He indicated that that one was easy, so why not do it. Chairman Orsini then moved on to outdoor storage and indicated that if they had standards for it, it was always better than if you did not. He then drew the Board’s attention to appeal of Zoning Board of Adjustment approval to Council and whether Council should be there when a variance was granted by the Zoning Board and should be deleted. Chairman Orsini stated it was not a road they wanted to go down.

Mr. Healey then summarized the Chairman’s thoughts by saying that he was hearing that he wanted to take this in several steps, with the initial step is to go through and put an ordinance together that gets the easy things out of the way as well as some high priority and not too difficult to be included in that first “batch”. He then added that they could then tackle the “medium” things and down the road get to the more difficult things.

Mr. Healey mentioned that he could draft these ordinances, but would need guidance from the Board of exactly they want him to do. He then asked if the Board wanted him to put something together for an ordinance committee. Chairman Orsini thought it was a great idea, and they did not have to appoint the committee members that evening, but thought it was a great idea to nominate four (4) people to keep it under a quorum. Down the road, Mr. Healey stated that the Planning Board would be recommending something and offering it to the Council for their consideration and they will do with it what they wish. A discussion ensued.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Chairman Orsini welcomed Mr. Sami Shaban back to the Planning Board. He then spoke about his environmental steward course he was taking, speaking about what the

class covered the evening before with the topic of Environmental Justice. He stated that it brought him back to what they talked about at the last meeting and what Vice Chair Brown had brought up about overburdened communities and things of that nature. The Chairman then told the Board that the person who gave the talk was from Newark and worked with a non-profit. He said that a lot of the themes that they talked about putting in the Master Plan of where you can have outsized impacts on communities by putting even an acre of open space in a very densely populated community had a multiplier effect that was not seen when you preserve 20 acres of farmland, but you should do both. He added that they talked about the Rails to Trails and told the Board that he would really like to see if Vice Chair Brown could get somebody from Bloustein to look at their East Millstone line to see where it was possible to park a car, get on the rail line, and get yourself down to Colonial Park. He noted that the rail line had been deeded to the people who live on Gary Court behind L'Oreal. Just providing open space to those in overburdened communities was not enough, as the Chairman stated that they need to provide access to the greatest extent possible to as many people as possible.

WORK SESSION / NEW BUSINESS:

There was no work session or new business to discuss.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

The Board did not enter into Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Chairman Orsini to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m., and was seconded by Vice Chair Brown. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Murphy, Recording Secretary
April 5, 2026

**RESOLUTION OF THE PLANNING BOARD OF THE TOWNSHIP OF
FRANKLIN, SOMERSET COUNTY, NEW JERSEY,
GRANTING EXTENSION OF
PRELIMINARY AND FINAL MAJOR SITE PLAN APPROVAL
WITH VARIANCES TO 789 HAMILTON, LLC,
CONCERNING PROPERTY LOCATED AT
789 HAMILTON STREET, SOMERSET, NEW JERSEY
AND DESIGNATED AS BLOCK 225, LOT 6.01 (F/K/A LOTS 6-15).**

Docket No. PLN-20-00008

WHEREAS, 789 HAMILTON, LLC (hereinafter referred to as “Applicant”), has applied to the Franklin Township Planning Board (hereinafter referred to as “Board”) for an extension of preliminary and final major site plan approval with variances, for the premises currently designated on the Tax Map of the Township of Franklin as Block 225, Lot 6.01 (f/k/a Lots 6 to 15) and located on what is commonly known as 789 Hamilton Street, Somerset, New Jersey (hereinafter referred to as the “Subject Property”), and is located within the Hamilton Street Business (“HBD”) zone district; and

WHEREAS, the Applicant was granted preliminary and final major site plan approval and associated variance relief (hereinafter the “Approvals”) on April 12, 2023, and a memorializing Resolution was adopted by this Board on June 21, 2023; and

WHEREAS, on June 4, 2025, the Applicant obtained a one (1) year extension of the Approvals until June 21, 2026; and

WHEREAS, at the Board’s meeting of April 1, 2026, the Applicant requested an additional one (1) year extension of the Approvals until June 21, 2027; and

WHEREAS, the zoning of the Subject Property has not changed since the original date of the Approvals, nor have any Township Land Development Ordinances been adopted which would affect the development of the Subject Property as approved; and

WHEREAS, good cause has been shown for the granting of a second extension of the Approvals.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning Board of the Township of Franklin, that it does grant a second extension of the preliminary and final site plan approval and associated bulk variance relief for an additional period of one (1) year until June 21, 2027.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, by the Township of Franklin Planning Board, that:

1. All conditions contained in this Resolution and in the record of the proceedings in

this matter, including any agreements made by the Applicant, were essential to the Board's decision to grant the approvals set forth herein. A breach of any such condition or a failure by the Applicant to adhere to the terms of any agreement within the time required may result in appropriate action by the Township; including, but not limited to, the revocation of the within approval and termination of the right of the Applicant to obtain or continue work or occupancy under any construction permits, Certificates of Occupancy or any other governmental authorizations necessary in order to continue development and use of the project.

