

BOROUGH OF SOUTH RIVER PLANNING BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

May 12, 2026 – 6:30 PM

Location: Criminal Justice Center, 61 Main Street, 2nd Level, South River

The Regular Meeting of the Borough of South River Planning Board was called to order by Chairman Bodak at 6:30 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. He read the following announcement in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act: *In compliance with Chapter 231 of Public Laws of 1975, adequate notice of this meeting was given by way of Annual Notice filed with the Borough Clerk, the Home News Tribune, The Sentinel and posted in the window of Borough of South River Municipal Building on January 16, 2026.*

The Planning Board may take formal action at this meeting.

Roll Call

Present: Sandra Adelino, Monica Almeida, Richard Byrne, Christian Eleto, John Frost, Councilman Nick Giannakopoulos, Mayor Peter Guindi, Jesse Hare, Katlin Vargo (Mayor's Alt), Robert Bodak

Absent: Brian Almeida (Alt. 1)

Also Present: Thomas Barlow, Attorney, Justin Cornell, Engineer, Todd Bletcher, Planner, Mark Tinitigan, Interim Administrator

Approval of Minutes:

The motion to approve the regular meeting minutes dated April 14, 2026 as presented was first moved by Councilman Giannakopoulos, seconded by Ms. Adelino, all in favor by voice vote.

Resolution – None

Public Hearing(s):

PB-2025-21, Tioumbelekchieff

2 Muravski Ct Block: 93 Lot: 1.09

At the request of Lawrence Sachs, Esq., for the applicant, he asked that their public hearing to be carried to the regular meeting scheduled on June 16, 2026. Mr. Sachs provided an extension to August 31, 2026.

The motion to carry **PB-2025-21, Tioumbelekchieff** without further notice, to the regular meeting scheduled for June 16, 2026 was first moved by Mr. Byrne, seconded by Mayor Guindi, all in favor by voice vote.

PB-2026-04, Cristina Martinez

52 Reid Street Block: 148 Lot: 24

Applicant seeking to construct a single family home in R75 zone. Variances requested are for undersized lot, lot width and side yard setbacks.

Lynne Dunn, Esq. represented the applicant. Ms. Dunn summarized the application.

Matt Hockenbury, MCH Engineering, Engineer and Planner was introduced and sworn in. He provided his credentials and was accepted by this Board. Ms. Dunn marked in *Exhibits A1, Aerial and A2, Collection of Photographs*. Mr. Hockenbury described the site and it's previous conditions along with the surrounding sites. The property is located in a flood zone. With preliminary Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) elevation of 14', and the Borough adds an additional freeboard of 2', the elevation is will be 16'. Mr. Hockenbury described the design flood elevation requirements. The original house was damaged by a fire in January 2025. He described undersized lot; the lot area required is 7,500 sf, the existing lot is 4,156 sf. The lot dept, 75' is required, the existing lot is 31.8'. There will be 2 habitable stories on the 2nd and 3rd levels. Mr. Hockenbury described the proposed first level, which



cannot be used as habitable space. In order to meet FEMA flood requirements, the basement will be filled in, making it level with grade. The applicant is proposing to reconstruct a 3-story flood compliant dwelling on the existing foundation. It will be 3 beds, 2½ baths with approximately 2,100 sf of living space. The proposed dwelling will be constructed on the existing foundation, making it the same size, while maintaining the same setback and coverages as the prior home. Mr. Hockenbury described the grading; same as previous home. The applicant is proposing to reduce the footprint of the previous driveway with an asphalt driveway running along the left side of the house to the garage, thus reducing the impervious coverage. There will be an 18' deep turnaround on the right side; Reid St. is a County road. Mr. Hockenbury went over the variances: building height, side yard setbacks and lot size.

Mr. Hockenbury provided planning testimony; he previously spoke about the existing non-conforming use and the hardships associated with this property. The applicant is looking to replace what was lost as the result of the fire. The proposed home will meet all flood and fire requirements. Mr. Hockenbury went over the positive and negative criteria of the application. It is his opinion that the benefits of this application will significantly outweigh any negative impact, and the variances can be granted without substantial detriment to the surrounding neighbors.

Mr. Hockenbury addressed *Exhibit A1, Aerial* to describe the proposed layout of the new dwelling on the existing lot. Mr. Hockenbury addressed *Exhibit A2, Photographs* to describe the site, prior and current conditions of the site. He addressed the engineer's report. He explained the State adopted new flood regulations in January 2026. During the legacy period, the period from February 20 to July 20, 2026, the applicant has six months to submit an application to DEP under the old rules. This house was designed under the old rules. The old rules were in affect since Sandy to January 20, 2026. Mr. Hockenbury addressed the Planner's report regarding the driveway setback; he explained the required turnaround with the driveway. The site provides 3 parking spaces; one in the garage and two in the driveway. Mr. Hockenbury took questions from the Board.

Ms. Dunn had no further testimony and closed the application.

Chairman Bodak opened the floor to the public. Seeing none, Mayor Guindi, made the motion to close to the public, seconded by Ms. Adelino, all in favor by voice vote.

The motion to approve *File PB-2026-04, Cristina Martinez*, was first made by Mayor Guindi, seconded by Mr. Frost

Roll call in favor: Adelino, M. Almeida, Byren, Eieto, Frost, Giannakopoulos, Guindi, Hare, Bodak
Opposed: None *Abstained:* None ***Motion carries 9-0***

Public Comment

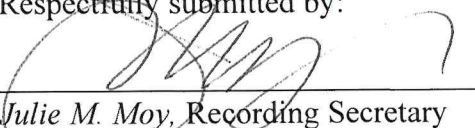
Chairman Bodak opened the floor to the public. Seeing none, Councilman Giannakopoulos made the motion to close to the public, seconded by Mayor Guindi, all in favor by voice vote.

Board Comments – None

Adjournment

The motion to adjourn at 7:15 pm was first moved by Mayor Guindi, seconded by Ms. Adelino, all in favor by voice vote.

Respectfully submitted by:


Julie M. Moy, Recording Secretary

Adopted: