

Township of Manalapan
120 Route 522 & Taylors Mills Road
Manalapan, NJ 07726

Planning Board Minutes
Public Meeting
August 13, 2026

Chairwoman Kathryn Kwaak called the meeting to order at 7:07pm with the reading of the Open Public Meetings Act. The salute to the flag followed.

Mr. Castronovo read the TV Disclosure Statement and took the Roll Call of the Board.

In attendance at the meeting: Barry Fisher, Todd Brown, John Castronovo, Barry Jacobson,
Chairwoman Kwaak, Mayor McNaboe, Steve Kastell, Eric
Nelson, Nunzio Pollifrone, Pat Givelekian

Absent from the meeting: Chief Hogan

Also present: Richard Brigliadoro Esq, Board Attorney
Jennifer Beahm PP, Board Planner
Jordon Rizzo PE, Board Engineer
Nancy McGrath, Recording Secretary

Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Fisher and seconded by Mr. Kastell to approve the July 09, 2026 minutes including the transcript of the proceedings.

Yes: Fisher, Brown, Castronovo, Jacobson, Kwaak, McNaboe, Kastell,
Pollifrone

No: None

Absent: Hogan

Abstain: None

Not Eligible: Nelson, Givelekian

A motion was made by Mayor McNaboe and seconded by Mr. Fisher to approve the July 13, 2026 minutes as written.

Yes: Fisher, Brown, Castronovo, Jacobson, Kwaak, McNaboe, Nelson,
Pollifrone

No: None

Absent: Hogan

Abstain: None

Not Eligible: Kastell, Givelekian

Resolution

PMS2319A - AAGWML – F Property , LLC
Amended Preliminary and Final Site Plan
Preliminary and Final Major Subdivision
Route 33 & Woodward Road
Blocks 73/74/75 Lots 1-7/ 6-10, 11.01 / 1-8
40,150SF Recreation Center and 502,031SF Warehouse - Approved at the June 25, 2026
Public Hearing

A motion was made by Mr. Jacobson and seconded by Mr. Brown to memorialize the resolution for AAAGWML-F Property, LLC as written.

Yes: Fisher, Brown, Jacobson, Kwaak, McNaboe, Pollifrone

No: None

Absent: Hogan

Abstain: None

Not Eligible: Castronovo, Kastell, Nelson, Givelekian

Application

PMS1931A/PMS1931TS Cardinale and Manalapan Crossing Associates 2, LLC

Amended Preliminary & Final Major Site Plan AND

Minor Technical Subdivision

Block 66 Lot 8.03 / 162 HWY 33 (Shoprite)

The amended plan is proposing to eliminate buildings B, C, and D and replace with a New Building B. No Change to Build A, E, F, and G

Previous meetings: 11/14/24, 1/23/25, 2/13/25, 2/27/25, 4/24/25

Hearing #6

Chairwoman Kwaak stated for the record that two Board members, Mr. Brown and Mr. Kastell, have recused themselves, stepped off the dais, and will not return for the remainder of the hearing.

Attorney Salvatore Alfieri appeared on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Alfieri gave an overview of the application.

- The amended application had its first public hearing in November 2024. and there have been five public hearings since with the last being in April of 2025.
- The application has two main components:
 - The amended site plan for the ShopRite.
 - A technical subdivision creating five lots (originally seven) which will allow the developer to sell or finance different components separately.
- The applicant worked with a resident group of about 90 families, represented by attorney Ron Gasiorowski, to reach a mutually agreeable resolution for both the applicant and the Manalapan Crossing homeowners.
- A settlement/right-of-access agreement, dated June 4, 2026, was executed with the Four Seasons HOA and will be included in the record. Marked as Exhibit A19.
 - After working extensively with Mr. Borden's office and the HOA's landscape architect, the applicant agreed to install an elaborate berm on the Four Seasons side of Crossing Lane.
 - Applicant agreed to get final landscape design approval from Ms. Spero's office as part of a condition of approval.
 - The developer (Cardinale at Manalapan Crossing) will post a two-year maintenance bond of \$1,053,000 to maintain the berm. After two years, maintenance becomes the HOA's responsibility.
- The applicant agreed to certain turning restrictions for ShopRite tractor-trailers as they enter and exit the ShopRite proper portion of the property. Site plans will be noted with those restrictions.
- ShopRite has a separate DOT application for a right-in/right-out lane onto Route 33. ShopRite cannot begin construction until that permit is obtained. If the permit is denied, ShopRite must seek amended approval.
- The applicant reserves the right to perfect the subdivision while the DOT permit is pending for Shoprite.
- There will be no outdoor dining at the ShopRite.
- Building-mounted signage was reduced from 13 signs to 6.
- A reciprocal easement agreement is required between the newly created lots. The document will be reviewed by board professionals and recorded with the county clerk.
- "No idling" signs will be installed at ShopRite loading areas.
- During prior hearings, two traffic engineers provided testimony—one for the Manalapan Crossing project and one for Saker. Other witnesses included the project's civil engineer, architect, and Saker's operations team.
- Mr. Borden began his planning testimony at the previous hearing and will continue testimony at tonight's hearing. He will place on the record the changes made since the last hearings and address all technical comments in the Board Professionals' reports, including Shari Spero's comments.

