

**MINUTES**  
**RED BANK PLANNING BOARD**  
**April 08, 2026**

The Red Bank Planning Board held a public meeting on April 08, 2026, at 7:03 PM in the Municipal Building, first floor, Council Chambers, 90 Monmouth Street, Red Bank, New Jersey.

Chair Dan Mancuso called the meeting to order at 7:03PM. A call showed the following members were in attendance:

Mayor Portman	Absent	Megan Massey	Absent
Dan Mancuso	Present	Louis DiMento	Present
Shawna Ebanks	Present	Kristina Bonatakis	Present
Frederick Stone	Absent	Barbara Boas	Present
Itzel Hernandez	Present	Wilson Beebe	Present
Brian Parnagain	Absent		

Marc Leckstein, Esq., Board Attorney; Jacqueline Dirmann, P.E., Board Engineer; and Sharleen Rodrigo, Board Secretary, were also present.

The Chair read the Open Public Meeting Statement Act. In addition, an adequate and electronic notice of time, place, and matter was posted in two newspapers, the Borough Clerk's Office, the Borough's website, outside the council chambers, and on the front door of Borough Hall.

**Regular Meeting Minutes: March 11, 2026**

Motion:        Approved as presented  
Moved by:     Dan Mancuso  
Seconded by:  Shawna Ebanks  
Ayes:         All in favor  
Nays:         None  
Abstained:    None

**Ordinance Referrals – Master Plan Consistency**

Ordinance Amending Chapter 490, Planning and Development Regulation Relating to Section 118 Outdoor Storage Materials.

A motion was made by Shawna Ebanks and Dan Mancus seconded to refer the ordinance to Mayor and Council.

Motion:        Approved as presented  
Moved by:     Dan Mancuso  
Seconded by:  Shawna Ebanks  
Ayes:         All in favor  
Nays:         None

Abstained: None

### **Extension of Approval P15253: 199 Riverside Avenue**

Reginald Jenkins, Esq., representing The Garden at Red Bank, appeared before the Board to request an extension of the applicant's site plan approval for a retail cannabis business. The application received site plan approval in 2024. The applicant applied to the Borough for a retail cannabis license; however, all licenses were issued, and so the applicant is currently in litigation with the Borough on the distribution of the license. Therefore, the applicant is requesting an extension of the approval until the litigation is settled.

Marc Leckstein questioned whether the applicant would be ready to construct the building if the Borough settled today and granted the license. Mr. Jenkins responded that the applicant would be well positioned to do so.

Mr. Leckstein asked whether the applicant was pursuing DEP approvals. Mr. Jenkins responded that the applicant was in communication with the DEP; however, he was unsure of the status.

Mr. Leckstein advised that the site plan approval is independent of the Borough cannabis licensing process. The applicant could proceed to demolish the existing structure, remediate the site, and construct the approved building without the cannabis license, as the use is permitted in the zone.

Therefore, he advised the Board that they should not vote on the extension until the applicant provides information on the status of the DEP and DOT applications, along with any other outside agency permits required. The applicant will provide documentation of the agencies' status before their next appearance.

Chair Mancuso asked about the property's ownership, and Mr. Jenkins confirmed the applicant remains a contract purchaser but does not hold title. The purchaser contract is extended on an ongoing basis depending on the results of the court proceedings.

The site plan approval is protected in perpetuity unless the Borough Council amends the zoning ordinance.

The applicant will return before the Board on June 10, 2026, with the requested documents.

### **26-28 Shrewsbury Avenue Rehabilitation Plan Presentation**

Susan Favate, BFJ Planning, presented the revisions made to the Rehabilitation Plan based on the comments from the public and Board on April 8, 2026.

- Overall Building Design (p. 8, 9, 12, and 14)
  - Language has been adjusted that the final design in submitted site plans shall be “generally consistent” with the renderings included in the Rehabilitation Plan. The previous language used “substantially similar.” The change is meant to provide the Planning Board with some flexibility in its review, and p. 14 clearly states that the

Board will have discretion over final designs for consistency with the Rehabilitation Plan.