2. The development of this property shall be implemented in accordance with the plans submitted and as approved. In the event that the Applicant shall make or propose any changes to the project or structures on the property from those shown on the revised and approved plans and exhibits approved for this Application, whether such changes in voluntarily undertaken or required by any other regulatory agency, Applicant may be required to resubmit any such changes to this Board for review and determination.

Christine Woodbury, Planning Board Secretary

**VOTE ON MOTION: 04/01/2026
FOR:**

Councilman Anbarasan
Robert LaCorte
Marc Dancy
Jennifer Rangnow
Meher Rafiq
Vice Chair Charles Brown
Robert Thomas
Sami Shaban
Chairman Michael Orsini

**AGAINST:
NONE**

**ABSTAIN:
NONE**

**VOTE OF RESOLUTION: 04/15/2026
FOR:**

**AGAINST:
NONE**

**ABSTAIN:
NONE**



COUNTY OF SOMERSET PLANNING BOARD

County Administration Building
20 Grove Street, P.O. Box 3000
Somerville, New Jersey 08876-1262
(908) 231-7021 • Fax (908) 707-1749
PlanningBd@somersetcountynj.gov
SomersetCountyNJ.gov



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Sami Shaban
Vice Chairman

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Matthew D. Loper
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Department of
Engineering and Planning
Board Secretary

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1st Alternate

Vacant
2nd Alternate

Adam Slutsky
County Engineer Alternate

STAFF

Samantha De Andrea
Director of Planning

Joseph DeMarco, Esq.
County Counsel

Sheli Daniels
Office Manager

March 26, 2026

Mr. Michael Orsini, Chairperson
Franklin Township Planning Board
475 DeMott Lane
Somerset, NJ 08873

**RE: COUNTY OF SOMERSET / KNOWLTON
BLOCK 9 – LOT 2.04
FL 728:001-26
1426 CANAL ROAD**

Dear Mr. Orsini:

This office and the office of the County Engineer have reviewed information submitted for the above-referenced project. The reviewed information consists of the following documents:

- Plans entitled “Minor Subdivision, for Block 9, Lot 2.04, situated in Franklin Township, Somerset County, NJ” dated October 20, 2025, and prepared by Van Cleef Engineering.

The purpose of this application is to subdivide the existing Lot 2.04 (±32.9 acres) into two (2) new lots. The County of Somerset is under contract to purchase approximately 23.9 acres of existing Lot 2.04 as proposed new Lot 2.08 to add to its open space inventory. The current owner will retain ±9 acres as proposed new Lot 2.04, which is presently improved with a single-family residential dwelling and accessory structures. No new development is proposed.

The proposed new Lot 2.08 will contribute approximately 23 acres of open space to the Millstone Valley target preservation area and is contiguous to County-owned open space to the north and east.

Since this application is for open space purposes and does not adversely affect a County facility, the Somerset County Planning Board approves this project.

Filed Map Requirements

Should the Township require a final plat to be filed with the County Clerk, the following items must be addressed.

1. Prior to obtaining any signatures on the final plat, a copy is to be submitted for review and acceptance by the County.

- Mission Statement -

The County of Somerset is committed to excellence and innovation in public service, promoting the well-being of all residents and communities by providing effective, efficient and responsive leadership.

Somerset County Is An Equal Opportunity Employer

2. Two paper copies of the final plat shall be provided to this office when it is presented for signature.
3. An appointment shall be made with the County Planning Board for the purpose of obtaining Planning Board signatures on the final plat. Please contact the Planning Board office at (908) 231-7021 to arrange a mutually agreeable time and date.
4. The filed map shall contain the following County Planning Board signature line with the municipal signatures:

This Plat complies with revised New Jersey Statutes 40:27-1 through 40:27-6.13

Somerset County Planning Board

Date

This report reflects comments from the County Planning Board and the Office of the County Engineer (908) 231-7024. Should you have any questions, please contact the appropriate individual listed below.

Sincerely,



Nora Fekete
Supervising Planner



Philip Kao
Principal Engineer, Land Development Section

cc: Christine Woodbury, Board Secretary via email
Franklin Township Engineer via email
County of Somerset, c/o Larisa Paxton, Principal Planner, Preservation via email
VCEA via email
Sarah E. Fitzpatrick, Esq., Rainone Coughlin Minchello, LLC via email
D & R Canal Commission via email



State of New Jersey
DELAWARE AND RARITAN CANAL COMMISSION
 PRALLSVILLE MILLS | 33 RISLER STREET | P.O. BOX 539
 STOCKTON, N.J. 08559-0539
www.nj.gov/dep/drcc



JURISDICTIONAL DETERMINATION

DRCC #: 26-6351

DATE: February 10, 2026

PROJECT NAME: 1425 Canal Road -- Subdivision

Latest Submission Received: February 2, 2026

Applicant:

County of Somerset

20 Grove Street

P.O. Box 3000

Somerville, NJ 08876

lpaxton@somersetcountynj.gov

Project Location:

Road	Municipality	County	Block(s)	Lot(s)
1425 Canal Road	Franklin Township	Somerset	9	2.04

Jurisdictional Determination:

Zone A	Exempt For Lot Line/Subdivision Only	Governmental
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Documents Received: Application received February 2, 2026; Minor Subdivision Plan (1 sheet) dated October 20, 2025, prepared by Van Cleef Engineering Associates.

