

**PLANNING BOARD**  
**City of Orange Township**  
29 North Day Street  
Orange, NJ 07050

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**October 15, 2025**

Chairman Holmes called the October 15, 2025 City of Orange Township Planning Board Meeting to order. Salute to the Flag. Compliance with the “Sunshine Law” was acknowledged. Roll Call. Meeting Notice.

Please note this meeting was held virtually via Zoom Meeting and all login information has been posted on the City of Orange Township website ([www.orangenj.gov](http://www.orangenj.gov)) as well as the local newspaper “Transcript.”

**Board Members Present:** Enock Faustin, Callistus Onyiuke, Christopher Mobley, Jean-Guy Lauture, Council Vice-President Weldon Montague, Mayor Dwayne Warren, Vice-Chair Antoinette Jones, Chairman Dwight Holmes.

**Board Members Absent:** None

**Professionals Present:**

Alexandra Reyes, Board Secretary

Gerard Haizel, P.P., Board Planner – Nishuane Group LLC

Joseph Wenzel, Esq., Board Attorney – Friends & Wenzel

John Cahillane, P.E., Board Engineer – CP Engineers

**Correspondence:**

None

**Minutes:**

**August 13, 2025 Meeting Minutes**

Motion to memorialize the August 13, 2025 Meeting Minutes by Member Mobley.  
Seconded by Member Lauture.

**Those in Favor:** Member Faustin, Member Onyiuke, Member Mobley, Member Lauture, Council Vice-President Montague, Mayor Warren, Vice-Chair Jones, Chairman Holmes.

**Those Opposed:** None

**Those Abstained:** None

**Motion carried.**

**August 27, 2025 Meeting Minutes**

Motion to memorialize the August 27, 2025 Meeting Minutes by Member Mobley.  
Seconded by Member Lauture.

**Those in Favor:** Member Faustin, Member Onyiuke, Member Mobley, Member Lauture, Council Vice-President Montague, Mayor Warren, Vice-Chair Jones, Chairman Holmes.

**Those Opposed:** None

**Those Abstained:** None

**Motion carried.**

### **September 17, 2025 Meeting Minutes**

The September 17, 2025 Meeting Minutes will be carried to the next Planning Board meeting.

### **MEMORIALIZATION OF RESOLUTIONS**

#### **Memorialize Resolution – Case #25-09 – Diana Marcela Acuna Martinez – 543 McChesney Street – Minor Site Plan with Redevelopment Plan Deviations**

Council Vice-President Montague was not present at the original hearing and abstained from memorialization.

**Motion:** Member Lauture    **Seconded:** Member Onyiuke

**Those in Favor:** Member Onyiuke, Member Lauture, Mayor Warren, Chairman Holmes.

**Those Opposed:** None

**Those Abstained:** Member Faustin, Member Mobley, Vice-Chair Jones

**Motion carried: 4-0-3-0**

#### **Memorialize Resolution – Case #25-11 – ABJ Orange Urban Renewal, LLC – 556–560 Scotland Road – Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan Approval**

Mayor Warren was not present at the original hearing and abstained from memorialization.

**Motion:** Member Mobley    **Seconded:** Member Faustin

**Those in Favor:** Member Faustin, Member Onyiuke, Member Mobley, Member Lauture, Vice-Chair Jones, Chairman Holmes.

**Those Opposed:** None

**Those Abstained:** Mayor Warren

**Motion carried: 6-0-1-0**

#### **Memorialize Resolution – Case #24-11 – Vida Capital, LLC – 538–544 Nassau Street (Nassau Commons) – Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan with Redevelopment Plan Deviations**

Council Vice-President Montague was not present at the original hearing and abstained from memorialization. Member Faustin was absent.