- Other Design Details (p. 8, 9, and 11)
  - The discussion of breaking up building mass is proposed to be enhanced with the requirement of “meaningful” vertical breaks in building facades at least every 55 feet. This is in addition to required meaningful breaks in roof lines and/or cornices.
  - The use of reflective materials or colors is discouraged.
  - The language on signage has been adjusted to clarify that the sizes provided are maximums.
  - The visual impact of rooftop equipment and structures is required to be mitigated through specialized paint or similar camouflaging materials.
  - Detail has been added on the specific building elevations that must be provided as part of site plan submission: the view from the Swimming River that includes the Galleria building, and the Shrewsbury Avenue streetscape from the north and south.
- Landscaping, Lighting and Public Walkway (p. 9, 10, and 11)
  - A requirement has been added that the plant schedule must comply with Borough ordinance.
  - A requirement has been added that the Environmental Commission will have the opportunity for an advisory review of the landscaping and lighting plans.
  - Language has been added that public seating and similar amenities should be provided as feasible, with illustrative images of how these features can be creatively incorporated into the landscape. Language has also been added reiterating that the walkway must be designed to be open and welcoming to the general public.
- Sustainability and Green Building Design (p. 10)
  - The language has been clarified to indicate that the green building strategies listed as strategies to achieve the required sustainable/green design elements, not merely encouraged.

At the April 8<sup>th</sup> meeting the Board approved the plan subject to the revisions and referred the plan to Mayor and Council. A motion was made by Wilson Bebee to affirm the revisions of the plans and refer the final draft of the plan to the Governing Body, second by Shawna Ebanks.

Ayes: Shawna Ebanks, Kristina Bonatakis, Dan Mancuso, Louis DiMento, Barbara Boas, Wilson Beebe, Itzel Hernandez.

Nays: None

Abstain: None

**P16478: 187 Riverside Avenue; Block 4.01, Lot 1-3**

Edward McKenna, Esq., represented the applicant, All Things Vic LLC.

The following witnesses were sworn in for the presentations:

Tyler Ms. Sandlass, R.A – Mancini Duffy Architects, LLC  
Victor Rallo, Principal - All Things Vic, LLC  
Robert Freud, P.E, P.P -Dynamic Engineering Services, PC  
John McCormack, P.E, PTOE - Dynamic Traffic, LLC

Applicant Exhibits A-1 to A-9 were marked and presented:

A-1 Preliminary & Final Site Plan prepared by Dynamic Engineering (Robert Freud, P.E.), dated February 16, 2026

A-2 Topographic Survey

A-3 Architectural Plans prepared by William Mandera, dated April 7, 2026

A-4 Stormwater Management Report

A-5 Traffic Impact and Parking Assessment Report

A-6 LSRP Letter from Slack Engineering, dated April 8, 2026

A-7 Aerial Map Exhibit, dated April 8, 2026

A-8 Quick Claim Deed for Lot 26.02

A-9 Revised Color-Rendered Site Plan, dated April 8, 2026

Board Exhibits B-1 to B-3 were marked and presented:

B-1 T&M Engineering Review Letter, dated March 25, 2026

B-2 Shade Tree Commission Comments, dated March 26, 2026

B-3 Environmental Commission Comments, dated March 30, 2026

Public Witness Exhibits W-1 to W-2 were marked and presented:

W-1 Photograph of existing site conditions

W-2 Rendering of proposed development

Mr. McKenna explained that the application seeks preliminary and final site plan approval to convert the former Bridge Avenue Gas Station at the corner of Route 35 (Riverside Avenue) and Bridge Avenue from a gasoline service station to a restaurant. The proposed restaurant use is permitted in the BR-1 zone. The applicant also owns and operates Birravino restaurant on an adjacent property.

Tyler Sandlass presented professional testimony on the architecture of the proposed renovations. The existing principal structure will be maintained, with minor modifications to exterior facade materials and additional changes to accommodate restaurant operations.

The building is approximately 1,700 square feet. The floor plan will include a reception area with support spaces, an ADA bathroom, a janitor's closet, a dishwashing area, and a main dining room with a small pizza oven kitchen, bar seating, and general unfixed seating. The most notable exterior material changes are on the two facades facing the corner: a brick system for the majority of the facade and Cor-Ten panels at the corner. The wall signage will comply with signage requirements. Proposed ground-mounted signage at the corner is slightly outside the property line.

Behind the principal structure will be a walk-in cooler and an enclosed trash area, the only elements added outside the existing building envelope, located at the southeast corner. The trash enclosure is proposed to be approximately 6 feet wide and 7 feet deep to accommodate four roller-bin-type trash containers, located toward the rear corner of the site. The existing garage doors will be retained and repurposed as part of the aesthetic. The building footprint will not change.

Chair Mancuso asked whether there was a liquor license for the property Mr. McKenna confirmed there was. Chair Mancuso followed up with whether the license will be shared with Birravino and whether that was permissible. Mr. McKenna confirmed it was shared and that it is permitted.