DRCC#: 26-6351

2

DATE: February 10, 2026

PROJECT NAME: 1425 Canal Road -- Subdivision

Existing Conditions: The project site is a 32.19-acre lot located on the easterly side of Canal Road in the Township of Franklin, Somerset County, approximately 40 feet east of the Delaware and Raritan Canal and within Commission Review Zone A.

The project site is bounded by residential development on comparatively large lots and preserved open space to the north, Canal Road followed by the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park to the west, Old Georgetown Road followed by lands in agricultural use and open space to the south and east. A tributary of the Delaware and Raritan Canal bisects the site, running in a northeast to southwest direction.

In the existing condition, the site is improved with a single-family residential dwelling along with an inground swimming pool, sheds, barn, and carport structures. Impervious surface coverage in the existing condition totals 12,906 square feet (0.3 acre), and the residence appears on historic aerial imagery dating to 1940.

Proposed Project: The applicant proposes to subdivide Block 9, Lot 2.04 into two lots in order to effectuate a county open space preservation acquisition project. Proposed Block 9, Lot 2.08 would be 23.902 acres in size, while Block 9, Lot 2.04 would be reduced in size to 9.015 acres and consist of the existing residence, pool, and accessory buildings. The applicant does not propose the creation of any impervious surface coverage or land disturbance.

Findings: The above referenced application, for the purposes of the lot line adjustment/minor subdivision only, is exempt from the Commission regulation at this time because the project is located in Commission Review Zone A and does not propose either: the cumulative coverage since January 11, 1980, of one quarter acre of land with impervious surface, or the disturbance of one acre or more of land (see definition of "major project" at N.J.A.C. 7:45-1.3 and "Scope of Review" at N.J.A.C. 7:45-2.3(c)) [Emphasis added].

The applicant is advised that any proposed construction on the lots subject to the lot line adjustment will require review and approval by the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission: once the total cumulative impervious coverage on the lot(s) either singularly or together exceeds one quarter acre since January 11, 1980; the proposed construction results in the disturbance of one or more acre of land; or the proposed construction exceeds the regulatory threshold for Commission regulation in effect at the time of proposed construction.

The applicants for future construction on the above referenced lots should consult with the Commission when seeking municipal approval to determine the regulatory threshold for Commission regulation in effect at the time of proposed construction.

Decision: Exempt.

This jurisdictional determination shall lapse:

DRCC#: 26-6351

3

DATE: February 10, 2026

PROJECT NAME: 1425 Canal Road -- Subdivision

1. If construction is not complete within five years from the date of the exemption letter;
or
2. If any municipal permit(s) or approval(s) applicable to the project expires, lapses, or is
revoked.

Expiration date: February 10, 2031.

Sincerely,



John Hutchison
Executive Director

- c. Somerset County Planning Board
Franklin Township Planning Board
Sarah E. Fitzpatrick, Esq. (sfitzpatrick@njrcmlaw.com)

Franklin Township

Somerset County, New Jersey

Municipal Building
475 DeMott Lane
Somerset, NJ 08873
732.873.2500
Fax: 732.873.0844
www.franklintwpnj.org

Township Technical Review Committee (TRC)

To: Planning Board

From: Technical Review Committee (TRC)

Date: March 10, 2026

Re: County of Somerset – Minor Subdivision with Variance (PLN-26-00003)
1452 Canal Road (Block 9; Lot 2.04)

The applicant has submitted the application forms and the materials listed below:

- 1-sheet Minor Subdivision Plan prepared by VanCleeef Engineering Associates, LLC dated October 20, 2025 and revised to February 5, 2026.

Site and Project Description

The applicant is described in the cover letter and application form as follows:

Please see the enclosed Subdivision and Variance Applications for the proposed subdivision of Block 9, Lot 2.04 in Franklin Township, also known as 1425 Canal Road. The purpose of this application is to subdivide the existing Lot 2.04 (±32.9 acres) into two (2) new lots. The County of Somerset is under contract to purchase approximately 23.9 acres of existing Lot 2.04 as proposed new Lot 2.08 to add to its open space inventory. The current owner will retain ±9 acres as proposed new Lot 2.04, which is presently improved with a single-family residential dwelling and accessory structures. No new development is proposed.

The proposed new Lot 2.08 will contribute approximately 23 acres of open space to the Millstone Valley target preservation area and is contiguous to County-owned open space to the north and east.