**Motion:** Member Mobley    **Seconded:** Member Lauture

**Those in Favor:** Member Mobley, Member Lauture, Mayor Warren, Vice-Chair Jones, Chairman Holmes.

**Those Opposed:** None

**Those Abstained:** Member Onyiuke

**Those Absent:** Member Faustin

**Motion carried: 5-0-1-1**

**Case #25-07 – 10 Essex Urban Renewal LLC – 8–22 South Essex Avenue  
Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan**

Attorney Jennifer Carrillo-Perez of Connell Foley LLP appeared on behalf of the Applicant. The property is located at Block 2801, Lots 1, 6, 7, 8, and 9 within the Main Street Redevelopment Area Plan, Area B (RDV Zone). The application also seeks lot consolidation. The proposed development is a six (6) story mixed-use building (23,590 SF) containing 69 residential units, approximately 8,400 SF of ground-floor retail, and two levels of enclosed parking (65 structured + 10 on-street restriped = 75 total spaces).

**Variations and Design Waivers Requested:**

- Front yard setback (Main St.): 1 ft. proposed / 0 ft. permitted; (South Essex Ave.): 0.7 ft. / 0 ft. permitted
- Rear yard setback: 2.8 ft. proposed / 25 ft. required
- Side yard setback (upper floors): 1 ft. proposed / 10 ft. required
- Impervious coverage: 97% proposed / 95% permitted (existing coverage is 100%; project is an improvement)
- Open space: 21.1% proposed / 25% required (5,335 SF rooftop terrace; HVAC constraints prevent further expansion)
- Parking: 75 spaces provided / 88 required after EV credit
- Design Waivers: Parking stall 9'x18' (9'x20' required); absence of off-street loading space

**Witness #1 – Karen Nichols, Architect (KNTM Architects) – Sworn In**

Ms. Nichols, licensed NJ architect for 25+ years, was accepted as an expert in architecture. She presented architectural plans for the 6-story corner building at South Essex Ave., Main Street, and Railroad Place. Key features: two-level structured parking accessed from different street elevations (41 spaces lower/24 upper = 65 total; 15 EV charging spaces); 5 retail spaces along Main Street and South Essex Ave.; 69 residential units (1BR, 1BR+den, 2BR, 2BR+den) with in-unit laundry and central HVAC; 5,335 SF rooftop terrace; 6th floor club room and amenity spaces. Total amenity area: ~11,975 SF (47.3% of lot area). Exterior: brick base with fiber cement panels; consistent four-sided treatment. Canopies reduced to avoid right-of-way encroachment. Bike racks in garage. Sensor-activated pedestrian alert light at garage entrance confirmed. Confirmed receipt and compliance with Planner's report (Aug. 15, 2025) and Engineer's report (Aug. 20, 2025).

**Witness #2 – John De Martinez, P.E. (Pannoni) – Sworn In – First Expert Hearing**

Mr. De Martinez, PE since February 2025, was accepted as an expert in civil engineering. He presented the 15-page site plan (May 5, 2025, last rev. June 25, 2025). Highlights: all lots to be consolidated and demolished; two concrete driveways (South Essex Ave. and Railroad Place); three existing Main Street trees preserved; ADA ramps at intersections; transformer and 50 kW emergency generator at SE corner screened by shrubs; 13 wall-mounted LED fixtures compliant with city lighting standards; stormwater is not a major development (0.81 ac. disturbed; impervious coverage decreasing). Parking: 69 residential + 28 retail = 97 required; 15% EV credit reduces to 88 required; 65 structured + 10 on-street (per Ord. 82-2023 for retail) = 75 provided. Security cameras (interior/exterior) with OPD access confirmed. Agreed to comply with all Engineer's and Planner's report recommendations.

**Witness #3 – Rihanna Kirchoff, P.E. – Traffic Engineer (Dolan & Dean) – Sworn In**

Ms. Kirchoff, licensed PE with 12 years of traffic engineering experience, was accepted as an expert in traffic engineering. Key findings from the Traffic Impact Assessment (Aug. 24, 2025): site is ~450 ft. from NJ Transit Orange Station with bus stops on Main Street and Railroad Place; intersection of Tony Galento Plaza/Railroad Place/South Essex Ave. operates at LOS B and remains unchanged after adding project traffic; ITE data for transit-adjacent residential shows parking demand of 48–54 spaces for 69 units – within the 65 structured spaces provided; on-street parking in the area experienced regular turnover with available spaces nearby. The Applicant agreed to provide a supplemental Saturday traffic count study as a condition of approval.