Robert Freud provided professional engineering and planning testimony. Mr. Freud presented that the subject property is located at the prominent corner of Route 35/Riverside Avenue and Bridge Avenue. The lot size is approximately 21,300 square feet in the BR-1 zone. The proposed restaurant use is permitted. The existing structure is a one-story building of approximately 1,700 square feet. An existing 400-square-foot garage in the southeast corner of the lot is used for storage. The entire site is currently paved with no meaningful landscaping other than one sycamore tree along the Bridge Avenue frontage and an existing billboard in the parking lot. A rooftop billboard was previously removed.

Mr. Freud added that the environmental cleanup for the site is substantially complete per the LSRP. Monitoring wells have been installed, and a No Further Action letter from the DEP is anticipated upon completion of monitoring.

The project requires a front-yard setback on Riverside Avenue of 19.4 feet, where 25 feet is required; the rear-yard setback to the east property line is approximately 1 foot, where 25 feet is required. Both conditions exist today, and the building will remain the same. Including Lot 26.02 in this application improves the rear yard setback by approximately 11 feet. Unoccupied open space currently stands at zero percent and will be improved to 16.5 percent, satisfying the 15 percent ordinance requirement and eliminating that variance.

Mr. Beebe asked if Birravino owned the parking lot between the fence and the adjacent residence. Victor Rallo responded that the three lots that make up the gas station site are all owned by All Things Vic LLC, and the chain link fence previously separated Birravino property from the gas station lots. He clarified that Birravino owns none of the lots in this application. Mr. Rallo confirmed that all three lots, including Lot 26.02, are owned by All Things Vic LLC and are consolidated under a single ownership.

Chair Mancuso asked whether Lot 26.02 was part of this application. Mr. Freud confirmed it was. Lot 26.02 is an 11-foot-wide alleyway running north-south between the Birravino property and Lots 1 through 3. Jacqueline Dirmann noted that the site plan appeared to show only a portion of Lot 26.02, whereas the lot runs from Riverside Avenue to Brower Place. Mr. Leckstein added that if the lot was part of the application, it had to be shown in its entirety on the site plan. As a

condition of approval, the site plans would be revised to include the entire Lot 26.02, not just the portion affected by the site improvements.

Ms. Dirmann asked about the access easements for the adjoining properties that use Lot 26.02. Mr. McKenna confirmed the applicant was prepared to grant permanent easements to the owners of the two adjoining properties. The law office at the corner of Bridge Avenue and Morford Place accesses their lot from Morford Place and has installed a curb across the rear five years ago, so it no longer uses the alleyway. The other property requires access to their garage from Lot 26.02 alleyway. Mr. Rallo currently rents the garage from the property owner.

Mr. Leckstein asked whether the applicant was willing to grant the easement to both Lots 4 and 5, regardless of how the property owners access their property. Mr. Rallo replied yes.

Gary Carpenter, 55 North Bridge Avenue, stated that he has owned the property for over 25 years and the alleyway had historically been used for rear access to adjacent properties. He questioned the ownership of Lot 26.02. Mr. McKenna responded that the applicant had conducted a title search and found that no taxes were being paid on the property and negotiated with the Borough to gain ownership of the property with a quick claim deed.

Mr. Carpenter responded that he would accept the applicant's offer of an easement for access to Lot 26.02. As a condition of approval, the applicant must offer easements to Lots 4 and 5, and that refusal by either property owner would not affect the approval.

Mr. Freud explained that the parking lot would be shifted 5 feet north of the southern property line. There will be a narrow-landscaped island around the existing billboard.

A 6-foot-high solid vinyl fence will replace the existing chain link along the south property line. Landscaping will be provided along the edge of the parking spaces.

The existing driveway and curb cut on Bridge Avenue will remain the same. The pavement will be pulled back from the frontage and defined with curbing to meet the 18-foot frontage buffer requirement. The large sycamore tree south of the driveway remains. The applicant is seeking a waiver for the driveway to preserve the sycamore tree.

On Riverside Avenue, the 130-foot depressed curb frontage will be closed to vehicular access. Pavement will be pulled back from the right-of-way line, and landscaping will be provided along the full length of the property. Bollards will be installed at the edge of the outdoor seating area for patron safety.

Vehicular access from Lot 26.02 onto Riverside Avenue will be closed with signage and a planter box. The alleyway is a one-way entrance into the parking lot from Brower Place. Signage will be posted inside the parking lot, facing the alleyway, to discourage vehicles from exiting there.