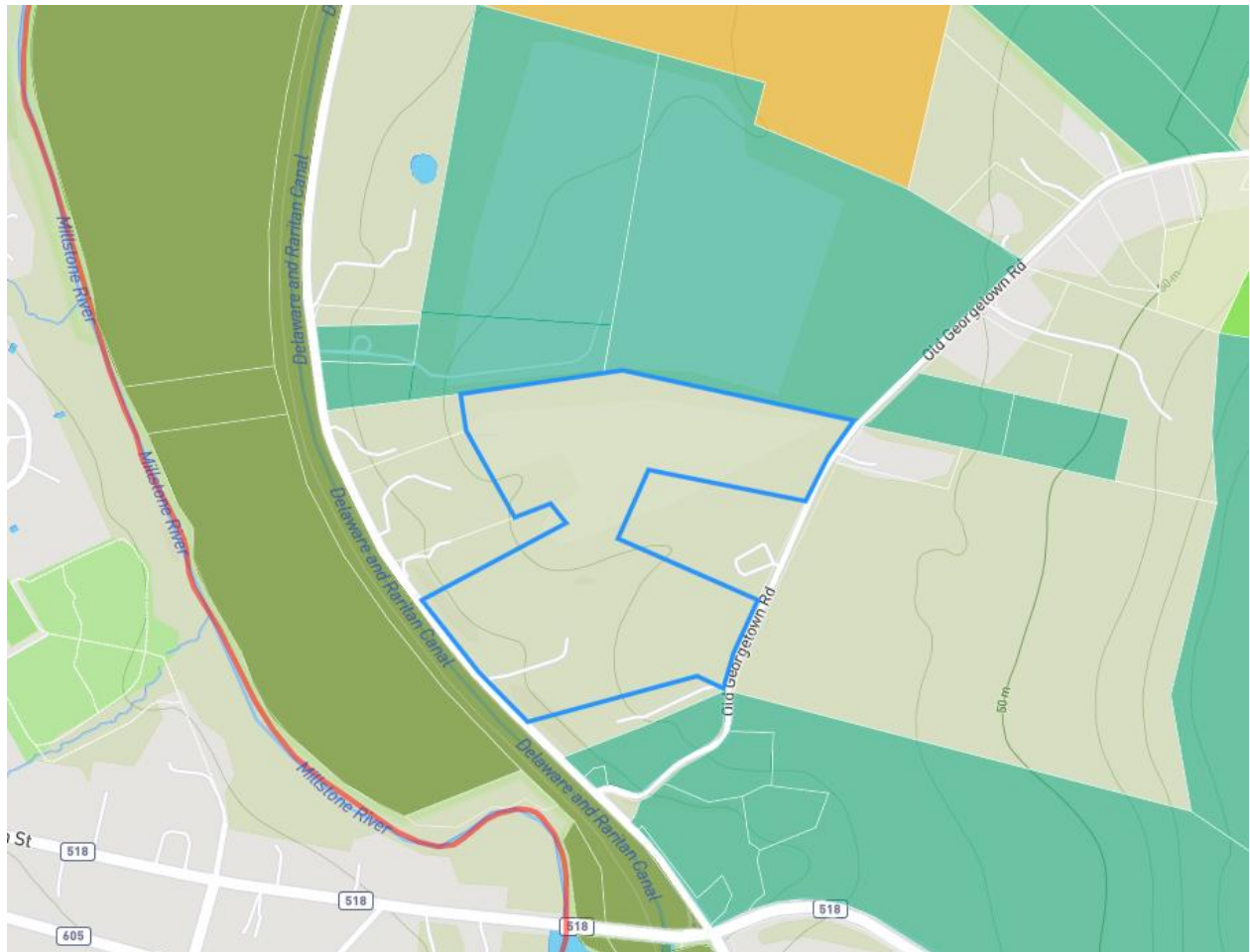
The purpose of the application is to subdivide existing Lot 2.04 in Block 9, 1425 Canal Road (+/-32.919 acres) in the CP-Canal Preservation Zone. The County of Somerset is under contract to purchase +/-23.902 acres of existing Lot 2.04 in Block 9 as proposed Lot 2.08 to add to its open space inventory. The current owner will retain +/-9.015 acres as proposed new Lot 2.04, which is improved with a single family dwelling and accessory structures. No new development is proposed.

One bulk (c) variance is associated with the application. Proposed Lot 2.08 to be owned by Somerset County will have 297 feet of lot frontage on Canal Road, where 400 feet are required.