Mr. Borden is sworn in again and confirmed his credentials as a license professional planner. His credentials were accepted and he resumed his testimony.

- Two new exhibits introduced
 - A-17: Landscape exhibit which shows the entire commercial site at Manalapan Crossing.
 - A-18: Architectural elevations (color renderings) for wall signage
- Reviewed the current building status at Manalapan Crossing
 - Building A (mixed-use with affordable housing) is completed and mostly occupied.
 - Building B (large ShopRite building) replaces former Buildings B, C, (previously two-story restaurant buildings) and D (medical office).
 - Building E: not yet constructed
 - Building F: QuickChek, already constructed
 - Building G: approved medical office, not yet constructed, unchanged in this application
- After meeting with the homeowners and addressing their concerns, the revised plans were resubmitted in early June following execution of the agreement referenced by Mr. Alfieri.
- The June resubmission did not alter the building, parking layout, or site access. The changes were primarily focused on landscaping, lighting, and traffic-related details in response to resident input.

Landscaping Exhibit A-17

- The exhibit shows the revised berm treatment along the north side of Crossing Lane.
- The change begins at Route 33 near Tulip Court and continues across the full frontage to the roundabout.
- It extends past the amenity area, courts, clubhouse, model area, and up to Building G.
- This revision was discussed extensively with the homeowners and their landscape architect from Nelson Engineering.
- The berm is an earthen structure with varied plantings, and the final design meets the homeowners' satisfaction.
- Any remaining questions or concerns will be addressed with Shari Spero the township forester.
- Landscape comments also included questions about saving some existing trees within the berm area. A few trees were originally planted in that berm under the prior site plan. Applicant will attempt to preserve trees where possible and discuss further with Ms. Spero.

Truck Traffic / Signage / Lighting

- The loading dock remains on the eastern side of the building, consistent with the prior design.
- The change involves reorienting truck movements.
- Previously, all truck traffic used the roundabout and Route 33 for both ingress and egress.
- It has now been agreed that no truck egress will be permitted to Route 33; all outgoing trucks must use Millhurst Road.
- Ingress will be allowed from Route 33 and Crossing Lane only during daytime hours (7:00 AM to 9:00 PM).
- After 9:00 PM, all truck ingress must use Millhurst Road.
- The intent is to keep nighttime truck activity away from the residential homes along that portion of Crossing Lane.
- The site plan now includes signage directing truck movements, and Saker will ensure drivers follow those requirements.
- No-idling signage has been added throughout the site.
- The third item addressed with the homeowners was site lighting, focused primarily on the Building B parking field.
- Lighting levels were adjusted by lowering fixture heights, reducing Kelvin temperature, and maintaining safe illumination while decreasing overall intensity.
- These lighting revisions were the final topic discussed with the homeowners.

DOT Permitting

- Saker pursuing the DOT permit for the revised ingress and egress configuration.
- As part of DOT's review, they required the addition of a new lane—a deceleration lane—from the jug handle to the ingress drive at the western end of Building B's parking field.
- This lane is intended to allow vehicles to enter and exit at that western point without disrupting Route 33 travel lanes.

