

City of Cape May Planning Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 10, 2026

Opening: The meeting of the City of Cape May Planning Board was called to order by Chairperson Bill Bezaire at 6:02 PM in the City Hall Auditorium. In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, adequate notice was provided.

Roll Call:	Mr. Bezaire, Chairperson	Present
	Mr. Jones, Vice Chairperson	Present
	Mr. Crowley	Present
	Mr. Gorgone	Present
	Mr. Lundholm	Absent
	Deputy Mayor McDade	Present
	Mayor Mullock	Absent
	Mrs. Reed	Present
	Mr. Riggs	Absent
	Mr. Padussis Alt # 1	Present
	Mr. Crippen Alt # 2	Present

Also Present: Richard King, Esquire, Board Solicitor
Craig Hurless, Board Engineer and Planner
Karen Keenan, Board Secretary

Resolution:

Motion made by Deputy Mayor McDade to adopt Resolution number 02-10-2026: 1, Recommendations for Improving Parking Initiatives, seconded by Mr. Jones and **carried 7-0.** Those in favor: Mr. Gorgone, Deputy Mayor McDade, Mr. Crowley, Mr. Padussis, Mr. Crippen, Mr. Jones, Mr. Bezaire. Those opposing: None. Those abstaining: Mrs. Reed.

Minutes:

Motion made by Mr. Gorgone to approve the meeting minutes of January 27, 2026, seconded by Deputy Mayor McDade and **carried 7-0.** Those in favor: Mr. Gorgone, Deputy Mayor McDade, Mr. Crowley, Mr. Padussis, Mr. Crippen, Mr. Jones, Mr. Bezaire. Those opposing: None. Those abstaining: Mrs. Reed.

Application:

Jersey Development Group LLC
930 Washington Street, Block 1093 Lot(s) 9

Attorney Ron Gelzunas of Ronald J. Gelzunas LLC introduced the application seeking substantial benefit variance relief and approval for minor subdivision to divide the lot into three lots for single family homes.

Also present at the meeting were Owner Scott Peter of Jersey Development Group LLC and Engineer and Architect John Halbruner of The Hyland Group. Owner Peter, Engineer Halbruner and Board Engineer and Planner Craig Hurless were sworn in by Solicitor King. Chairperson Bezaire accepted John Halbruner as an expert in engineering and architecture.

Owner Peter gave a history of ownership of the property and the explained his experience working with the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) on plans for the large property, that formerly housed a bank. He had planned to build a four-unit townhouse multifamily project, and the HPC seemed to be steering towards single family homes for the property at their informal meetings.

Engineer Halbruner described the existing conditions in the neighborhood consisting of apartments, single family homes, and condos and said the property abuts single family homes. He explained that the 15,000 plus square foot lot is to be divided into three lots of 5,201 square feet for the lot on Madison Avenue, 5,467 square feet for the corner lot and 5,010 square feet for the lot on Washington Street where 6,250 square feet per lot is required. Engineer Halbruner confirmed that duplexes are not proposed; there will be single family homes. He said zoning permits six by-right multi-family townhouses with lot coverage permitted at 75% with floor area ratio of .50 versus single family homes lot coverage permitted at 45% with floor area ratio of .40. Single family homes will allow more green space, open space and less intense development. Engineer Halbruner said the streetscape is consistent with Washington Street with less bulk and allows differing roof forms, more open porches, vertical articulation, and more light, air and open space. He testified that parking would have less demand, traffic and reduced trips. Engineer Halbruner said six townhouse units are more massive, cause more traffic, require more parking and results in less light air, and open space. He testified the purposes of zoning are advanced by promoting a desirable visual environment, promoting the conservation of historic sites and districts, promoting the establishment of appropriate population densities and providing adequate light, air and open space. He testified there is no substantial detriment to the public good and the benefits outweigh any detriments.

Board members were allotted time for questions of Engineer Halbruner. Member Crowley asked about one or two lots versus three, and Engineer Halbruner responded that large monolithic buildings are not in keeping with the character of the homes on Washington Street. The members wanted design plans for review. Owner Peter said there is a great cost for plans, and the homes will be approved by the HPC. Engineer Hurless said the analysis includes: do the positives outweigh the negatives, is the zoning plan impaired, and are there substantial detriments. Engineer Hurless explained that if the owner plans an inclusionary development with affordable housing, he can build eight units. Engineer Hurless said the board can make conditions of approval, such as driveway placement. Member Reed asked if the lots are planned to be sold, and Owner Peter said he will develop the land. Chairperson Bezaire asked about a driveway on each side of the houses for proposed lots 1.02 and 1.03, and Attorney Gelzunas responded that the proposed shared driveway would be a shared curb cut on Washington Street. Engineer Hurless preferred the applicant to request the county for an additional curb cut on Madison Avenue (for proposed lot 1.02) to keep the driveway as far away from the intersection as possible. The dwelling proposed on lot 1.02 is to front on Washington Street with the driveway access via Madison Avenue, if approved by the county. He did not support the combining of the driveways.