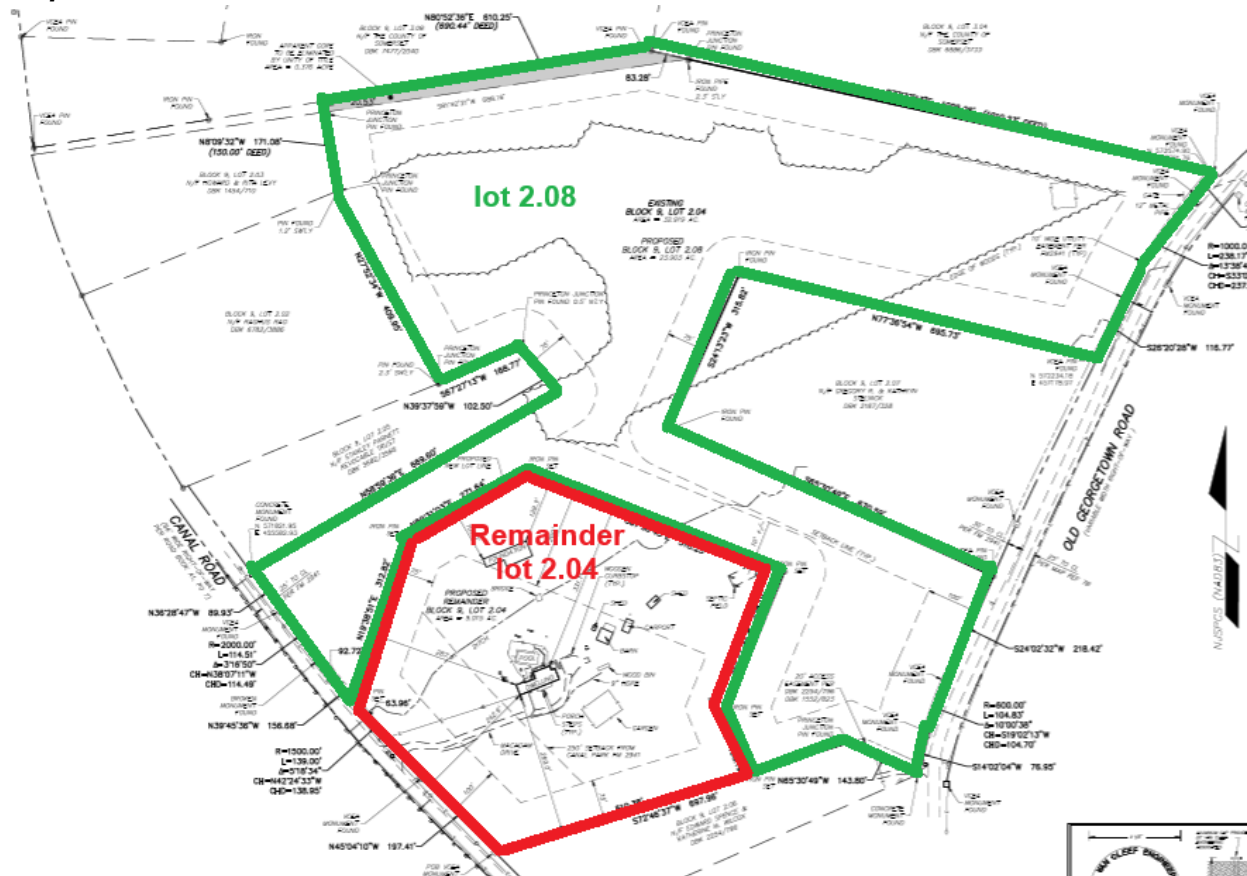
Review Comments

1. The only variances requested are for lot frontage (297 feet along Canal Road where 400 feet is required) and "through lot" (a lot, other than a corner lot, which has more than one frontage) for the proposed open space lot (proposed lot 2.08). The lot that would contain the exiting home would require a variance for rear yard setback for an accessory structure (129 feet where 150 feet is required). Based on the nature application (for open space preservation) and the nature of the variance (for the open space lot), staff has no comments/concerns with respect to the requested variances.
2. The following comments are offered with respect to the subdivision plan:
 - Should the Board act favorably on the application, the new lot numbers shall be as follows:
 - i. Block 9, Lot 2.08 (23.903 Ac. to County)
 - ii. Block 9, Lot 2.09 (9.015 Ac. remainder of Lot 2.04)
 - Minor subdivision map shall be updated showing the proposed new lot numbers
 - Subdivision deeds with metes and bounds descriptions attached shall be provided for review and approval prior to filing with the Somerset County Clerk's Office.
 - The applicant shall contact the Township 911 Coordinator for official street addresses.
 - Note: Other than the above-mentioned lot numbering, the Minor Subdivision map is acceptable.

Site Location



Proposed Subdivision



memo



TO: Christine Woodbury – Secretary to Franklin Township Planning and Zoning Boards

FROM: Tara Kenyon, AICP/PP – Sustainability Coordinator, Franklin Township

DATE: March 3, 2026

RE: Comments from Franklin Township Environmental Commission
County of Somerset
1425 Canal Road Princeton
(Block 9 – Lot 2.04)
File #: PLN-26-00003

At its regularly scheduled meeting of March 2, 2026, the Franklin Township Environmental Commission (“EC”) reviewed the submission of the above-referenced project, which will result in the preservation of open space by the County of Somerset.

The EC does not have any comments to submit at this time.

Please contact me with any questions at Tara.Kenyon@franklinnj.gov or 848-203.1857. Thank you!