- To accommodate the new lane, DOT required an additional 15 feet of right-of-way dedication.
 - When Building A was originally approved and constructed, DOT permits, dedications, and roadway improvements were already completed; however, the curb line is now being shifted back, necessitating this new dedication.
 - This additional 15-foot dedication affects several setback conditions along Route 33 and will be addressed in the planning testimony as part of the variance requests.
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- The applicant agreed to widen the curb radii and provide additional turning templates to demonstrate safe, simultaneous movements. This is to ensure that right-turnout and left-turn-in truck movements at the new Crossing Lane driveway would not conflict. These revisions will be completed to the Board Engineer's satisfaction as a condition of approval.
 - Cross-access and utility easements will be provided among all lots, including parking areas.
 - The Fire Bureau's prior comments were discussed, and the applicant will obtain Fire Bureau approval as a condition of any approval.
 - A review memo was also received from the Police Department. No plan changes were required; they noted only that the existing signals are in place and operating.
 - The freestanding identification sign at the Route 33 intersection will sit 10 feet above grade, directly opposite the jug handle. Earlier landscaping proposed around the sign was too tall, and during plan revisions it was mistakenly removed. Plantings will be restored with species under 10 feet to keep the sign visible while still providing buffering and improving the frontage. Low-growing species will be added in the gap, subject to Artheon's approval.
 - The refuse container facing drive aisle between Quick Check and Shoprite will be relocated to make sure front-loading truck can access.
 - A portion of the open fence along Crossing Lane—between Tulip Court and Route 33—was built closer to the front setback than permitted. The applicant will relocate sections of the fence and is requesting variance relief due to the landscape berm.
 - Mr. Rizzo stated that most of the technical comments have been addressed through prior discussions, and the applicant confirmed they will resolve any remaining items.
 - Mr. Rizzo explained to the Board that there is an additional change: the west-side access point has been redesigned. Earlier versions showed a ramp and then stairs down to Crossing Lane, which raised concerns about shopping carts and led to an interim bollard solution. The current plan now provides a combined ramp-and-stair configuration with a bend to maintain ADA compliance. Mr. Rizzo stated he has no objection to the updated design and finds it efficient and compliant.
 - Mayor McNaboe asked whether the existing berm at Route 33 and the jug handle—already planted—will also be irrigated. The applicant confirmed that irrigation for that berm was always part of the plan and remains unchanged.
 - All plantings will occur in conjunction with building construction. Once all approvals—including outside agency approvals—are secured, the agreement requires construction to begin promptly, with planting work following on a relatively quick timetable.
 - Sales displays will remain under the front roof and will not extend outward, and this condition is shown on the plans. No storage will be permitted behind the building because it would interfere with truck turning movements.
 - All trucks must utilize the loading docks, and Saker coordinates truck logistics to prevent any trucks from waiting to unload.
 - NJDOT has reviewed the initial access-permit submission and indicated that the proposed right-of-way dedication appears acceptable. Final plans are still being prepared and will be submitted, and while NJDOT has given a preliminary "looks good," formal approval is still required.
 - Crossing Lane will not be widened; it will remain 30 feet curb-to-curb.

- Some trees on the berm may be able to be relocated, and the applicant will attempt to save them, with the final decision depending on discussions with ShopRite and the project professionals.
- With the increased berm height and added landscaping, homeowners will still see the top of the building, but the berm's primary function is to screen all activity—cars, parking, and people.
- No pallets will be stored outside; they remain inside the trucks. No outdoor storage is proposed. Tractor-trailers will use the main loading docks, while smaller trucks will use a separate ramp. Truck logistics are coordinated so no trucks wait on-site, and truck parking is not permitted anywhere on the property

Planning Testimony on Variances

Mr. Borden explained that nine variances are required.

- Two new monument signs are requested—bringing the total to nine—to improve visibility and public safety at the Route 33 and Crossing Lane entrances.
- Six wall signs, reduced from the original 13–14. A pharmacy sign is required by state law.
- Another variance is needed to remove the third side of a previously approved three-sided identification sign, simplifying it while keeping the two sides facing Crossing Lane and Milhurst.
- Relief for on-site informational signs, including slightly larger directional and pickup signs intended to improve circulation and safety.
- The required parking setback along Route 33 is 50 feet, but Building B is proposed at 40 feet, while Buildings E and F continue to exceed the 50-foot requirement.
- The building meets the 120-foot setback, but the front covered walkway extends slightly closer, at about 115.7 feet from the right-of-way.
- The additional monument sign requires a 20-foot setback, but due to site constraints it is proposed at 10 feet. Although the right-of-way expansion reduces the measured setback, the sign's distance from the travel lanes remains unchanged.
- The required fence setback along Crossing Lane is 25 feet, but the applicant proposes a 15-foot setback. Also, the fence briefly touches the edge of Tulip Court at the gate, creating a zero-foot setback only at that small point
- ShopRite complies with the rule limiting outdoor display to the front overhang, but needs a variance because the ordinance allows only five one-week temporary sales events per year, while their displays would be available year-round.
- Mr. Borden explained that the applicant is seeking C-2 variance relief because the benefits of the deviations substantially outweigh any detriments, consistent with the *Kaufman* standard. He stated that all requested variances are de minimis, improve public safety—particularly through clearer signage, the added Route 33 lane, and the relocated fence—and represent a better zoning alternative for the property. He also noted that none of the variances affect light, air, or open space, since outdoor storage remains fully under the canopy, and therefore the proposal meets both the positive and negative criteria for C-2 relief.
- Ms. Beahm stated for the record that she has no objection to the revised sign package, noting that the applicant has effectively minimized sign clutter and that she supports the requested signage relief.
- Mr. Borden explained that one design waiver is needed for landscaping. The waiver is technical in nature because the site clearly has substantial landscaping (over 20%) despite the ordinance's restrictions.
- Handicap Parking – applicant is providing 20 parking spots which exceeds the state requirement.

