

MINUTES
RED BANK PLANNING BOARD
June 10, 2026

The Red Bank Planning Board held a public meeting on June 10, 2026, at 7:00 PM in the Municipal Building, first floor, Council Chambers, 90 Monmouth Street, Red Bank, New Jersey.

Chair Daniel Mancuso called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM. A roll call showed the following members were in attendance:

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

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

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: May 13, 2026

Motion: Approved as presented
Moved by: Barbara Boas
Seconded by: Kristina Bonatakis
Ayes: Shawna Ebanks, Kristina Bonatakis, Dan Mancuso, Barbara Boas, Frederick Stone
Nays: None
Abstained: Louis DiMento

Resolution of Approval: P15555: 26 Drs. James Parker Boulevard; Block 75, Lot 124.01

Motion: Approved as presented
Moved by: Dan Mancuso
Seconded by: Shawna Ebanks
Ayes: Shawna Ebanks, Kristina Bonatakis, Dan Mancuso, Barbara Boas, Frederick Stone
Nays: None
Abstained: Megan Massey, Louis DiMento

P16248: 15 East Leonard Street; Block 72, Lot 30.01

Edward McKenna, Esq. represented the applicant, Verdant 15, LLC.

The following witness was sworn in for the presentation:

Christopher Horning – Management Service Operator, Verdant 15, LLC

Applicant Exhibits A-1 to A-2 were marked and presented:

- A-1 Minor Site Plan prepared by Andrew R. Stockton, P.E., L.S., of Eastern Civil Engineering, LLC, dated September 24, 2021, last revised July 28, 2023, consisting of six (6) sheets.
- A-2 Architectural Plan entitled “Building B Renovations – 15 East Leonard Street”, prepared by Hybrid Tech, LLC, undated, consisting of 11 sheets.

Board Exhibits B-1 to B-4 were marked and presented:

- B-1 Resolution No. 2023-04 Granting Minor Site Plan Approval
- B-2 T&M Engineering Review Letter dated May 29, 2026
- B-3 Environmental Commission Comments
- B-4 Shade Tree Commission Comments date June 2, 2026

Mr. McKenna explained that the applicant is seeking minor site plan approval to operate a cannabis extraction and manufacturing facility in addition to the existing cultivation operations at the site. The site received site plan approval from the Board in 2023. Mr. Leckstein added that the existing approved building and site plan remain unchanged and that the application is limited to modifying the approved use to add extraction and manufacturing. No variances were required.

Mr. McKenna noted two outstanding items from prior approval: trees had not yet been planted, and the access road had not been paved. The applicant agreed that trees would be planted or a contribution made to the Borough’s Shade Tree Trust Fund, whichever the Board preferred, and that the road would be paved prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. McKenna clarified that the applicant currently operates under a Temporary Certificate of Occupancy, and that a bond remains in place covering the outstanding improvements.

The site was operational for cultivation only under the 2023 approval, and that the application before the Board was solely to add extraction and manufacturing as an additional use. Shawna Ebanks noted that resolution compliance from the 2023 approval was completed and construction permits were issued but the improvements under the performance guarantee such as the road had not been paved and the trees had not been planted.

Mr. Leckstein asked whether the building had a Certificate of Occupancy issued by the Borough. Mr. McKenna confirmed that a CO had been issued under the prior operator, whose license had since been surrendered and revoked by the state. Mr. Leckstein clarified that the Borough's local cannabis board had not recommended a new license for cultivation to the new operator to the Governing Body, and Council's resolution of support does not mean that they were issued a Class 1 cannabis license.

Mr. Leckstein asked Ms. Dirmann what outstanding items remained under the prior approval. Ms. Dirmann confirmed that paving, landscaping, and the generator installation were all still outstanding and that the bond placed under the prior operator remained in place to cover those items. The applicant agreed that as a condition of approval, a full Certificate of Occupancy would not be issued until all outstanding improvements were completed. Mr. Leckstein directed the applicant to follow up with the Borough regarding the issuing of the cultivation license and completing the appropriate steps.

Christopher Horning provided testimony on the manufacturing operation of cannabis business. He will be managing the day-to-day operations at Verdant 15. The facility would produce a solventless rosin product using a cold water washing and mechanical pressing process. No solvents, butane, CO₂, hexane, or other volatile chemicals would be used. The process involves rinsing cannabis trimmings in cold water using mesh bags, then pressing the resulting material between metal plates to extract oil. The process is not loud and poses no explosion risk.

Mr. Horning described a negative vacuum system identical to the one installed at Neptune's Garden. Air enters the building through a filtered duct with an MV-13 filter and a backdraft louver. Interior fans draw air through a pre-filter and activated carbon filter before exhausting it from the building. The negative pressure prevents any unfiltered air from escaping through gaps in the building envelope. Mr. Leckstein noted that the odor control system would be subject to the Board Engineer's review.