COUNTY OF SOMERSET PLANNING BOARD

County Administration Building
20 Grove Street, P.O. Box 3000
Somerville, New Jersey 08876-1262
(908) 231-7021 • Fax (908) 707-1749
PlanningBd@somersetcountynj.gov
SomersetCountyNJ.gov



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Erika Inocencio

Ashok Rakhit

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Shanel Y. Robinson
Commissioner Director

Paul M. Drake
Commissioner / Liaison

Matthew D. Loper
County Engineer / Director
Department of
Engineering and Planning
Board Secretary

ALTERNATE MEMBERS

Pradeep Lamba
1st Alternate

Vacant
2nd Alternate

Adam Slutsky
County Engineer Alternate

STAFF

Samantha De Andrea
Director of Planning

Joseph DeMarco, Esq.
County Counsel

Sheli Daniels
Office Manager

April 6, 2026

Mr. Michael Orsini, Chairman
Franklin Township Planning Board
475 DeMott Lane
Somerset, NJ 08873

**RE: IONNA, LLC – EV INFRASTRUCTURE INSTALLATION
BLOCK 164 – LOT 1.01
FL 1098:002-26S
607 SOMERSET STREET**

Dear Mr. Orsini:

This office and the office of the County Engineer have reviewed information submitted for the above-referenced project. The reviewed information consists of the following documents:

- Plans entitled "IONNA Site Number NJ-0036 Site Plan for Installation of Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure, Project Name: NJ-0036 Somerset, NJ, 607 Somerset Street, Somerset, New Jersey 08873, Block 164, Lot 1.01" dated January 28, 2026, and prepared by Kimley-Horn & Associates, Inc.

The applicant proposes the installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure at the existing Wawa fueling station on Somerset Street, US Route 27.

Since this application does not adversely affect a County facility, the Somerset County Planning Board approves this project.

This report reflects comments from the County Planning Board and the office of the County Engineer (908) 231-7024. Should you have any questions, please contact the appropriate individual listed below.

Sincerely,

Nora Fekete
Supervising Planner

Lewis Mora
Engineer, Land Development Section

cc: Christine Woodbury, Board Secretary via email
Franklin Township Engineer via email
IONNA, LLC via email
Kimley-Horn & Associates via email

- Mission Statement -

The County of Somerset is committed to excellence and innovation in public service, promoting the well-being of all residents and communities by providing effective, efficient and responsive leadership.

Somerset County Is An Equal Opportunity Employer

memo



TO: Christine Woodbury – Secretary to Franklin Township Planning and Zoning Boards

FROM: Tara Kenyon, AICP/PP – Sustainability Coordinator, Franklin Township

DATE: March 17, 2026

RE: Comments from Franklin Township Environmental Commission
IONNA, LLC
607 Somerset Street, Somerset
(Block 164 – Lot 1.01)
File #: PLN-26-00002

At its regularly scheduled meeting of March 16, 2026, the Franklin Township Environmental Commission (“EC”) reviewed the submission of the above-referenced project, which is currently under consideration by the Franklin Township Planning Board:

The EC does not have any comments or recommendations at this time.

Please contact me with any questions at Tara.Kenyon@franklinnj.gov or 848-203.1857. Thank you!

Franklin Township

Somerset County, New Jersey

Municipal Building
475 DeMott Lane
Somerset, NJ 08873
732.873.2500
Fax: 732.873.0844
www.franklintwpnj.org

Township Technical Review Committee (TRC)

To: Planning Board

From: Technical Review Committee (TRC)

Date: March 11, 2026

Re: IONNA – Site Plan with C Variances (PLN-26-00002)
607 Somerset Street (Block 164; Lot 1.01)¹

The applicant has submitted the application forms and the materials listed below:

- 22-sheet set of site plans prepared by Kimley Horn dated 1/28/26 revised 2/26/26

Site and Project Description

The subject site is located at the Somerset Street/ Juliet Avenue intersection within the Renaissance Commercial (R-C) district of the Renaissance Redevelopment Area. The site is developed with a WaWa convenience store and gas station.

The application seeks site plan and variance approval for proposed project, described in the application form as follows:

The applicant looks to convert 13 existing parking stalls along the Northern property boundary abutting Myrtle Street to 10 EV charging, two of which will be ADA compliant complete with ADA path of travel to the existing WAWA convenient store. Utility Transformer & Switchgear on concrete pads look to be installed along the Northern corner in Landscaped area nearing Myrtle Street & Juliet Avenue.

The applicant also looks to add a canopy structure residing along the proposed EV stalls measuring approximately 15 feet in height.

¹ As per Board bylaws, applicants represented by attorneys, engineers and/or architects (or other such professionals) are expected to use the video display system available in Council Chambers to project hearing exhibits. Use of the video display systems greatly improves visibility of these exhibits for the Board, the public and the Township's video broadcast of the hearing. In order to use the video display system, please bring a computing device capable of utilizing a HDMI connection. A cable is provided, however adapters are not so please make sure you have the required adaptors to connect to HDMI if necessary.

