



**BOROUGH OF NORTHVALE
COMBINED PLANNING BOARD | BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MEETING**

April 16, 2025, at 7:30 P.M.

MINUTES

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CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman Giannotti called the meeting to order at 7:31 PM in the Planning Board/Board of Adjustment meeting room located on the second floor of the Municipal Building at 116 Paris Avenue, Northvale, New Jersey 07647.

STATEMENT

Chairman Giannotti read the "Sunshine Statement" into the record as follows:

"This is a regularly scheduled meeting of the Combined Planning Board/Board of Adjustment of the Borough of Northvale. The date, time and location of this meeting has been advertised in the official newspapers of the Borough, filed with the Municipal Clerk, and posted on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building. All notice requirements of the Public Meetings Act for this meeting have been fulfilled. Please note the fire exits as required by law at the public meetings."

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Chairman Giannotti, Mayor McGuire, Councilman Bakalian, Mr. Puppelo, Mr. Gullestad, Chief Ostrow, Mr. Pothos, Mr. Degen (ALT#1),

ALSO PRESENT: Gregg Paster-Attorney
Scott Loverich- Neglia Engineering
Julia Martino-Board Secretary

ABSENT: Vice Chair Amorosso, Mr. Briscoe, DeGennaro (ALT 2) Mr. Argiro (ALT#3)

REGULARLY SCHEDULED COMBINED WORK AND FORMAL MEETING



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**CONTINUING APPLICATION FOR BULK VARIANCE
MIDAS CHAIN | 151 VETERANS DRIVE LLC.
151 VETERANS DRIVE, NORTHVALE NJ 07647
BLOCK # 1011 LOT#S 3, 5.01, 5.02 AND 27**

Chairman Giannotti introduced the first application; this is a continuing application of Midas Chain | 151Veterans Drive LLC.

As with the last meeting, Mayor McGuire and Councilman Bakalian, recused themselves, from the dais for this application.

Attorney Dean Stamos, on behalf of Attorney Mark Madaio introduced himself and his client. He shared this is a continuing application from the February 5th meeting. Mr. Stamos went over the details of the application from the February 5th meeting. He mentioned the concerns of residences to the rear of the property; that is why the applicant went back to the drawing board. They reconfigured the design of the building and how they are going to use the property. Mr. Stamos went over the new application plans; applicant is amending to remove the front residential lot and keep the redesign of the building. He went over the details of the subdivision and zone line.

Board Attorney Mr. Paster explained, this is a D2 use variance, pre-existing non-conforming use. This is due to the way the zoning line is drawn; it accentually traverses through the lots on which the applicant's facility is.

Mr. Stamos called his first witness **Mr. Conrad Roncati** – Project Architect. Mr. Roncati is considered still sworn in from the February 5th meeting. His license is still in good standing.

Mr. Roncati stated there has been a change to the plan. He explained the changes include both site and building. He did an overview of the changes. The changes result from the comments and concerns of the board members and the public and notably of the neighbor behind to the west. Referring to the colorized site plan, exhibit # A-7 April 16, 2025, site plan C100 dated March 26, 2025, by L2A. North is to the top, Veterans drive is in the grey stripe on the right-hand side of the plan and Walnut is on the Left. As discussed in the last meeting, he explained the property is a shallow U Shape wrapping around a residential structure on Walnut Street. He went over the last meeting discussion about parking ingress and egress points onto Walnut Street, and comments to restrict right turns out, onto Walnut Street. The new plan shapes the driveway entrance allowing right turns in, but no right turns out. Also, there is the possibility of signage to give that direction. He explained, they are planning a 2-story addition on the north side of the building. This is unchanged, same size in terms of height width, length and volume. This has not changed from the last application. In the new plan, they are proposing to leave the residential portion of the property untouched. They needed to create more parking, and they did this along Veterans Drive in front of the building. He went over the parking details using the presented exhibit. He also went over the relocation of the loading dock. It will not be on the west side near



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the residential zone. It will be relocated to the east side of the front and there is a variance for that. It will now be facing the industrial neighborhood. Shipping areas are generally all the same, slightly reorganized to accommodate the flip of the loading dock. The exterior and materials are the same. Referring to his new drawings dated 3/26/2025, he went through drawings and pointed out the notable changes. A1, A11 (ground floor). A12 (second floor), A13 (roof plan) no additional equipment. A20 (revised building elevations, loading dock relocation changes and features). A21 (section through the building no changes). All drawings carry that same march date.

