

The Chairperson called the meeting to order and stated it was being held in compliance with the "Open Public Meetings Act" and had been duly noticed and published as required by law.

Roll Call:

Present: Mr. Vandegrift, Mr. Nicini, Mr. Platt, Ms. Branch, Mr. Schallenhammer, Ms. Augustine

Absent: Mr. DiNatale, Mr. Kleinman, Mr. Rashatwar, Mr. Ravitz, Mr. Schwenke

Also present are Chris Norman, Board Solicitor, and Jeremy Noll, Board Engineer

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Mr. Norman swears in Board Engineer, Jeremy Noll.

NEW BUSINESS

PC#25-015

First Harvest Credit Union

Site Plan Waiver

6 Berlin Rd

Block 141, Lot 1

Mr. Chris Wisniewski, the applicant's attorney of law firm Cohen & Vaughan approaches the board and testifies that he represents the applicant, First Harvest Credit Union, in the current application. Mr. Dan Murphy, Vice President of First Harvest Credit Union is introduced and sworn in along with Mr. Bob Persicheti, applicant's sign contractor from Effective Sign Works. Mr. Wisniewski testifies the applicant is seeking site plan waiver approval to install a digital copy display on the bottom of the existing freestanding sign. He explains it will be an LED display, and they are requesting a waiver of site plan due to the limited nature of the proposed sign modification. Mr. Wisniewski adds the applicant is requesting variances to allow the sign to display safety, community, and similar messages in addition to time and temp that the existing sign shows. Mr. Norman asks for confirmation on whether the sign will only show messages about the community, safety, and the business onsite, and not any offsite businesses. Mr. Murphy confirms this.

Ms. Augustine asks about services provided at the credit union that would be displayed on the sign. Mr. Murphy covers the various financial products offered by First Harvest that would be shown on the sign, including, but not limited to checking & savings accounts, CDs, mortgages, loans, as well as seasonal promotions. Mr. Schallenhammer asks about the layout of messages that will be displayed on the sign and whether community messages and First Harvest messages would be shown together. Mr. Murphy explains that community messages and the credit union's messages would likely be shown separately, and only First Harvest's messages would show the credit union's logo on it. Mr. Schallenhammer asks if community messages would be shown after hours on the sign. Mr. Murphy states that he believes the township ordinance only allows for digital messages to be displayed during business hours, and First Harvest operates from 10am to 6pm on most days, with opening starting as early as 8:30 on other days. He adds they intend to only show messages up to closing time but if the board is willing to grant a variance for showing messages after hours, they would be willing to do so. Mr. Norman asks if the digital sign will have any flashing, blinking, or otherwise distracting display. Mr. Murphy states that the sign will only show static messaging. Mr. Noll recommends the board allows community messaging on the sign after hours as the intersection is frequented often after 6pm and for safety in case the police department or other municipal department needs to show messages on the sign. Mr. Murphy testifies that showing community messaging on the sign after hours would also be helpful as there is a Voorhees Township Welcome sign at that area of the intersection. Mr. Platt adds that having such messages on display in the evening and at night would be beneficial as the sign is not overly imposing, and he requests that the time also be shown on the sign after hours. Mr. Murphy states they could show both time and temperature on the sign display after hours as well as public service messaging if the board grants the necessary variance.

Mr. Vandegrift asks if the variance applies to any illuminated signage in town. Mr. Noll states that the variance is only for LED illuminated signage in the township.

Mr. Platt states security cameras that can capture the intersection from the building would be helpful for the credit union. Mr. Murphy states the First Harvest location has extensive security cameras around the exterior of the building. Ms. Augustine asks about the maximum number of employees per shift at the credit union and the number of shifts. Mr. Murphy explains there are currently 8 employees max per shift, and there are two shifts. Ms. Augustine asks if First Harvest has a trash and recycling schedule. Mr. Murphy states the credit union does not as some of their locations, including Voorhees, do not have space for trash and recycling containers; instead, a cleaning service is used that collects all trash and recycling from the site and takes it to their corporate headquarters where larger dumpsters are located. He states the cleaning service visits three times a week. Ms. Augustine asks if the credit union has any regularly scheduled deliveries or pickup of goods. Mr. Murphy states First Harvest does not have a scheduled delivery or pickup, but they have a business supply company that delivers occasionally as well as cash deliveries by a cash service company, neither of which are done on a fixed schedule. He adds that a courier service van does also visit usually once a week. Mr. Noll asks if deliveries are by box truck. Mr. Murphy states that deliveries are by box truck and occur at the front doors. Ms. Augustine asks if there will be any changes to the existing driveway or site circulation in the application. Mr. Murphy explains there will be no changes to the site circulation and access; they just replaced site circulation signs with new refreshed signage that shows the company's logo.