In addition to site plan approval for the site plan modifications reflected on the plans (and summarized above) the application requires the following variances:

- Residential buffer: 20-foot wide buffer consisting of fencing and/or landscape screening to create a solid screen. The application proposes the following features in the residential buffer: canopy; EV chargers and concrete pads; transformer of concrete pad; and switchgear on concrete pad.
- Front Yard Setback: 40 feet required – 16.1 feet proposed (canopy – Myrtle Street)
- Side Yard Setback: 40 feet required – 24.4 feet proposed (canopy)
- Signage: Max. number of building-mounted signs exceeded – 2 signs proposed on canopy (“Wawa” and “Ionna”)

Review Comments²

1. Residential Buffer. As indicated above, several proposed site features are proposed within the residential buffer behind the building.

It is noted that these modifications are proposed behind the existing 6-foot stockade fence which would remain and that most of these features (with the exception of the 15-foot canopy) would be below the height of the fence.³ In addition to the fence it is noted that the buffer contains a mixture of evergreen and deciduous trees that were planted as a condition of the site plan approval for the Wawa.

It is noted however, that there are notes on the plan (“post to be reset to proposed grades”) that *appear* to suggest that the fence location might be shifted. The applicant needs to clarify what those notes mean – is this fence being shifted back to accommodate the proposal? If so, staff would raise significant concerns about the retention of the existing trees in the buffer (which would not only serve to screen view of the proposed canopy but if removed would open up views of the entire site to the residential neighborhood behind the development).

2. Revise the Lighting Plan to delineate the property boundary, especially the Myrtle Street right-of-way.
3. Revise the Lighting Plan to clearly identify the proposed light fixtures and mounting heights for the EVSE Canopy. The Lighting Plan should be revised to clearly identify all existing and proposed features.

² As per Board bylaws, subsequent plan submittals shall be accompanied by a written description of the changes made compared to the prior submission. Preferably, this would be accomplished by providing a response to each of the review comments with a description of the plan changes and where the plan changes can be found (e.g., sheet number). If the plans have not been revised in response to a comment, the reason should be provided. The number of copies of this written description should be commensurate with the number of revised plans.

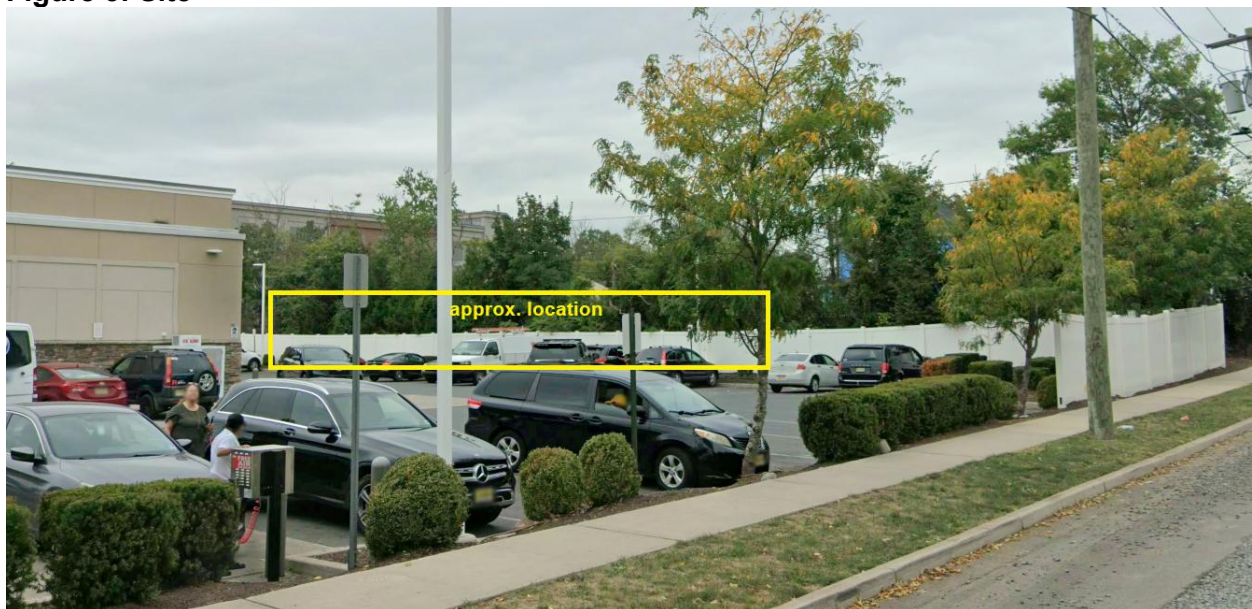
³ The Applicant should confirm this with respect to the transformer and switchgear.

