

BOROUGH OF PITMAN

PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD

MINUTES

June 15, 2026

Call to Order

The meeting of the Borough of Pitman Planning and Zoning Board was called to order. Pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, the Chair announced that adequate notice of the time and date of the meeting had been posted on the Borough Hall Bulletin Board and advertised on the Borough of Pitman website.

Roll Call

Roll call was taken with the following members present: Chairman Aspras, Patti Kelley, Councilwoman Musto, Mayor Razze, Chuck Romick, Thomas Slenkamp, Vice-Chair Stech, Jack Franchi, Kevin Austin, Paul Bially, and Jen Evans.

Mr. Owen stated that he would arrive at approximately 7:15 p.m.

Approval of Prior Minutes

The Board reviewed the May 15, 2026 minutes. A minor spelling correction was noted. A motion to approve the minutes was made and seconded by Romick and Slenkamp.

Roll call vote on the May 15, 2026 minutes:

- Chairman Aspras: Abstain.
- Patti Kelley: Yes.
- Councilwoman Musto: Yes.
- Mayor Razze: Abstain
- Chuck Romick: Yes.
- Thomas Slenkamp: Yes.
- Vice-Chair Stech: Yes.
- Jack Franchi: Yes.
- Kevin Austin: Yes.

Public Comment

The Chair opened the public portion for comments on items not on the agenda. One attendee indicated an intention to comment on historic applications, and the Chair advised that the comment could be made when that application was heard. No one else wished to speak, and the public portion was closed.

Historic Application 2026-21 Matt Curcio 153 West Jersey Block 83 Lot 22

Chairman Paul Blass was sworn in and stated his name for the record. He advised that the application involved porch work and that the historic committee recommended approval. Questions were asked regarding whether the work was a complete replacement or partial replacement and whether matching materials were used. Chairman Blass explained that the work was a partial replacement and that the railings had been reused and the posts were covered in vinyl.

A motion to approve Application 2026-21 was made by Kelley and seconded by Aspras.

Roll call vote on Application 2026-21:

- Chairman Aspras: Yes.
- Patti Kelley: Yes.
- Councilwoman Musto: Yes.
- Mayor Razze: Yes.
- Chuck Romick: Yes.
- Tom Slenkamp: Yes.
- Vice Chair Stech: Yes.
- Jack Franchi: Yes.
- Kevin Austin: Yes.

Historic Application 2026-022 Tessa Belluscio 47 Fourth Ave Block 5 Lot 20

The committee reviewed several changes to the house and advised that it had accepted the applicant's request with certain stipulations. Those stipulations included the front door to be a Thermatruue S206 which is different than originally requested, approval of either of two exterior light options, and solid glass for the rear storm door.

A motion to approve the application with the committee's recommended changes was made by Chairman Aspras and seconded by Vice Chair Stech.

Roll call vote on Application 2026-022:

- Chairman Aspras: Yes.
- Patti Kelley: Yes.
- Councilwoman Musto: Yes.
- Mayor Razze: Yes.
- Chuck Romick: Yes.
- Tom Slenkamp: Yes.
- Vice Chair Stech: Yes.
- Jack Franchi: Yes.
- Kevin Austin: Yes.

Historic Application 2026-023 CVI Investments LLC 81 Circle Ave Block 21 Lot 1

The committee reviewed a new construction application and required historically accurate two-over-two windows. The applicant was also permitted to install a landing on the left side provided that railings with turned spindles were included, and all optional windows shown on the plans were to be installed. The applicant agreed with the committee's direction.

Joshua Hitchner of 143 Sixth Avenue was sworn in and identified himself as a private resident and long-time Historic District resident, stating that he had served on the Historic Commission for nine years. He raised concerns that the proposed house was too large, that the survey appeared inaccurate, and that the structure might be located on or close to borough-owned property. Board members responded that his concerns about lot size and technical compliance were matters for the construction code official and zoning officer, not the historic-design review.

A motion to approve Application 2026-023 was made by Romick and seconded by Aspras.