For landscaping and parking onsite, Mr. Murphy testifies that seasonal plantings with flowers were completed recently and are done periodically, and they also plan to reseal and restripe the parking lot. Mr. Murphy notes the existing condition of the parking lot is great, but they will still be resealing and restriping for enhanced visibility. Mr. Schallenhammer asks when First Harvest's grand opening is. Mr. Murphy states they just had their grand opening a day ago, but it was small with the board of directors and staff. Mr. Schallenhammer notes the township does offer to be part of such openings. Mr. Murphy states they had invited the township and did have a member from the Eastern Highschool board present at the opening. He states First Harvest is non-profit and they are federally chartered as a low income designated credit union, and their Voorhees branch is their Camden County hub.

Mr. Noll asks for testimony on any proposed exterior modifications. Mr. Murphy states the bulk of exterior modifications involves landscaping, but when the credit union moved into the building they also did various work around the site to refresh it, including maintenance of the irrigation/stormwater system, power washing the building façade, repainting shutters, and general site maintenance. He adds that trees near the intersection were removed and replaced with shrubbery and seasonal plantings. Mr. Noll asks if the dead trees at the rear of the site have been replanted. Mr. Murphy states that he believes any dead trees have been replaced but they would agree to allow ERI to inspect the site. Mr. Noll notes that a night light functioning test is also generally done onsite. Mr. Murphy explains they have an electrician who handles lighting onsite and they make sure lighting is not excessive so it does not spill over onto adjacent residential properties and they would agree to the light test. Mr. Noll asks if the existing ADA parking stalls and ramp are compliant with current regulations. Mr. Murphy states that he believes they are all compliant, and their electrician also noted some lighting to add to entry and exit signs. Mr. Noll asks if the applicant submitted to the Camden County Planning Board. Mr. Murphy explains they are not aware of any submission to the County Planning Board. Mr. Noll testifies they would need to submit and would likely get a letter of no intent/impact. Mr. Murphy acknowledges this.

Mr. Nicini asks if there is a designated contractor for snow removal and salt spreading. Mr. Murphy states they have a contractor, Zambino Landscaping, that does snow and ice removal in winter in addition to landscaping. He adds they maintain the sidewalks as well as the parking lot and maintain plants. Mr. Murphy states they use calcium chloride on the sidewalks and parking lots as it is less corrosive and damaging, but they will occasionally use rock salt too. Mr. Noll notes the ADA ramp will be inspected and during that time no rock salt should be spread on the ramp.

At this time, Ms. Augustine opens the meeting to the public. With no public present, Mr. Schallenhammer makes a motion to close public portion, seconded by Mr. Platt.

Mr. Norman outlines for the board the conditions and stipulations for the application for Site Plan Waiver approval to add a digital LED changeable copy sign to the existing freestanding sign at 6 Haddonfield-Berlin Rd, Block 141, Lot 1:

1. Applicant will receive two variances to allow for display of non-commercial public safety messages and after-hours community messages, including showing time and temperature
2. Applicant will comply with the board engineer's review letter dated October 1, 2025
3. Applicant agrees to having a night light functioning test
4. Applicant will reseal and restripe the parking lot
5. Applicant agrees to allow ERI to inspect the current landscaping onsite for compliance
6. Applicant will submit an application to the Camden County Planning Board for acquisition of a letter of no impact
7. Applicant agrees to have ERI review the ADA improvements onsite for compliance

Mr. Nicini makes a motion to approve the Site Plan Waiver application for adding a digital LED changeable copy sign to the existing freestanding sign for the property located at 6 Haddonfield-Berlin Rd, Block 141, Lot 1, seconded by Mr. Platt. Motion carries by the following Roll Call Vote:

AYES: Mr. Vandegrift, Mr. Nicini, Mr. Platt, Ms. Branch, Mr. Schallenhammer, Ms. Augustine

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

Seeing no further business, Mr. Schallenhammer makes a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Platt. The motion carries by the assenting voice vote of all present board members.

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Rashane Thapa

Voorhees Township Planning Board Secretary

Minutes prepared by Rashane Thapa. The minutes are intended to reflect the basic comments and action. Verbatim transcripts of all electronic recordings can be available upon proper request and payment