4. Sheet C2.0 should be revised to delete reference to the bulk requirements of the NBR Overlay District as they don't apply (Section 112-280.F(10) contains the applicable bulk requirements).
5. Bollards and Charger Dispenser should not be installed over the existing water service.
6. Wawa Standard Asphalt Repair Detail should be revised to conform to Township standard of 2" HMA Surface Course, 4" Base Course and 6" DGA Subbase.
7. The survey should be resubmitted, too scale.
8. The applicant should add a note to that the plan stating that no landscaping shall be disturbed west of the existing vinyl fence that is to be reset/regraded.
9. All site concrete shall be 4,500 psi. Revise all necessary details accordingly.
10. All proposed ADA striping and markings shall be blue.
11. All parking stall striping shall be white whether it is proposed on concrete or asphalt.
12. The 4" Fix Bollard and 4" Removable Bollard details should specify the final color the proposed bollards. Safety yellow is recommended.
13. The Canopy Details, sheet no. S1.2 notes that Interior PVC Downspout is proposed for all columns and references Detail 8/CA2. That detail is not part of the plan set. Provide a copy of the detail. In addition, it is recommended that the downspouts be connected to the on-site stormwater management system.

Figure 2: Site



Figure 3: Site





JURISDICTIONAL DETERMINATION

DRCC #: 26-0018C

DATE: February 19, 2026

PROJECT NAME: 607 Somerset Street -- EV Charging Infrastructure

Latest Submission Received: February 2, 2026

Applicant:

428-458 North Second Street, Inc.
6573 Northwest 39th Terrace
Boca Raton, FL 33496
udynahum@gmail.com

Engineer:

Zhi Chow, P.E.
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.
301 Carnegie Center, Suite 202
Princeton, NJ 8540
Zhi.Chow@kimley-horn.com

Agent:

IONNA, LLC
4022 Stirrup Creek Drive, Suite 315
Durham, NC 27703
David.Lane@ionna.com

Project Location:

Road	Municipality	County	Block(s)	Lot(s)
607 Somerset Street (N.J. State Highway Route No. 27)	Franklin Township	Somerset	164	1.01

Jurisdictional Determination:

Zone B	Exempt	Nongovernmental
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Documents Received: Application received February 2, 2026; Site Plans, (26 sheets) dated January 28, 2026, prepared by IONNA, LLC.

DATE: February 19, 2026**PROJECT NAME:** 607 Somerset Street -- EV Charging Infrastructure

Existing Conditions: The project site is a 74,907 square-foot (1.72 acres) lot located on Somerset Street in Franklin Township, Somerset County, approximately 1.5 miles south of the Delaware and Raritan Canal at Landing Lane and within Commission Review Zone B.

The project site is bounded by Myrtle Street followed by residential developments on comparatively small lots to the north, an urgent care facility to the west, Somerset Street followed by an apartment complex to the south, and by Juliet Avenue followed by a combination of residential and commercial developments to the east.

In the existing condition, the site is improved with a gasoline service station and convenience store, along with a gasoline pump canopy, asphalt paved parking and driveway areas, concrete sidewalks, trash enclosure, landscaping and areas of maintained lawn. The existing improvements were constructed pursuant to a Commission certificate of approval issued in 2016 (DRCC #15-0018A), which reduced onsite impervious surface coverage from 69,696 square feet (1.6 acres) cumulative to January 11, 1980, to 54,942 square feet (1.3 acres). Project DRCC #15-0018A was reviewed as a major project due to the disturbance of 1.86 acres of land.

Prior to the construction of the service station/convenience store, the site was a towing and truck repair facility which appears on historic aerial imagery dating to 1974.

Proposed Project: The applicant proposes to install electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure at the project site, which would include 10 EV charging stations installed over existing impervious surface coverage along the northern property boundary near Myrtle Street, transformers and switch gears to be located on concrete pads in a landscaped area near the intersection of Myrtle Street and Juliet Avenue, ADA-compliant walkways to provide access to the existing convenience store, bollards, trash receptacle, and EV parking signage.

The project would result in the creation of 456 square feet (0.01 acre) of impervious surface coverage; however, impervious surface cumulative to January 11, 1980, remains reduced by 12,632 square feet (0.29 acre). The project would also result in the disturbance of 2,500 square feet (0.06 acre) of land.

Findings: The applicant proposes a project in Commission Review Zone B that would not result in the cumulative coverage since January 11, 1980, of one quarter acre of land with impervious surface, or the disturbance of one acre or more of land. Therefore, the project is not a “major project” subject to Commission regulation (See definition of “major project” at N.J.A.C. 7:45-1.3 and Scope of Review at N.J.A.C. 7:45-2.3).

Decision: Exempt.

This jurisdictional determination shall lapse:

DRCC#: 26-0018C

3

DATE: February 19, 2026

PROJECT NAME: 607 Somerset Street -- EV Charging Infrastructure

1. If construction is not complete within five years from the date of the exemption letter;
or
2. If any municipal permit(s) or approval(s) applicable to the project expires, lapses, or is
revoked.

Expiration date: February 19, 2031.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Hutchison", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Hutchison
Executive Director

- c. Somerset County Planning Board
Franklin Township Planning Board