**Witness #4 – Paul Ricci, P.P. – Sworn In**

Mr. Ricci, licensed planner since 2000 and AICP member, was accepted as an expert in professional planning. He testified that the Main Street Redevelopment Plan (Section 6.2) expressly grants the Board authority to approve deviations where plan purposes are advanced. The project is significantly less intense than permitted (119 vs. 200 units/acre; 70 vs. 105 ft. height; FAR 5.1 vs. 9.0 max.). Setback deviations maintain the plan’s intended zero-setback street wall on Main Street. Impervious and open space deviations are de minimis. Census data shows 28.5% of Orange households have no car (40.5% for single-person households), supporting reduced parking near the rail station. Project advances transit-oriented development, economic growth, and smart growth principles. Benefits significantly outweigh detriments. Negative criteria satisfied.

**Board Planner – Gerard Haizel, P.P. – Sworn In**

Mr. Haizel concurred with the application. The one-foot deviation from the zero-setback requirement is de minimis and does not disrupt the desired Main Street street wall. Retail storefronts are well-placed without lobby interruption on Main Street, consistent with the plan’s intent. The third-floor outdoor deck is accessible only to units fronting on it. On parking: the 69 residential spaces cannot be offset by on-street parking; street credits apply only to retail uses. The transit-oriented location adjacent to the rail station helps justify the parking deficiency. The three-street-frontage nature of the site creates unique setback conditions that the applicant addressed appropriately.

**Board Engineer – John Cahillane, P.E. – Sworn In**

Mr. Cahillane confirmed all items in his August 20, 2025 report were thoroughly addressed. Noted a stylistic difference in the EV credit calculation (net differential is the same). Advisory: confirm capacity of existing Railroad Place pipes prior to connection.

**Motion to Open Public Portion:** Motion by Member Faustin. Seconded by Member Mobley. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Public Comment:**

**Rachel Tennant, 461 Waverly Place, Orange, NJ** – Expressed strong opposition. Stated Main Street traffic is routinely bumper-to-bumper; raised concerns that restriped on-street spaces harm existing community parking needs including library patrons. Asked whether units will have central air and requested an additional traffic study.

**Applicant Response:** Restriped spaces remain public and are not reserved for the development. Central air confirmed. Applicant agreed to provide a supplemental Saturday traffic study.

**Alicia Rodriguez, 487 Mountain View Avenue, Orange, NJ** – Questioned the housing shortage characterization given numerous existing/planned Orange projects; asked about construction timeline, historic district status, security/safety measures given understaffed police and fire, and impact on current tenants. **Applicant Response:** Property is not in a historic district. Security cameras with OPD access confirmed. Mr. Dunn (Paramount Assets, SVP, sworn in) testified construction would begin within 12 months of approval and take 14–20 months to complete. No current residential tenants on site.

**Carolyn Hayward King, 498 Mountain View Avenue, Orange, NJ** – Asked why a one-foot setback was provided when zero is permitted. Architect Ms. Nichols explained it accommodates building footings to avoid encroaching beyond the property line. Ms. King expressed appreciation for the approach.

**Motion to Close Public Portion:** Motion by Member Mobley. Seconded by Member Lauture. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Motion for Approval – Case #25-07 – 10 Essex Urban Renewal LLC – 8–22 South Essex Avenue – Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan:**

Motion by Vice-Chair Jones. Seconded by Member Mobley.

**Variances Granted:** Front yard (Main St.) 1 ft./0 ft.; front yard (South Essex Ave.) 0.7 ft./0 ft.; rear yard 2.8 ft./25 ft.; side yard upper floors 1 ft./10 ft.; impervious coverage 97%/95%; open space 21%/25%; parking 75/88 spaces.

**Design Waivers Granted:** Parking stall 9'x18'; absence of off-street loading.

**Conditions of Approval:** Comply with Engineer's report (Aug. 20, 2025) and Planner's report (Aug. 15, 2025); develop landscaping/streetscape plan with Board professionals; install pedestrian alert signal at garage entrance; provide Saturday traffic count study; provide OPD access to security cameras.

**Those in Favor:** Member Faustin, Member Onyiuke, Member Mobley, Member Lauture, Mayor Warren, Vice-Chair Jones, Chairman Holmes.