Attorney Ron Gasiorowski introduced himself and his clients, noting that he represents the objectors known as MC Community Supermarket, LLC. He explained that his clients and Mr. Cardinale have worked closely and diligently to develop the revised plan now before the Board. He praised both the citizens and the developer, calling it one of the best examples he has seen of a collaborative effort to produce a project that benefits the community.

He introduced Mr. Jeff Stufsky, a member and spokesperson, had previously informed him that the group does not intend to object to the application other than noting some landscaping concerns. Mr. Stufsky was then asked to confirm this.

Jeff Stufsky was sworn in and identified himself as an owner in Four Seasons at Manalapan Crossing (17 Begonia Drive). He confirmed that he had contacted Mr. Gasiorowski years earlier regarding representation and had continued meeting with the applicant and its representatives over time. He agreed that the attorney’s representation to the Board—that the group had no objection to the plan except for one individual with a partial objection—was accurate.

Mr. Gasiorowski explained that he had previously spoken with Beth Sholom (59 Freesia Drive), who is present, and that she voiced an individual objection to the application. He stated she has every right to speak publicly or pursue legal action if she chooses, as he does not represent her individually. He asked that she come forward to confirm their prior conversations. After brief discussion with counsel, it was agreed to proceed, and the meeting transitioned into the public comment portion.

Public Comment

Ms. Sholom was sworn in and explained her position as part of the group represented by Mr. Gasiorowski. Ms. Sholom said she disagrees with the group’s position on truck routing. She lives on the quiet side of the community, paid more to be away from commercial activity, and does not want trucks using Crossing Lane or Millhurst Road. She said the decision was never voted on and felt that Mr. Gasiorowski was not representing everyone’s views.

Mr. Briigliodoro advised Ms. Sholom that her concerns regarding Mr. Gasiorowski and the group he represents were outside the Board’s purview but were noted for the record.

Mr. Gasiorowski followed up stating that if Ms. Sholom opposes the application, she has the right to retain counsel or file a prerogative-writ action should the Board approve it.

Mr. Rosenzweig, of 400 Crossing Lane and World War II Marine Corps veteran, was sworn in and stated that he relies on having a ShopRite nearby due to mobility challenges. He explained that he no longer drives and uses a walker and electric scooter provided by the VA. He said he and other residents look forward to a ShopRite within walking distance and noted that everyone who purchased homes there knew the area included a commercial strip.

Mr. Ruggiero, 57 Crocus Drive, a resident of Manalapan Crossing, was sworn in and stated that he and his wife were among the first buyers in the community and understood it was a commercial area. He said the revised plan is reasonable for residents and ShopRite. Addressing traffic, he explained that the truck-routing design was developed over several meetings to avoid unsafe movements near the rotary and reduce overall impact. Mr. Ruggiero also stated that he is one of the 92 members of the group and serves on its committee. He said he participated in developing the plan and believes it is the most reasonable option for the community. He added that residents purchased homes knowing the area was adjacent to a commercial zone, and that it is not selfish for some to want less traffic near their homes.

No one else came forward to speak so Chairwoman Kwaak closed public.

Mr. Briigliodoro outlined the conditions for the resolution: amended preliminary and final major site plan approval; a technical subdivision creating five lots; all variances and the single design waiver; compliance with the board engineer and planner reports; post-approval coordination on final landscaping; a maintenance bond; obtaining NJDOT approval before construction; compliance with the fire official’s report; entering a developer’s agreement; and allowing the technical subdivision to be perfected even if NJDOT has not yet issued its approval.

A motion was made by Mr. Jacobson and seconded by Mr. McNaboe to approve the Amended Preliminary and Final Site Plan and Technical Subdivision with all the conditions outlined by the Board Attorney, Mr. Briigliodoro.

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| Yes: | Fisher, Castronovo, Jacobson, Kwaak, McNaboe, Nelson, Pollifrone, Givlekian |
| No: | None |
| Absent: | Hogan |
| Abstain: | Brown, Kastell |
| Not Eligible: | None |

No one from the public came forward for any non-agenda items. Chairwoman Kwaak closed public.

Chairwoman Kwaak stated that the next meeting is set for August 27, 2026 at 7:00 PM. At approximately 9:10pm, she asked for a motion to adjourn and Committeeman Nelson offered the motion.

Nancy McGrath
Recording Secretary