MINUTES OF
PLANNING BOARD/BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
OF HIGH BRIDGE BOROUGH

Meeting Date: July 20, 2026 - **Meeting Time:** 7:30 P.M.
Meeting Location: 95 West Main Street, High Bridge, NJ 08829

1. CALL TO ORDER:
This is a regular meeting of the Planning/Zoning Board of the Borough of High Bridge. Adequate notice of this meeting has been given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act in that a Notice was published in The Star Ledger and the Hunterdon Review on January 13, 2026. Notice of and agenda for this meeting has also been posted on www.highbridge.org and posted on the bulletin board in Borough Hall.

2. FLAG SALUTE: Led by presiding officer.

3. ROLL CALL:
Brosnan, present; Conroy, absent; Koffman, present; Lee, absent; Mart, present; Musnuff, absent; Ryder, present; Epstein, present, Osborne, present. Also present were Board Attorney Kevin VanHise, Board Engineer, William Burr, Board Secretary, Barbara Kinsky and two members of the public.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** It is the policy of the Planning Board that all public comments on an issue shall be limited to 3 minutes per person and no person may make more than one (1) comment per subject. Comments may be made on any subject pertaining to Board issues. Comments pertaining to Public Hearings should be saved for that section of the agenda. No debating between residents. Comments should be addressed to the Chairman and Board members at the public microphone. NONE.

5. READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES: June 15, 2026.
Motion to dispense with the reading of the prior meetings' minutes:
Motion/Second: Mart/Brosnan Voice vote: Seven yes votes, motion passed.

Motion to approve June 15, 2026, meeting minutes. Motion/Second: Mart/Koffman
Brosnan, yes; Conroy, absent; Koffman, yes; Lee, absent; Mart, yes; Musnuff, absent; Ryder, yes; Suozzo, yes; Epstein, yes; Osborne, yes. Seven yes votes, motion passed

Board of Adjustment Meeting begins at this point.

6. BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT NEW BUSINESS:

Only those who voted in the affirmative can vote on the resolution.

Board Member Brosnan noted that the two proposed resolutions appeared identical. Board Attorney VanHise clarified that the resolutions differ in two key respects. The scope of variance relief requested varies between the two lots. The resolution for Lot 29 specifically conditions approval on the removal of an existing concrete pad to comply with impervious coverage calculations, a requirement not applicable to Lot 28. It was confirmed that apart from these lot-specific conditions, the remaining terms of the resolutions are substantially identical.

A. Motion to approve Resolution PB10-2026: **RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF HIGH BRIDGE PLANNING BOARD / ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT GRANTING A CRITICAL AREA DISTURBANCE VARIANCE FOR PROPERTY LOCATED ON BEAVERS STREET (BLOCK 24, LOT 28)**
Motion/Second: Mart/Brosnan

Brosnan, yes; Mart, yes; Musnuff, absent; Suozzo, yes; Osborne, yes; Regan, absent.

Four yes votes, motion passed.

B. Motion to approve Resolution PB11-2026: **RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF HIGH BRIDGE PLANNING BOARD / ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT GRANTING A CRITICAL AREA DISTURBANCE VARIANCE FOR PROPERTY LOCATED ON BEAVERS STREET (BLOCK 24, LOT 29)**
Motion/Second: Mart/Brosnan

Brosnan, yes; Mart, yes; Musnuff, absent; Suozzo, yes; Osborne, yes; Regan, absent.

Four yes votes, motion passed.

C. Public Hearing for PBapp-03-2026 and PBapp-02-2026, 12 Silverthorne Rd., High Bridge, NJ 08829, Blocks 15 Lot 22.02 for variance. Owner: Robert and Susan Haake

Motion to open public hearing: Motion/ Second: Mart/Brosnan
Brosnan, yes; Koffman, yes; Mart, yes; Musnuff; absent; Ryder, yes; Suozzo, yes; Epstein, yes; Osborne, yes. Seven yes votes, motion passed.

Board Attorney VanHise noted for the record that the notice of publication requirements for this application has been complied with, and the Board does have jurisdiction.

The following individuals were sworn in to provide testimony: Susan Haake and Bob Hakke.

The applicant, Ms. Haake, presented a request for a side yard setback variance for the property located at 12 Silverthorne Road in the R-2 zone district. She proposed a setback of approximately 23.3 feet where 30 feet is required. To accommodate a long-term stay in High Bridge, the applicant intends to construct a one-bedroom, one-bathroom addition to their current two-bedroom home that will match the existing architecture, face undeveloped land, and only be accessible through the interior of the house.

Addressing technical review concerns, the applicant noted that the addition will be situated in the only feasible location on the property. It would be located between the home and garage to align with the existing garage structure. The garage was built under a historical 20-foot setback rule. Furthermore, the applicant offered documentation confirming that the existing backyard septic system was originally designed to accommodate three bedrooms. This document was labeled Exhibit A-1. The applicant detailed that the proposed addition would contribute 308 square feet of impervious coverage, increasing the total coverage by 1.4% to 23.9%. Although the property is in an R-2 zone (requiring a 1.49-acre minimum lot size and 15% maximum impervious coverage), the lot is only 0.484 acres due to historically being part of a larger tract. The applicant noted that the site functions more like an R-3 zone, which requires a 0.34-acre minimum and permits 25% coverage. To support this, they provided the zoning map and updated coverage calculations for review. To minimize environmental impact, the addition will be constructed on piers over mostly flat terrain to allow for drainage beneath the structure, with gutters routing run-off to existing discharge points to prevent erosion. Finally, the applicant confirmed that no exterior lighting would be added and offered to replace an existing 14.5-inch caliper saucer magnolia which must be removed for construction. She would also plant two or more replacement trees elsewhere on the property.

Questions from the Board's Professionals and Board Members:

Board Engineer William Burr questioned the applicant about their history with the property, asking how long they had lived in the house and whether they had built it themselves. The applicant testified that they have resided at the property for 34 years, and clarified that the home was originally constructed by an architect who lived in it for roughly four years before selling. When asked if any lot coverage had been added or expanded during their residency, or if the garage and deck had changed, the applicant explained that the coverage has remained essentially the same. The garage and deck stand as originally built, with the only modification being the replacement of a set of hazardous steppingstones with a proper front sidewalk to improve safety along the long walk to the main entrance.

Mr. Burr then inquired if the proposed location was truly the only viable option based on the property's grade and topography. The applicant confirmed that the planned location is the only viable spot on the lot due to surrounding physical constraints, noting that the rear of the property is restricted by an elevated deck, while the opposite side is limited by a narrow yard and a propane tank. Furthermore, when asked if this was planned out previously, the applicant noted that the original architect had designed the site layout with the explicit intent of eventually enclosing that exact area to connect the house to the garage. Asked whether the addition would encroach closer to the property line than the garage, the applicant reassured the Board that it will not extend past the garage structure, which will remain the closest boundary point.

Mr. Burr addressed driveway access and lot coverage mitigation, asking if access would change, pointing out the driveway's large footprint, and asking about the 25-foot width on the plan. The applicant confirmed access to Silverthorne Road via the easement remains unchanged, clarifying that while the easement strip is 25 feet wide, the paved driveway is only 10 feet wide. Mr. Burr asked if any extra coverage could be removed to offset the addition, the applicant noted hardscape is already minimal; removing the sidewalk would leave no safe entrance, and the driveway width is required for access. Lastly, the applicant clarified that the addition is strictly a single-story structure containing only one bedroom and one bathroom, with no second story proposed.

Board Member Brosnan asked where the new roof leaders would direct runoff, the applicant explained that they will point toward the back of the yard, discharging toward an adjacent 10-acre, unbuildable wooded lot owned by High Bridge.

Vice Chairman Suozzo inquires about access and the applicant confirmed that entry will be strictly interior through a converted dining room window to create a single-floor layout for long-term accessibility. He also asked the applicant to confirm if any other locations were possible. The applicant reiterated that alternative sites are constrained by the backyard septic field and a propane tank near the opposite property line.

Board Member Mart asked for confirmation that this maintains the property's existing drainage flow toward the woods which the applicant confirmed. He also asked if any exterior lighting was being proposed. The applicant confirmed that no exterior lighting is necessary due to the adjacent woods and garage layout.

Motion to close the Public Hearing: Mart Second: Koffman Voice vote: Six yes votes, motion passed.

Before taking a vote, Board Member Brosnan asked for clarification that the variance grants relief for the proposed addition while permitting all existing coverage, including the sidewalk and driveway. Impervious coverage is to remain under the 25% zone limit.

Motion to approve PBapp-03-2026: Mart Second: Koffman

Brosnan: Yes, citing the addition's compliant setbacks, tree replacement plan, and the adjacent town-owned open space capable of handling excess runoff.

Koffman: Yes, complimenting the thorough application and its consideration for the borough and surrounding community.

Mart: Yes, stating that the addition aligns with the existing garage setback without further encroaching on the property line and noting that the ~2% increase in impervious coverage is minor.

Ryder: Yes.

Suozzo: Yes, concurring with previous statements and noting that the testimony and site surveys confirm the proposed location is the only viable option.

Epstein: Yes, echoing previous remarks on the unobtrusive design and praising the applicant's thorough presentation.

Osborne: Yes, for all reasons previously stated.

Seven yes votes, passed.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS: It is the policy of the Planning Board that all public comments on an issue shall be limited to one (1) minute per person and no person may make more than one (1) comment per subject. Comments may be made on any subject pertaining to Board issues. Comments pertaining to Public Hearings should be saved for that section of the agenda. No debating between residents. Comments should be addressed to the Chairman and Board members at the public microphone. None, no public present.

8. ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn: Koffman Second: Mart Voice vote: Six yes votes, motion passed.

Next Meeting Date: August 17, 2026
Meeting Location: 95 West Main Street, High Bridge, NJ 08829
Meeting Time: 7:30 P.M.