Roll call vote on Application 2026-023:

- Chairman Aspras: Yes.
- Patti Kelley: Yes.
- Councilwoman Musto: Yes.
- Mayor Razze: Yes.
- Chuck Romick: Yes.
- Thomas Slenkamp: Yes.
- Vice Chair Stech: Yes.
- Jack Franchi: Yes.

- Kevin Austin: Yes.

*Member Barry Owen arrived (7:15pm) and took his seat on the dais. Kevin Austin was removed as a voting member for the remaining new applications.

Memorialization

Resolution 2026-15 Keith Dunbar 224 Grandview Ave Block 86 Lot 15.01

The Board considered memorialization of Resolution 2026-15 regarding both variances for Keith Dunbar, 224 Grandview Avenue, Block 86, Lot 15.01.

A motion to approve the memorialization was made by Franchi and seconded by Stech.

Roll call vote on Resolution 2026-15 memorialization:

- Patti Kelley: Yes.
- Councilwoman Musto: Yes.
- Barry Owen: Yes.
- Chuck Romick: Yes.
- Thomas Slenkamp: Yes.
- Vice Chair Stech: Yes.
- Jack Franchi: Yes.
- Kevin Austin: Yes.

Application 2026-006 Bulk Variance Scott Friedrich, 699 Pitman Ave Block 155 Lot 1

The Board then heard Application 2026-006, both variances, for Scott Friedrich, 699 Pitman Avenue, Block 155, Lot 1. Scott Friedrich was sworn in and testified that the garage addition was for personal residential use only, intended to store vehicles, bicycles, lawn and garden equipment, household storage, and other personal items. He stated that the proposal was not for any business use and that the design was intended to preserve the historic character of the property and neighborhood.

Mr. Friedrich explained that the garage would help protect his vehicle collection and that the property, which is about an acre and a half, was well suited to accommodate the structure. He also testified that the addition would not create noise or traffic and would not be disruptive to neighbors.

Adam Wharburton, the Board engineer, testified that the proposal was for a 35-by-36-foot garage addition, totaling 1,260 square feet, and that the proposed accessory building would be 21 feet 8 inches high and 1,660 square feet, which exceeded the zoning ordinance limits of 16 feet in height and 750 square feet total floor area for accessory buildings. He also noted that the front-yard setback was a pre-existing nonconforming condition and that the proposal required variances for height and total floor area.

Patti Kelley stated that the committee did not find the proposal to be a detriment and that the plan fit the historic character of the property. The Board discussed the size of the lot, the lack of impervious coverage concerns, and the fact that the proposal was not precedent setting because of the property's size.

A motion to approve the variances for 699 Pitman Avenue for height and total square footage was made by Kelley and seconded by Owen.

Roll call vote on Application 2026-006:

- Chairman Aspras: Yes.
- Patti Kelley: Yes.
- Councilwoman Musto: Yes.
- Mayor Razze: Yes.
- Chuck Romick: Yes.
- Thomas Slenkamp: Yes.
- Vice Chair Stech: Yes.
- Jack Franchi: Yes.

Action taken: The variances were approved, and Mr. Friedrich was advised to obtain his building permits.

Public Comment

No one approached the podium and the public portion was closed.

Due to the next application being a D variance, Mayor Razze, Councilwoman Musto and Thomas Slenkamp stepped down from the dais. (7:31 pm)

Application 2026-008 Kyle Castagna 96 Brookfield Ave Block

The Board then took up Application 2026-008, a use variance for 96 Brookfield Avenue, Block 55, Lot 39. Kyle Castagna was sworn in and testified that he sought permission for his brother to use the detached garage as living quarters. He explained that he and his brother were engaged in street ministry work near Rowan University and that the arrangement was intended to support their ministry and allow them to remain together on the same premises.

Adam Wharburton testified that the existing garage would be used as a separate dwelling unit and that the zoning ordinance did not allow accessory buildings to be used as residences. He also explained that the proposal raised conditional-use and use-variance issues and that the applicant had not shown special reasons to justify the variance.

The Board discussed whether the matter should be treated as a ministry, home occupation, or accessory dwelling use, but concluded that the application before it was for a residence in an accessory building. The Board also discussed precedent concerns and the lack of proof that the property was particularly suited for the proposed use.