Mr. Roncati, addressing comments from the Borough Engineer's letter. One was requesting the Architect should provide testimony on the following areas in which he did or shared who will, regarding specific items on his team. He discussed the green area variances, minimum parking and off-street parking. Minimum landscape, the island and the buffering are the same. Spaces required 97 and 82 are proposed. His engineer will address the variance for the width of driveways. Variance of the loading space from the rear to front of the building. Referring to page 6 of 7 Code 20019.1.H, he believes it is part of the Park Avenue overlay zone, and they are not in the Park Avenue overlay zone.

Mr. Stamos summarized Mr. Roncati's testimony with Mr. Roncati. Mr. Stamos reiterated, all comply, the size and setbacks with the exception of the loading dock.

Chairman Giannotti ask the board members if they had any question for Mr. Roncati.

No members had questions.

Mr. Giannotti had a comment. He wanted Mr. Stamos to testify there would be no tractor trailers backing into the loading docks, only box trucks. Mr. Stamos agreed that it was correct.

Giannotti opened the meeting to the public, questions for Mr. Roncati

Resident Johanna Bargisen of 146 Walnut Street had a question about the set back of the building being conformed. She asks how is that possible if the original building is not. Mr. Roncati shared that everything is conforming. Mr. Roncati again stated that this building conforms to the zoning ordinance. Resident Johanna Bargisen approached the existing exhibit and pointed to her house and insisted that the applicants building is not set back far enough. After reviewing the zoning setbacks and rear yard setbacks, Mr. Roncati and Mr. Stamos confirmed the applicants' building is 50' from her property line and is indeed conforming.

Giannotti Closed the meeting to the public

Mr. Stamos introduced his Civil Engineer Mr. Willam Vogt Jr. Mr. Vogt is considered still under oath as he was sworn in from the February 5th meeting. His license is still in good standing. The new plans were prepared under his supervision.

Mr. Willam Vogt Jr. gave us an analysis of the engineering revisions. He started with the prior site plan rendering A-3 vs the updated rendering A-7. He explained based off of their original



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plan, they had development on lot 5.01, which was the residential portion lot. Approximately 10 thousand square feet, it's a 100 x 100 lot. They eliminated all that parking for that area. He will be rerouting the storm sewer through a portion of that property. It's not included in that lot area any longer, he deducted 10 thousand square feet, going from approximately 80 thousand to 70 thousand square feet. With the improvements, they do not comply with the 25% requirement for the green area, they are at 19.31, due to subtracting the lot from the application. He explained they changed the front of the property along Veterans Drive, on the east side. They used to have two separate parking areas with three driveways. On the proposed plan, they connected and made it one parking area with only two driveways. Because they are not using the residential lot, the requirement is 97 spaces, they need a variance, they only have room for 82 parking spaces. It's a deficiency of 15 spaces. He also went over the width of the driveway changes from 200.52 linear feet; with a reduction they are down to 128.69 feet. He spoke about relocating the trash enclosure from the north side of the property to the south side. He also went over the relocation of the proposed loading dock to the northeast corner of the property. They will also be relocating the transformer to the new loading dock area along Veterans Drive. They will also be adding more evergreen to the landscape along the northern property line. With the changes, this is now considered not a major development for storm water management. They will comply with regulations.