**Those Opposed:** None

**Those Abstained:** None

**Motion carried: 7-0-0-0**

**Case #25-08 – 23 Essex Urban Renewal LLC – 26 Tony Galento Plaza Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan**

Prior to hearing this application, the Board voted to extend the meeting to no later than 11:00 PM. All in favor. Motion carried.

Attorney Jennifer Carrillo-Perez of Connell Foley LLP appeared on behalf of the Applicant. The property is located at Block 2705, Lots 1 and 10, within the Central Orange Redevelopment Plan District A (RDV Zone). The application also seeks lot consolidation. The proposed development is a six (6) story mixed-use building (22,550 SF) containing 68 residential units, approximately 5,130 SF of ground-floor retail, and two levels of enclosed parking (70 structured spaces). The NJ Transit Orange Station is approximately 150 feet southwest. The same four witnesses from Case #25-07 provided testimony for this application.

**Variances and Design Waivers Requested:**

- Side yard setback (east/South Essex Ave.): 1 ft. proposed / 5 ft. required
- Side yard setback (west/Tony Galento Plaza): 1 ft. proposed / 5 ft. required
- Rear yard setback: 1 ft. proposed / 10 ft. required
- Building coverage: 92% proposed / 90% permitted
- Impervious coverage: 96.42% proposed / 90% permitted
- Parking: 70 spaces provided / 78 required after EV credit
- Design Waiver: Parking stall 9'x18' (9'x20' required)

**Witness #1 – Karen Nichols, Architect – Re-sworn**

Ms. Nichols presented 12 architectural sheets (June 25, 2025) for the 6-story mixed-use building fronting Tony Galento Plaza and South Essex Avenue. Lower level (South Essex access): 31 parking spaces (7 EV, 2 ADA), two retail spaces (~600 and ~1,430 SF), utilities and trash compactor. Upper level (Tony Galento Plaza, at grade): main lobby, fitness center, 39 parking spaces (6 EV, ADA/van), bike racks, two retail spaces (1,400–1,700 SF), mail/package room. Total retail: ~5,130 SF. Residential floors 3–6: 68 units (32 one-BR, 21 one-BR+den, 7 two-BR, 8 two-BR+den); all with in-unit laundry. Sixth floor: ~1,000 SF club room with train station views; 1,725 SF common outdoor rooftop terrace. Exterior: brick base, fiber cement panels, modern design complementing the adjacent South Essex Ave. project. Gas-powered emergency generator. Confirmed receipt of Planner's report (Aug. 18, 2025) and Engineer's report (Aug. 25, 2025).

**Witness #2 – John De Martinez, P.E. – Re-sworn**

Mr. De Martinez presented a 14-page site plan (May 5, 2025, last rev. June 25, 2025). Existing: Lot 1 (10,200 SF) is open space/sidewalk; Lot 10 (14,310 SF) contains a multi-story commercial building. Proposed: lots consolidated; two concrete driveways; brick pavers with new tree pits on Tony Galento Plaza; ADA ramps; 50 kW gas generator and underground transformer. Two sewer connections; 8-inch fire and domestic water from Tony Galento Plaza. Stormwater: new underground detention basin under South Essex Ave. driveway offsets increase in impervious coverage per NJDEP. Parking: 68 residential + 18 retail = 86 required; 10% EV credit of 8 spaces = 78 required; 70 structured spaces provided. Note: unlike Case #25-07, the Central Orange Redevelopment Plan does not permit on-street parking credits. Pedestrian alert lights at driveways and OPD security camera access confirmed.

**Witness #3 – Rihanna Kirchoff, P.E. – Traffic Engineer – Re-sworn**

Site is directly across from the NJ Transit Orange Station (~150 ft.) and near multiple bus stops. Development generates an estimated 31 AM and 63 PM peak-hour trips – below the ITE threshold for a formal detailed study. ITE data shows parking demand of 48–54 spaces for 68 units near rail transit; the 70 provided spaces comfortably exceeds demand. On-street parking on South Essex Ave. and Tony Galento Plaza remains available for retail patrons. The 8–22 South Essex Ave. project was specifically incorporated into the traffic analysis, and background growth rates account for other future development. The Applicant agreed to provide a supplemental Saturday traffic count as a condition of approval.