Engineer Hurless then summarized his memorandum dated January 5, 2026 including the completeness review and the waivers he supported to be conditions of approval. He said the plans for each individual lot would be required for compliance review prior to getting permits. He explained items 31, P and S are required to create the lots (subdivision), and the other items are required for compliance review approval prior to permit applications. The applicant agreed to the conditions. Engineer Hurless changed the side yards in the table on page four to be 12/8 feet, 12 feet and 12/8 feet for the proposed lots that were renumbered to 9.01, 9.02 and 9.03 respectively, to agree with the Tax Assessor numbers. He detailed the variances for lot size sought to be considered under the c(2) criteria. The General Review Comments 1-23 were classified as conditions of approval with emphasis on the deed notice that a plot plan, signed and sealed by a professional engineer, be submitted to the board engineer for review and approval is required. Engineer Hurless advised the Fire, Police and Public Works Departments recommended approval of the project in their reports dated January 12, 2026, January 8, 2026 and January 12, 2026, respectively. The Shade Tree Commission recommended approval and noted that no trees exist on the property in their report dated January 29, 2026. Engineer Hurless commented that trees would be recommended as part of the required landscaping and vegetation plan as a condition of approval. The Environmental Commission recommended approval of the application with the condition that the landscaping plans focus on the use of native, drought tolerant plants. Evidence of final Historic Preservation Commission approval will be required.

Board members were allotted time for questions of Engineer Hurless. Member Crowley asked about the lack of plans and elevations of the structures, and Engineer Hurless said the applicant assumes risk that what they have provided and their testimony are acceptable to the board. It is up to the board to decide whether to grant or deny the waiver request. Engineer Hurless explained that if the board waives the requirement, the plans and elevations of the structures will be required for compliance review before a construction permit can be requested.

Discussion was opened to the public within two hundred feet at 7:54 PM.

Gary Waxman, 931 Corgie Street, was sworn in by Solicitor King. He lives to the rear of the property and voiced concerned about a buffer between the properties. Owner Peter said he will meet all setbacks and will submit a landscape plan that includes a fence and hedge.

Laurel Nuschke, 924 Washington Street, was sworn in by Solicitor King. She expressed concern about the lack of plans, traffic at the intersection and parking. She did not favor the plans submitted to the HPC.

Elizabeth Fritz, 926 Washington Street, was sworn in by Solicitor King. She is the adjacent neighbor and was concerned about the shared driveway apron. She thought three homes were too many at the property. Engineer Hurless will ensure that she will retain full access to her driveway, and the curbing and landscaping will be maintained.

Discussion was opened to the public beyond two hundred feet at 8:12 PM. Discussion was closed to the public at 8:12 PM.

Attorney Gelzunas made a closing statement.

Solicitor King explained the vote for the board.

Motion made by Deputy Mayor McDade to grant §525-16B(1) Table 1 lot size variances – 3 lots as set forth in the Board Engineer January 5, 2026 memo on page four with the side yards amended to 12/8 feet for 1.01, 12 feet for 1.02 and 12/8 feet for lot 1.03, minor subdivision approval and the completeness and technical review item 5 on page two, items 31, P, and S on page three to be done before the subdivision map is filed, the remainder to be done before a permit can be issued, subject to conditions discussed including an attempt to seek approval for two driveways on Madison Avenue and if not attainable, driveways to be in 12 foot side yards, as indicated on the plans along Washington Street, a hedge and fence along the property line with the property on Corgie Street behind the subject property to help buffer the properties, a separate full driveway for the adjacent neighbor in lot 8 to the Board Engineer's satisfaction, with the tax lot numbers changed to 9.01, 9.02 and 9.03, subject to conditions 1-23 on pages six, seven and eight in the January 5, 2026 memorandum by Craig R. Hurless, PE, PP, CME and subject to all conditions discussed at the hearing, seconded by Mr. Gorgone and carried 7-1. Those in favor: Mr. Gorgone, Deputy Mayor McDade, Mrs. Reed, Mr. Padussis, Mr. Crippen, Mr. Jones, Mr. Bezaire. Those opposing: Mr. Crowley. Those abstaining: None.

Members gave reasons for their votes. Member Gorgone said the traffic will be less than the current use. He thought the three single units to be appropriate for the streetscape. Deputy Mayor McDade agreed the application is for a less dense build, will fit in better, and the HPC will get a design that fits in with the streetscape. Member Reed preferred three homes rather than townhouses. Member Crowley was concerned about three undersized lots at 15 to 20% lower than the minimum. He could not balance the negative and positive impact on the use of the property. Member Padussis said he will rely on the HPC. Member Crippen said the benefits outweigh any potential detriments. Vice Chairperson Jones believed the streetscape concerns will be addressed by the HPC and homes in the 2,100 to 2,200 square foot range will be a better alternative to the bank. Chairperson Bezaire agreed with the other comments about the streetscape and the HPC.

Discussion:

Payment of Bills

Motion made by Mr. Gorgone to approve the payment of bills, seconded by Mrs. Reed and carried 8-0. Those in favor: Mr. Gorgone, Deputy Mayor McDade, Mr. Crowley, Mrs. Reed, Mr. Padussis, Mr. Crippen, Mr. Jones, Mr. Bezaire. Those opposing: None. Those abstaining: None.

Motion made to adjourn by Deputy Mayor McDade at 8:25 PM with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted: Karen Keenan, Board Secretary