Attorney Dean Stamos summarized the testimony of Mr. Willam Vogt Jr. asking if the building is following the setback requirements, Mr. Willam Vogt Jr. answered yes, front side and rear setback are all compliant. Attorney Dean Stamos ask Mr. Vogt if he reviewed the Neglia engineering report revised April 11, 2025, Mr. Vogt, yes. He thought it was a fair review letter and had no issues complying with any issues that Neglia addressed.

Chairman Giannotti ask the board members if they had any question for Mr. Vogt.

Chief Ostrow- referring to the loading dock area, asked if it was going to be ground level entry and no changes in the grade, Mr. Vogt answered that it was correct.

Mr. Gullestad – referencing 3rd to last page on a letter that was sent out by Attorney Madaio office, residence notifications, driveway width numbers. Mr. Vogt. Shared the numbers on that letter where the original numbers. With the elimination of the two driveways, the one on Walnut and the one on Veterans is down to the 128169.

Mr. Degan- ask if they were installing EV ports. Mr. Vogt, yes. Mr. Degan, not against the building. Mr. Vogt, no, not against the building. They have located three EV parking spaces on the southernmost access point of the property along Veterans Drive. As far away from the building as possible.

Mr. Giannotti-Mentioned the credit received from having EV spaces. Mr. Vogt, they do get 1.5 spaces, they did not take the credit to reduce the variance from 15 spaces to 13 spaces.

Scott Loverich from Neglia Engineering asked if they had three EV spaces, Mr. Vogt said yes, Mr. Loverich mentioned they count for double toward the parking requirements. The requirement can go from 97 to 94 and they are providing 82 and that is the state statute we have to follow. Mr. Loverich does not have any issues with the driveways. He has no problem with the engineer stating he can comply with the engineer's letter. Referring to the storm water management, he did ask about the peak run-off rates, he has not received a report. Mr. Vogt



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shared they are going to reduce them to below the existing conditions, if they can further reduce them, they will do that. They did some soil testing onsite, during the correct months. They did two in the northwestern portion of the site, and did get an adequate infiltration rate of, 1½ inches per hour. Mr. Loverich had a recommendation towards the northeast end of the parking lot, to add a couple or another drain, catch basin towards the driveway. Mr. Vogt said that's fine. Mr. Loverich mentioned they will be relocating the easement and the pipe we have in the easement. This runs through the property and provides us with a report showing that it has no adverse impact on this town's drainage system. He mentioned this is in the letter and still needs to be addressed.

Mr. Giannotti asks where the standpipe is. Mr. Vogt did not know at that moment. Mr. Vogt shared his tech believes, it's in the southwest corner. The board and Mr. Vogt briefly spoke about the driveway signage. Chief Ostrow mentioned, they need to include stop signs. Scott Loverich confirmed to the Chief that was also included in his letter.

Mr. Giannotti opened the meeting to the public

Resident Johanna Bargisen of 146 Walnut Street, mentioned at the last meeting it was mentioned the building was existing non-conforming, Chairman Giannotti confirmed it is confirming.

Mr. Giannotti closed the meeting to the public.

Mr. Stamos introduced his Planner Steven Lydon. Mr. Lydon is still under oath as he was sworn in from the February 5th meeting. His license is still in good standing.

Mr. Lydon started off with the Master planning & Zoning ordinance background, not for this site but in speaking in general. He explained that lot 5.01 is a through lot. It has frontages on two different roads, and two front yards and this is not a good idea for planning. He mentioned they are in an industrial zone by large and a small portion of the property is a residential zone. He shared the VFW Building is a non-conforming use. In this application they will be getting rid of this. He also shared that in this particular LI zone, the ordinance allows this occupant to cover 50% of his lot with his building, and he is using less than 20% of the lot area. This property has a lot of building potential. This is a two-story building not sprawling out on the property. He also shared 25% has to be green area. He ask the Chairman how are they to meet the ordinance requirements to provide parking? This is why they need a parking variance. He shared where they are looking to put the new car park, it already exists. In his summary, he thinks this application can be granted, it's consistent with the masterplan goal. It provides economic development that will help maintain the boroughs' tax base, by encouraging high quality commercial and office space development.