The intersection driveway at the northwest corner of Bridge Avenue will be closed. Any damaged curb or sidewalk on Bridge Avenue will be repaired. The remaining single driveway centered on Bridge Avenue is the only proposed vehicular access. The site can accommodate a box truck, and deliveries will be coordinated with Birravino. Pedestrian access will be provided from Bridge Avenue via the accessible stall, and from Riverside Avenue via Lot 26.02 into the outdoor patio area.

The ordinance requires 10 spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area, resulting in a requirement of 17 spaces, and the applicant proposes 17 spaces, including one ADA space. The ADA space will be revised to 12 feet, with a 5-foot loading zone, to comply with ADA standards and the Borough ordinance. The project is exempt from EV charging requirements as the parking lot is not being reconstructed and falls below the 25-space commercial threshold.

The applicant is requesting waivers for parking in the front yard parking in the front yard (existing condition); driveway setback from intersection on Bridge Avenue (existing condition, sycamore retention); 18-foot safety island buffer deficiency on Riverside Avenue side (minor); and street tree spacing (applicant proposes trees at 20-30 foot spacing rather than the required 40-50 feet, resulting in more trees).

Rain gardens are proposed on the island adjacent to the ADA space and on the billboard island, with narrow, depressed curbing to allow sheet flow from the parking lot for ground recharge. The project is below the major development stormwater threshold. Net impervious area will be reduced, resulting in less stormwater runoff.

The existing standalone sign structure and base at the corner will remain and will be refaced to show the restaurant name and a "Welcome to Red Bank" graphic. The existing sign is 54 square feet and 20 feet high, both of which are pre-existing nonconformities. The applicant proposes no increase in size or height and will maintain internal illumination. The existing sign sits slightly within the right-of-way.

Mr. Freud provided professional planning testimony stating that the project satisfies three purposes of the MLUL: light, air, and open space-impervious coverage is being reduced and open space increased; promoting free flow of traffic -all Riverside Avenue access is being eliminated and the at-intersection Bridge Avenue driveway closed, reducing access to a single point; and promoting a desirable visual environment-adaptive reuse of an existing building with aesthetic improvements and landscaping where almost none currently exists. Mr. Freud testified that there was no substantial detriment to the public good in granting the variances and waivers, and that they will not substantially impair the intent and purpose of the zone plan.

Ms. Dirmann asked whether the landscape island will have full-height curbing on the applicant's property to contain plantings and serve as an additional barrier to protect patrons. Mr. Freud responded no because the proposed bollards are spaced 5 feet apart and would provide the necessary safety protection. He added that installing a full-height curb before the Borough's grant-funded streetscape improvements could create grade conflicts.

Chair Mancuso asked if the Borough's street improvement grant would address the depressed curb on Riverside Avenue. Mr. Freud confirmed that it would. Chair Mancuso added that, as a condition of approval or through a developer's agreement, whether the Borough or the applicant completed the work, there should be a real curb along Riverside Avenue fronting the property, not a depressed curb, before the restaurant opens with outdoor dining. Additionally, if the Borough does not proceed with the grant, the applicant should agree to install the curbing.

The applicant will revise the site plans to reflect the 5-foot shift of the parking spaces and the narrowing of the billboard island.

Mr. Leckstein asked whether the landscaped island would still be needed if the billboard was removed, noting that a pending settlement in a Zoning Board case could result in its removal. Mr. Freud explained that the island would remain because it separates two 24-foot drive aisles, which are required for backing out of parking spaces and for two-way traffic. The applicant confirmed that the island would remain regardless of the billboard.

The Board took a break. A roll was called confirming the following members present: Kristina Bonatakis, Luis DiMento, Wilson Beebe, Dan Mancuso, Barbara Boas, and Shawna Ebanks.

John McCormack provided traffic engineering testimony. All vehicular access on Riverside Avenue will be eliminated, closing existing open frontage.

On Bridge Avenue, access to the site is proposed via the existing southerly full-movement driveway along Bridge Avenue and the existing connection to Brower Place. 'Do Not Block the Box' signage and striping could be provided along Bridge Avenue to improve the operation of the site driveway further.

The Brower Place alleyway will become a one-way entrance to the parking lot, with do-not-enter signage facing into the lot to discourage exit through the alleyway. A planter box will be installed to prevent any vehicle passage between the buildings toward Riverside Avenue.

Mr. McCormack added that there is a proposed Bodman Place traffic signal application with DOT. The signal will include streetscape improvements along the full Riverside Avenue frontage, including in front of Birravino. The next revision of the DOT plans will extend the streetscape curb and sidewalk from Lot 26.02 to Bridge Avenue.