Patti Kelley stated that local churches already do outreach and that she did not believe the need described by the applicant was as dire as suggested.

A motion was made by Kelley to deny the use variance on the property, including denial as both a home occupation and as a residence in an accessory building. The motion was seconded by Romick. The solicitor explained that because the motion was in the negative, a yes vote meant denial.

Roll call vote on Application 2026-008:

- Chairman Aspras: Yes.
- Patti Kelley: Yes.
- Barry Owen: Yes.
- Chuck Romick: Yes.
- Thomas Slenkamp: Stepped down / recused.
- Vice Chair Stech: Yes.
- Jack Franchi: Yes.
- Kevin Austin: Yes.

Action taken: The Board denied both use variances by a vote of 7-0.

After the denial, Mr. Castagna addressed the Board and audience with a final religious statement.

Public Comment for 96 Brookfield Ave

Ms. Shawn McCleery 92 Brookfield Ave approached the podium and was sworn in. She shared her concern regarding the use of the yard for “Congregational Church Services” in a residential area. She has no problem with small numbers of people meeting occasionally at the property.

No one else approached the podium to speak and the Public portion was closed.

Ms. McCleery was allowed to approach the podium for additional comments regarding the use after the public portion closed.

*Mayor Razze, Councilwoman Musto and Thomas Slenkamp returned to their seats on the dais. (8:11pm)

Zoning Officer Report

Kristine was sworn in and stated that the zoning office was still receiving changing-use applications. She noted that the only ones questioned were those previously discussed by email and stated that there had not been any additional applications requiring that treatment.

Kristine also asked the Board to consider adding zoning regulations for driveways, noting that the code currently did not regulate driveway width, height, size, number, setbacks, or similar standards. The Chair agreed that this was a good point and noted that the issue is often handled through engineering review but should be addressed in the ordinance if needed.

Site Plan Committee

Mr. Fijalkowski was absent, and no site plans were reported.

Subdivision Committee

Mrs. Kelley reported that the subdivision committee had nothing pending

Environmental Commission

The Environmental Commission reported that the systemic herbicide treatment project would be postponed until next year because there was not enough time to assemble the budget, obtain three bids, and complete the permit process in the current year. Water quality sampling was still expected to proceed that month and would include bacterial sampling, dissolved oxygen testing, and related information for future planning.

Master Plan Committee

Mr. Romick reported that the committee had not met because of limited professional resources, but noted that the master plan reexamination process should consider downtown expansion, mixed-use possibilities, and possible future changes in the borough. He and others discussed the need to evaluate what problems the current master plan has addressed, what problems remain, and what recommendations should be made.

Economic Development Committee

Mr. Owen reported that the committee would meet on Thursday night. He stated that the breakfast-before-business project had been moved to September due to the number of other events occurring in the borough.

Mayor and Council Report

Councilwoman Musto reported that the 2026 budget had been adopted, a special committee meeting was scheduled for the following week, and Fourth Friday events were upcoming. She also outlined July 4 festivities, including Miss Pitman, fireworks, the parade, a block party, a mural unveiling, and the Freedom Four Miler. She mentioned a patriotic house contest and the sale of commemorative signs to support fireworks and July events.

The Mayor also raised the issue of data centers and explained that the borough was discussing whether to consider a moratorium or other guardrails, given action being taken by surrounding communities. Discussion followed regarding redevelopment, utility demand, and the possibility that data centers may seek more urbanized areas because of access to power and water infrastructure.

Old and New Business

No new or old business was reported.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.

Actions Taken

- Approved May 15, 2026 minutes, with Chairman Aspras abstaining.
- Approved Historic Application 2026-21.
- Approved Historic Application 2026-022 with stipulations.
- Approved Historic Application 2026-023.
- Memorialized Resolution 2026-15.
- Approved Application 2026-006 for 699 Pitman Avenue.
- Denied both use variances in Application 2026-008 for 96 Brookfield Avenue by a 7-0 vote.
- Adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:30 p.m.