

MINUTES
BOROUGH OF LAVALLETTE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING BOARD
Wednesday, December 17, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.



ROLL CALL:

Alex Barletta – present
John Bennett – absent
Anthony Cataline – present
Mary Chyb – present

Jennifer DeRienzo – present
Joanne Filippone – present
Jennifer Hartman-Sica – absent
Vincent Marino – present

Joseph Palinsky – present
Thomas Restaino – present
Mark Speaker - absent

Also Present: Mr. T. Kunz, Esq. and Michael Goldstein, PE, PP, CFM

Flag Salute: Chairman Cataline

Public Notice Announcement:

This is the Borough of Lavallette Planning Board Regular meeting of December 17, 2025. Adequate notice of this meeting has been given as required by Chapter 231 Public Law 1975, commonly known as "The Sunshine Law." The date, time and place of this meeting was posted on the bulletin board located in the Borough Hall Clerks Office at 1306 Grand Central Ave., filed with the Borough Clerk, and supplied to the Official Borough newspapers, the Ocean Star and the Asbury Park Press.

This meeting is a judicial proceeding. Any questions or comments must be limited to issues that are relevant to what the Board may legally consider in reaching a decision and decorum appropriate to a judicial hearing must be maintained at all times.

Public Hearings:

Application #11-2025, 702 Grand Central Avenue, Benny D'Aloisio, Block 34.01 Lot 102

A. Pagano, Esq, attorney for the applicant, introduced the application for a change of use at the property formerly occupied by Rite Aid. The proposal is to convert the building into a restaurant, a permitted use in the B-2 business zone. The applicant presented three witnesses: an engineer, an architect, and the applicant himself.

M. Hockenbury, the applicant's professional engineer and planner, was sworn in and provided testimony.

- The property is a 10,000 square-foot corner lot at Grand Central Avenue and Reese Avenue.
- The existing building has two minor, pre-existing bulk non-conformities related to front setbacks, which are off by "an inch or two."
- The proposal includes adding outdoor seating under an awning along the east and north sides of the building and constructing a new trash enclosure.
- The application requires four variances: two for the pre-existing de minimis setbacks, one for off-street parking as none is existing or proposed, and one to permit outdoor seating along Reese Avenue.
- M. Hockenbury noted that a lack of on-site parking is common for businesses in the area, citing the B&B stores, Crab's Claw, Dunkin, and Jersey Mike's as examples. He also stated that other restaurants, such as Lava Java, Castaways, Little Mia's, Salty's Ice Cream, and The Oven Pizza, have been permitted to have side-street seating.

- In his professional opinion, the benefits of activating the vacant building with a permitted use operated by a successful local resident would substantially outweigh any potential negative impacts.

The board and its professionals discussed procedural matters. M. Goldstein, the Board Engineer, recommended that the board grant a waiver from the requirement of an engineer-prepared site plan, as the proposed site improvements were minimal and an architectural plan was provided. It was confirmed that all proposed improvements would be located on the applicant's private property and not in the public right-of-way.

J. Bell, the applicant's architect, and B. D'Aloisio, the applicant, were sworn in to address the board engineer's review letter and other board inquiries.

- The proposed restaurant will have a total of 167 seats, including both indoor and outdoor seating. For comparison, the applicant stated his current restaurant, Lenny's, has sixty-four seats in the dining room and twenty seats outside.
- The proposed hours of operation are 11:00 AM to 10:00 PM, seven days a week.
- The trash enclosure will be approximately 9.5 feet by 9.5 feet. Following discussion, the applicant agreed to construct the enclosure using a solid, aesthetically pleasing material such as PVC fencing.
- The applicant will place two garbage receptacles on the property for customer use.
- A rendering of the proposed building exterior, marked as Exhibit A1, was distributed, showing a wraparound awning and other aesthetic improvements.
- The applicant confirmed there would be no live entertainment and no takeout window.
- Concerns were raised regarding the year-round use of the outdoor seating area. The applicant agreed to a condition that the use of the outdoor seating will remain seasonal and comply with the borough's ordinance at all times.
- The applicant agreed to remove a proposed outdoor sink from the plans due to floodplain management and ordinance restrictions, though a movable hostess station would be permitted.
- Following a discussion on bicycle parking, the applicant agreed to replace one of the proposed benches in the southeast corner of the property with a bike rack.
- The applicant will provide a lighting plan for new exterior lights to ensure they are shielded and minimize spillage onto adjacent properties.

The public portion of the hearing was opened, and with no members of the public wishing to speak, it was closed. Board members expressed their support for the application, noting it would be a significant improvement to a prominent vacant building and that the applicant has a positive track record in the borough.

Motion: Made by A. Cataline seconded by A. Barletta, to approve Application #11-2025 with the conditions discussed during the hearing. The conditions require that the applicant:

- **Obtain separate annual permits** for all outdoor seating from the construction official and police department.

- **Ensure all outdoor seating is for seasonal use only**, in compliance with the current borough ordinance.
- **Construct the trash enclosure** with a solid PVC fence or similar aesthetically pleasing material.
- **Provide two garbage receptacles** on the property for customer use.
- **Remove the proposed outdoor sink** from the plan; a movable hostess station is permitted.
- **Provide a bike rack** in the southeast corner of the property, replacing one of the proposed benches.
- **Submit a lighting plan** for any new wall-mounted lights that minimizes light spillage onto neighboring properties.
- **Ensure there is no live entertainment** and no takeout window.
- **Revise all architectural plans** to comply with the board engineer's review letter, ensuring all improvements (including awnings and planters) are located within property lines and not in the public right-of-way.
- **Comply with all applicable UCC, fire, and floodplain construction codes** and obtain all necessary outside agency approvals.

The motion passed by a unanimous vote of 9-0, J. Bennett; absent, Jennifer DeRienzo; not eligible.

Resolutions to be memorialized:

- none

Review and Adoption of Minutes:

- Regular Planning Board Meeting of November 12, 2025.

A motion was made by J. Filippone to accept the minutes, seconded by A. Barletta.

All votes were in favor, none opposed, J. Bennett; absent and none abstained.

Closed Session

The board voted to enter a recess before convening in a closed session to discuss matters concerning appointments for the upcoming year.

Public Meeting opened

A motion was made by J. Filippone to accept the minutes, seconded by A. Cataline.

All votes were in favor, none opposed, J. Bennett; absent and none abstained.

Old Business:

- none

New Business:

- Master Plan

Correspondence: (on file in the Planning Board Office for your review)

- None

Discussion:

- None

Adjourn:

On motion by Mr. Barletta, seconded by Mrs. Filippone the meeting was adjourned at 7:02 pm. All in favor of adjournment.

Respectfully submitted,
C. Nunziato, Secretary