Mr. Horning added that the existing security measures approved under the 2023 resolution, including a gate, alarms, cameras, diversion prevention, and a vault, would remain unchanged. Dan Mancuso asked whether there was barbed wire on the fences and Mr. Horning confirmed there was not.

The typical working hours would be 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, with the facility available until 8:00 PM for emergencies. Two full-time employees would operate the manufacturing lab, with Mr. Horning and his partner overseeing the operation daily.

No trucks would access the site. Deliveries would be made using small vans, such as a Dodge ProMaster City or Sprinter van, consistent with the previously approved operation.

Jacqueline Dirmann asked about relationship between the cultivation and manufacturing uses. Mr. Horning confirmed that all material processed in the manufacturing building would originate from the on-site cultivation operation. Trimmings and byproduct from cultivation would move from the vault in the cultivation building to the manufacturing lab, be processed into product, and return to the vault. No outside plant material would be brought in.

Megan Massey asked whether the manufacturing use would have any negative impact on potential future residential development adjacent to the site near the train station. Mr. Horning confirmed there would be no noise or odor impact, and that no smell or sound would be detectable outside the building.

Ms. Ebanks asked about energy capacity and whether operating both the cultivation and manufacturing uses simultaneously would create any issues given that energy capacity had been a concern for the site previously. Mr. Horning answered that the manufacturing operation would use approximately 100 amps or less, which is minimal given that each building on the site has 1,200 amps of available capacity. Overall energy consumption would be lower than what the prior operator had planned, as the current applicant uses fewer grow lights.

Eric Wokas, 53 Leroy Place, asked whether anyone had visited the Neptune facility to observe the operation. Mr. Horning answered there were no customers permitted at the site, no smoking on the premises, and the facility was not open to the public. However, if the Board members would like to tour the facility, he will make arrangements.

Mr. Leckstein asked if that the applicant would comply with all conditions of the 2023 resolution and the 2026 T&M Engineering Review Letter. McKenna confirmed the applicant would comply.

Ms. Dirmann went through the comments on the Environmental Commission Letter. The applicant agreed to submit a landscaping plan for the Board Engineer's review consistent with the prior approval. Stormwater was not an issue. The applicant confirmed the existing LED fixtures were controllable and would look into whether the color temperature could be adjusted from 3,000K to 2,700K as requested. Ms. Dirmann and Chair Mancuso noted the site had been operating without lighting complaints from adjacent residential properties and that the standard spillover requirement is 0.5 foot-candles at the property line, not 0.1 as stated in the Environmental Commission letter, which appeared to be a typographical error.

A motion was made by Dan Mancuso and seconded by Shawna Ebanks to approve the application.

Ayes: Shawna Ebanks, Kristina Bonatakis, Dan Mancuso, Louis DiMento, Barbara Boas, Megan Massey, Frederick Stone, Itzel Hernandez

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Ordinance Referrals – Master Plan Consistency Review

Ordinance 2026-17: Amending Chapter 490, Planning and Development Regulation Relating to Section 55 Historic Districts/Sites Regulations and Procedure

A motion was made by Shawna Ebanks and seconded by Dan Mancuso to find the ordinance consistent with the Master Plan and refer it to Mayor and Council.

Ayes: All in favor
Nays: None
Abstained: Frederick Stone

Susan Viscome, 25 Cedar Street, asked whether the designation of the Red Bank Middle School as a local historic landmark would require the school to undergo additional review for future exterior changes. Shawna Ebanks responded that exterior changes visible from the street would require review by the Historic Preservation Commission going forward. Ms. Viscome followed up with whether the designation includes the Board of Education building. Ms. Ebanks replied that if the office was located on the same lot, it would be included in the designation.

Ordinance 2026-18: Amending the Borough's Planning and Development Regulations to Repeal and Replace Sections of Chapter 490

Chair Mancuso recommended that Mayor and Council consider reducing the side yard and rear yard setbacks for ADUs, noting that 8 feet was excessive.

A motion was made by Dan Mancuso and seconded by Shawna Ebanks to find the ordinance consistent with the Master Plan and refer it to Mayor and Council, with the recommendation that the ADU setback requirements be reconsidered.

Ayes: All in favor
Nays: None
Abstained: None

Ordinance 2026-20: Amending the Borough Code to Promote the Use of Native Plants and to Prohibit the Planting of Invasive Species in Connection with Land Use Applications

A motion was made by Shawna Ebanks and seconded by Dan Mancuso to find the ordinance consistent with the Master Plan and refer it to Mayor and Council.

Ayes: All in favor
Nays: None

Abstained: None

A motion was made by Shawna Ebanks and seconded by Dan Mancuso to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 PM.

Ayes: All in favor

Nays: None

Abstained: None

Respectfully submitted,
Sharleen Rodrigo
Planning Board Secretary