Chairman Giannotti ask the board members if they had any question for the Planner

Mr. Puppelo wanted clarity understanding when the building is taking lot coverage of 28.9 use, you excluded lot 5.01. Mr. Stamos answered, "Correct.



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Mr. Giannotti opened the meeting to the public
No one approached the podium
Mr. Giannotti closed the meeting to the public.

Attorney Greg Paster reminded the board members that they have 6 members, and they need 5 yes votes to grant the application. He also asked Mr. Stamos if he wanted to continue with the six members or come back next week. Mr. Stamos wanted to continue with the application tonight. If they can open the meeting to the public one more time.

Mr. Giannotti opened the meeting to the public

Resident Johanna Bargisen of 146 Walnut Street had no questions; she mentioned the board heard her concerns back in February and commented that zoning ordinances are in place to protect residents like her. Mrs. Bargisen reiterated her concerns from the first meeting and her concerns today. She's asking the board to follow the law.

The board had a brief discussion about the new plans for where the loading dock, parking and garbage are going to be. They will make sure Attorney Paster will have the details in the resolution.

Mr. Roncati clarifying, they closed up the proposed loading dock in the northwest corner, there is a small existing loading dock that's on the southwest corner of the building, that will remain. It's not the delivery loading dock. There is a portion of the building where there is intake, and this will now be their main loading dock.

Mr. Puppelo asked what the number of employees for this facility is. Mr. Roncati, now there's 55 with the additional space, Mr. Stamos testifies, there will be 80 employees. Mr. Puppelo asked how many parking spaces they have now. Mr. Roncati, 55 employees and 55 parking spots 1/1 now. With the addition, close to 1/1 again, 80 employees and 80 parking spots. Mr. Stamos, 82 parking spots proposed, without the credit for the EV stations.

Mr. Stamos summarized the application and testimonies of the Architect, Engineer and Planner. He confirms he would like to proceed with a vote today.

Mr. Havannes Bakalian of 164 Livingston Street- approached the podium, he asks the board engineer, if that residential lot at some point in the future, gets transferred over or redeveloped, is the new sewage or the new drain water system being installed, will it be able to handle the additional capacity from another residential home on that lot? Mr. Loverich responded, presumably that a new home would have to connect to the storm system, they could have an overflow pipe, but our ordinance states, for a small development, you have to provide 2" of rain over the impervious in the system underground and that gets infiltrated back into the ground. He might recommend an overflow pipe, just in case there is 3" of rain, that seepage pit gets filled up, it will overflow into the towns system.



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Chairman Giannotti ask Attorney Paster to summarize the details for the resolution. Attorney Paster did go over his noted details.

Chairman Giannotti entertained a motion for approval, A Motion to approve was made by Mr. Pothos, seconded by Chief Ostrow.

ROLL CALL: Chairman Giannotti-Yes, Mr. Gullestad – No, Chief Ostrow-Yes, Mr. Puppelo-Yes, Mr. Pothos-Yes (ALT#1) Mr. Degen-Yes

Those in favor 5

Those opposed-1

Absent –Mr. Brisco, Vice Chair Amorosso, Mr. Degennaro, Mr. Argiro

This application was voted on and was approved with 5 yes votes and 1 no vote.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF
PLANNING | ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
REORGANIZATION MEETING ON FEBRUARY 5, 2025**

Chairman Giannotti entertained a motion for approval of minutes of February 5, 2025, the motion was made by Mr. Giannotti and seconded by Chief Ostrow.

ROLL CALL- All members present in favor -Yes.

Absent Vice Chair Amorosso, Mr. Briscoe, DeGennaro (ALT 2) Mr. Argiro (ALT#3

Chairman Giannotti entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:40:59 pm, motion was made by Mr. Giannotti and second by Mr. Pothos.

All members present in favor-Yes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julia Martino

Julia Martino
Board Secretary

APPROVED: 