**Witness #4 – Paul Ricci, P.P. – Re-sworn**

The project is significantly less intense than the Central Orange Redevelopment Plan permits (6 vs. 9 stories/95 ft.; FAR 3.5 vs. 4.5 max.; 26% less floor area than permitted). The setback deviations are appropriate: the site has three street frontages, making the technical “rear yard” effectively a side yard fronting Tony Galento Plaza, consistent with adjacent buildings. Building and impervious coverage deviations are small and would not be perceptible. Benefits of the application outweigh detriments. Negative criteria satisfied.

**Board Planner – Gerard Haizel, P.P. – Re-sworn**

The Central Orange Redevelopment Plan and the Main Street Redevelopment Plan are distinct plans; their consistent standards reflect the appropriateness of the planning vision for the area. The rear yard setback deviation is appropriate as the “rear yard” is functionally a side yard. Unlike Case #25-07, the Central Orange plan does not permit on-street parking credits; however, direct adjacency to the train station helps justify the parking deficiency. Building treatments complement the adjacent South Essex Ave. project. All property owners within 200 feet were given proper MLUL notice, including the building owner of the nearby church.

**Board Engineer – John Cahillane, P.E. – Re-sworn**

All items in the Engineer’s report were addressed by the Applicant’s professionals. Same stylistic EV credit difference as in Case #25-07 – the net result is the same. The inclusion of on-site stormwater detention to manage runoff near the South Essex low point is appropriate.

**Motion to Open Public Portion:** Motion made and seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Public Comment:**

**Rachel Tennant, 461 Waverly Place, Orange, NJ** – Asked about the age of existing sewer/water infrastructure being tapped; whether the street would be repaved or patched after utility work; why apartments versus condominiums; and whether buildings will have central air. **Applicant Response:** Ms. Nichols identified the Orange Housing Authority project on Oakwood Avenue and other Essex County projects among her prior work. Utility trench work will be full-depth pavement per City requirements. Mr. Dunn confirmed apartments are consistent with the transit village pattern; condominiums may be considered for future projects. All units will have central air. Age of existing infrastructure to be confirmed with the City prior to construction.

**Alicia Rodriguez, 487 Mountain View Avenue, Orange, NJ** – Asked whether future planned projects were incorporated in the traffic study; raised concerns about security, public safety staffing, wind safety for rooftop furniture, and asked whether parking is included in rent. **Applicant Response:** Ms. Kirchoff confirmed background growth rates and the adjacent South Essex project were incorporated. Parking is included in rent. Security cameras provided with OPD access. Applicant did not oppose ensuring rooftop furniture complies with applicable safety requirements.

A motion was made to continue the application to completion past 11:00 PM. Motion made and seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Motion to Close Public Portion:** Motion made and seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Motion for Approval – Case #25-08 – 23 Essex Urban Renewal LLC – 26 Tony Galento Plaza – Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan:**

Motion by Vice-Chair Jones. Seconded by Member Mobley.

**Variances Granted:** Side yard (east) 1 ft./5 ft.; side yard (west) 1 ft./5 ft.; rear yard 1 ft./10 ft.; building coverage 92%/90%; impervious coverage 96.42%/90%; parking 70/78 spaces.

**Design Waiver Granted:** Parking stall 9'x18'.

**Conditions of Approval:** Comply with Engineer's report (Aug. 25, 2025) and Planner's report (Aug. 18, 2025); coordinate landscaping plan with Board professionals and adjacent South Essex Ave. project; provide OPD access to security cameras; provide Saturday traffic count study; confirm historic district status with the City and comply with any applicable review requirements prior to issuance of construction permits.

**Those in Favor:** Member Faustin, Member Mobley, Member Lauture, Vice-Chair Jones, Chairman Holmes.

**Those Opposed:** None

**Those Absent/Not Voting:** Member Onyiuke, Mayor Warren, Council Vice-President Montague

**Motion carried.**

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** None

Motion to Adjourn made by Member Mobley. Seconded by Council Vice-President Montague. All in favor. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 11:24 PM.

Next Planning Board meeting scheduled for Wednesday, November 12, 2025 at 7:30 p.m. via Zoom Meeting.

Prepared by: Alexandra Reyes.