

Maple Shade Township
Planning Board
Minutes
May 28th, 2025
www.mapleshade.com

AGENDA

I. Meeting called to order.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Fletcher at 7:02PM.

II. Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Open Public Meeting Act: Public notice of this meeting, pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, has been given by the Township Council in the following manner:

1. Notifying the Township Clerk December 27th, 2024.
2. Mailing Notice to the Courier Post, The Central Record & Burlington County Times on December 27th, 2024.
3. Posting Notice on the Official Municipal Bulletin Board on December 27th, 2024.
4. Board Agendas; Meeting Minutes; Planning and Zoning Information and Application Forms can be downloaded from the Township website: <https://mapleshade.com/> under the Planning & Zoning page <https://mapleshade.com/planning-zoning/>

Note: Anyone from the public wishing to speak will be permitted during public participation portions. Those wishing to speak should step up to the microphone, state their name and their address prior to making any comment. The agenda has been posted on the Township webpage and bulletin board in the Municipal Building.

Please place all phones on mute to alleviate disruption of the meeting.

Oaths of Office

Renee Bruce and Francis Bertele were sworn in as Planning Board members by Solicitor Sullivan.

IV. Roll Call

Mayor Talarico	X	Gina Capate	X
Deputy Mayor John Zahradnick	X	Barbara Rathgeb	X
Susan Danson – <i>non voting</i>	X	Matthew Reeves	X
James Fletcher, Chairman	X	Emily Wallace	X
Louis Manchello, Vice Chairman	X	Renee Bruce, Alt. #1	X
		Francis Bertele, Alt. #2	X

Ms. Bruce was designated as Alternate No. 1 and moved into a voting position for the evening.

V. New Business:

1. **14-16 West Main Street** – Block 126.01, Lot 4: The Voice Studios LLC; Application No. PB-25-02
Zone: Downtown Business (DB)
Existing use: Vacant Office
Proposed Use: Music Studio / Classes
Application: Site Plan Waiver and Change of Use Approval

The applicant, Isabella Adams of 318 Locust Street, Moorestown, NJ 08057, testified to the following:

- Hours of operation – Monday to Friday 12noon to 9pm and Saturday 9am to 2pm
- Up to three students may be present at a time; one additional employee (a vocal teacher) may be hired.

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- Students primarily enter through the Main Street entrance; rear access is gated.
- Waste and recycling are handled via standard municipal pickup.
- Parking is available in the rear, with approximately 10 spaces, and students are often dropped off.
- No structural improvements are planned at this time beyond signage and façade enhancements.
- Signage plans will be submitted through the Community Development office and must comply with township code.
- All construction materials formerly stored onsite have been removed by the property owner as previously requested.

Engineer's Recommendation:

Township Engineer Fred Turek recommended approval of the site plan waiver and noted all comments from the Site Plan Review Advisory Board had been addressed. The property is clean, compliant, and consistent with the township's goals for the downtown area.

Board Comments:

Discussion included encouragement to use projecting signage for better downtown visibility and clarification that any sign approval must comply with ordinance standards.

Public Comment:

No members of the public came forward.

Motion to close public comment made and seconded. All in favor.

Motion:

Motion to approve the site plan waiver and change of use with conditions (confirmation of construction material removal and compliance with signage regulations) was made by Matthew Reeves and seconded by Gina Capate

	Motion	Second	Ayes	Nays	Abstain
Bertele, Alt #2					
Bruce, Alt. #1			X		
Capate		X	X		
Rathgeb			X		
Reeves	X		X		
Wallace			X		
Susan Danson					
Deputy Mayor Zahradnick			X		
Mayor Talarico			X		
Vice Chairman Manchello			X		
Chairman Fletcher			X		

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VI. Old Business:

Discussion of Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendments

Land Use Engineer Fred Turek provided a summary of draft zoning ordinance amendments initially introduced in April 2024. Key topics discussed:

- Treatment of corner lots for fence and shed placement, shifting toward defining both frontages as “front yards” to improve visibility and safety.
- Fence height and setback standards intended to reduce line-of-sight obstructions and clarify installation practices.
- Introduction of impervious coverage limits in R1 and R2 zones to address stormwater runoff concerns.
- Clarifications to accessory structures (shed size, number per lot) and building coverage ratios.
- Updates to garage standards across all residential zones.

Clarification on Accessory Structures and Lot Coverage

- The ordinance refines regulations on **shed size and number**, reaffirming the limit of two sheds not exceeding 192 square feet each. Any structure larger than 192 square feet is considered a “building” and requires a building permit.
- **Building coverage** is defined as the total area covered by all structures, including the house, garage, porch, and sheds. In certain zones (e.g., R2), up to 50% of the lot may be covered by structures.
- Visual aids were referenced (e.g., green for pervious surfaces and yellow for impervious areas) to help illustrate what constitutes building coverage and guide residents during the permit process.
- The intent is to give residents clarity before construction begins by providing educational packets, example diagrams, and updated definitions for terms such as “detached,” “interior,” “lower,” and “upper.”
- Impervious surface regulations were emphasized as essential for stormwater management and flooding mitigation. A call was made to establish impervious coverage limits in all residential zones (RA, R1, R2), not just for building coverage.
- Mr. Turek agreed that while the intent is to provide consistency and improve safety, specific conditions vary and merit review.

Ordinance Process and Review

- The ordinance revisions aim to improve consistency, transparency, and enforcement for land use applications.

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- Once finalized, the ordinance will be forwarded to Council for consideration and returned for Planning Board recommendation prior to adoption.
- Suggestions from the Board are welcome and encouraged during this process to ensure practical implementation and fairness to property owners—especially for additions or second-story expansions that do not exceed building coverage limits.

Board Comments:

- Mr. Zahradnick expressed concern that the ordinance may be overly restrictive for corner lot homeowners and advocated for more flexibility.
- Full ordinance to be distributed to the board for further review prior to formal recommendation to Council.

Downtown Waste and Dumpster Concerns

- Township Engineer Fred Turek continued the discussion on proposed ordinance amendments, focusing on zoning and development clarity for both residents and professionals.
- The Board discussed ongoing issues related to commercial waste management along Main Street, specifically the inconsistent placement and maintenance of dumpsters behind businesses such as the Chinese restaurant and laundromat.
- Dumpsters are frequently relocated, sometimes blocking parking spaces or encroaching onto curbs and streets, creating both visual and operational challenges.
- The group discussed the potential for a **shared dumpster enclosure**, centrally located and maintained by the Township, with participation from business owners.
 - Participation would be voluntary, with businesses required to sign an agreement and pay a usage fee to the Township.
 - Enforcement would be limited to participating businesses; non-participating businesses would still be responsible for providing and maintaining their own dumpster solutions.
- The possibility of amending the 2017 waste ordinance was discussed to address these recurring issues and ensure greater accountability from commercial property owners and tenants—particularly for mixed-use buildings where residential and commercial tenants have different waste needs.
- A consensus was reached that these discussions should continue with a long-term goal of proposing a business waste management policy or resolution for consideration by Council later this year.

VII. Resolutions:

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VIII. Minutes: January 22nd, 2025

	Motion	Second	Ayes	Nays	Abstain
Bertele, Alt #2					
Bruce, Alt. #1			X		
Capate			X		
Rathgeb			X		
Reeves			X		
Wallace			X		
Susan Danson					
Deputy Mayor Zahradnick		X	X		
Mayor Talarico			X		
Vice Chairman Manchello	X		X		
Chairman Fletcher			x		

IX. Adjourn: Next Meeting – June 25th, 2025