Ms. Dirmann asked whether the applicant agreed to the condition that, if neither the Borough grant nor the DOT traffic signal project results in curbing being installed along Riverside Avenue, the applicant would be responsible for installing it. McCormack asked that it not be a condition of the Certificate of Occupancy, given the uncertainty of the timeline, noting that the process could take years.

Chair Mancuso had concerns about the restaurant opening without the curbing and bollards in place, but acknowledged that a curb alone would not stop an errant vehicle and that the bollards at 5-foot spacing would provide meaningful patron protection. The Board agreed that bollards and landscaping along the Riverside Avenue edge will be installed before Certificate of Occupancy, and that if neither the Borough grant nor the DOT project results in a proper curb being installed, the applicant shall be responsible for that work.

Ms. Dirmann recommended restricting the Bridge Avenue driveway to left-in and right-in/right-out only. Mr. McCormack requested full movement access including left turns out, noting the driveway is existing, the restaurant will generate significantly less traffic than the former gas station, and the traffic signal phasing creates significant gaps in southbound traffic on Bridge Avenue. Chair Mancuso expressed concern about southbound vehicles approaching the bridge at speed and failing to see the driveway in time. Mr. McKenna asked that, as a condition of approval, Traffic Safety review the plans to determine whether the proposed access movement is safe. If Traffic Safety determines that the movement is unsafe, the applicant will restrict the exit to right-turn only with proper signage, without returning to the Board for relief.

Shawna Ebanks asked about whether a standalone sign will be internally illuminated. She expressed concern that future condo residents in the adjacent Saxon building would have the restaurant sign lit from the inside directly outside their windows. Ms. Ebanks asked when they would be turned off. Mr. Leckstein cautioned the Board that specifying closing times as conditions of approval would restrict the business's operating hours and suggested instead that the freestanding sign be required to shut off one hour after closing. Mr. Rallo confirmed that the restaurant name panel would use halo lighting and agreed that the lighting would be on a timer.

Kristina Bonatakis asked whether the Welcome to Red Bank portion of the sign design should be reviewed by the Visual Arts Committee. She acknowledged that the site is a gateway and that the design should be carefully considered, as it is mentioned in the Master Plan. Mr. Rallo agreed, stating that whatever design the Borough provides for that panel, he will have fabricated and installed. The restaurant name panel would remain the applicant's decision.

Mr. Carpenter commented that there is no sidewalk along the 11-foot stretch of Lot 26.02 at the Bridge Avenue entry. He explained that when Birravino developed its property in 2005, the town required 110 feet of sidewalk, and when he developed his property in 2001, the town required 130 feet of sidewalk. Still, the 11-foot alleyway between the two properties had no owner and was never improved. The grade at the apron does not comply with ADA recommendations. He asked that the applicant extend the concrete apron to match the width of the adjacent sidewalks and provide a level compliant surface. Mr. Rallo agreed to extend the apron and re-grade as needed.

Mr. Carpenter also noted that the existing sign location at the corner was already occupied by a telephone pole and pedestrian signal button, and that the sign may be in the right-of-way where a sidewalk should be, though he acknowledged it may need to be elevated due to the sight

triangle. He stated overall the project was very positive and that Birravino had been a good neighbor over the years.

Eric Wokas, 53 Leroy Place, provided the Board with photographs of the existing site and the proposed development (Exhibits W-1 and W-2) and stated that, while the proposal was an improvement, he did not feel it was sufficient for a gateway location. He commented that future condo residents in the adjacent Saxon building would have the internally lit restaurant sign directly outside their windows; the external, downward-facing lighting is preferred over internal illumination for the standalone sign; a color temperature of approximately 3,000K is preferable to reduce blue light; the up-down wall sconces on the building should be replaced with downward-facing fixtures only; and the sign at 20 feet high was too prominent for a gateway location and he did not believe a freestanding sign was necessary given the building signage and word-of-mouth nature of the business. He presented a photograph of a sign in Atlantic Highlands on Route 36 as an example of a lower-profile gateway signage approach. Mr. McKenna responded that the sign design was the result of discussions with Borough officials and reflected what the Borough wanted.

A motion was made by Shawna Ebanks and seconded by Wilson Beebe to approve the application as present.

Ayes: Shawna Ebanks, Kristina Bonatakis, Dan Mancuso, Louis DiMento, Barbara Boas,  
Wilson Beebe

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Shawna Ebanks motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Dan Mancuso seconded.

Ayes: All in favor

Nays: None

Abstained: None

The meeting adjourned at 9:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sharleen Rodrigo  
Planning Board Secretary