

March 9, 2026

Board of Adjustment  
Township of Verona  
600 Bloomfield Avenue  
Verona, New Jersey 07044

Attention: Ms. Dolores Carpinelli, Zoning Board Secretary

Re: Abbasi Construction, LLC  
**Board of Adjustment Application**  
**11-unit Townhouse Development**  
21 and 25 Grove Avenue  
Block 1702, Lot 22  
Township of Verona  
Our File No. 25VAZ107

Dear Ms. Carpinelli:

This office has reviewed the following documents that have been submitted in response our last review letter dated February 5, 2026 for the above referenced project:

- a. **Engineer's Response Letter prepared by Petry Engineering, LLC, dated February 26, 2026.**
- b. Site Plan (21 sheets) entitled, "Preliminary and Final Site Plan prepared for Mohammad Abbasi, 21 and 25 Grove Avenue, Block 1702 Lot 22, Township of Verona, Essex County, New Jersey", prepared by Petry Engineering, LLC, **last revised February 26, 2026.**
- c. Architectural Plans (8 sheets) entitled, "21-25 Grove Avenue, proposed 11-Unit Townhouse Complex, Block 1702, Lot 22, Verona NJ 07044 Essex County", prepared by Bodnar Architectural Studio, dated October 6, 2025, **last revised February 21, 2026.**
- d. Turning Movement Plans (6 sheets) entitled, "21-25 Grove Avenue, proposed 11-Unit Townhouse Complex, Block 1702, Lot 22, Verona NJ 07044 Essex County", prepared by Bodnar Architectural Studio, dated October 6, 2025, **last revised February 26, 2026.**

Based on our review of the above referenced documents, we offer the following comments:

### Plan Revisions

1. **At the February 12, 2026 meeting, the Zoning Board conditionally approved the following variances, subject to the Applicant securing site plan approval, tree removal plan approval, and approval of the bulk variances at the next Board meeting:**
  - **D(1) use variance for 10 residential units;**
  - **D(5) floor area ratio variance subject to it being reduced, and;**
  - **D(6) height variance subject to the elimination of rooftop decks and stair bulk heads and reducing building height to 2 1/2 stories for the northern units.**



2. The site and architectural plans have been revised in response to comments provided by the Board during the meeting held on February 12, 2026, as outlined below:
  - The total number of proposed units have been reduced from 11 to 10.
  - Units 2 to 5 have been converted to 2-bedroom units.
  - The unit sizes have been reduced to eliminate the variance required for lot coverage.
  - Units 1 and 2 have driveway area of 7 ft x 10.5 ft and Units 3 to 5 have driveway area of 9 ft x 20 ft.
  - Rooftop terraces and stair bulkheads have been removed therefore associated variance for accessory use has also been removed.
  - The parking aisle width has been increased to 24 feet to eliminate the variance required for parking aisle width.
  - Three (3) parking spaces including one (1) ADA van accessible space are proposed in the front yard and three (3) parking spaces have been added in the rear yard of the property. A total of 34 parking spaces are proposed whereas 24 are required.

**Variances**

3. The following variances are required as indicated in the Zoning Denial Letter dated November 7, 2025 and Title Sheet (SP-1):

Section	Item	Requirement	Proposed
150-17.11 A	Use	Commercial and Professional Offices	Residential Townhouse (D-1)
150-17.11 D(4)	Min. Side Yard Setback (One)	15 feet	12.9 feet (V)
150-17.11 D(5)	Min. Side Yard Setback (Both)	35 feet	27.9 feet (V)
150-17.11 D(7)	Min. Rear Yard Setback	50 feet	<b>29.7 feet (V)</b>
150-17.11 D(8)	Max. Building Height	35 feet / 2.5 stories	<b>41.35 feet (V)</b>
150-17.11 D(12)	Max. Floor Area Ratio	50%	<b>75.3% (V)</b>
150-17.11 D(13)	Min. Landscape Buffer along Residential Zone	15 feet	Not Compliant (V)
150-7.21 B	Max. Deck Height	4 feet	8.8 feet (V)
150-7.21 C	Deck Setback	Shall not extend into the side yard beyond the line of the existing dwelling	Not Compliant (V)
150-7.11 D(4)	Min. Side Yard Setback for HVAC Unit	15 feet	<b>11.3 feet (V)</b>
150-12.2A	Min. Parking Stall Dimensions	9 ft x 20 ft	9 ft x 18 ft (V)

**Plot Plan**

4. The decks for Units 9 and 10 are located directly adjacent to each other. The Applicant shall consider incorporating a setback or separation between the decks for privacy and safety.



5. Grove Avenue is under the jurisdiction of Essex County. The Applicant shall obtain approval or exemption from Essex County Planning Board. The Applicant noted that approval or exemption from Essex County Planning Board will be obtained.
6. The existing conditions plan on Sheet SP-2 shows fence and driveway encroachments in the side and rear yards of the property. The Applicant shall indicate if these encroachments are to be removed. The adjacent property owners are required to be notified. **The site plan has been revised to indicate the existing fence and driveway encroachment to be removed. The adjacent property owner shall be notified prior to the removal of these encroachments.**
7. The Applicant shall provide testimony regarding garbage/recycling area operations, including frequency, time, and who will provide same. A 13ft x 8.3 ft trash enclosure is proposed at the rear of the property. The Applicant also noted that garbage pick-up will be provided by a private hauler. **The proposed pavement area in the rear yard has been expanded to accommodate an on-site turnaround area for the garbage truck.**
8. The Applicant should address how snow plowing operations are to be handled. An area should be identified for snow stockpiling after a plowable event, taking into account vehicular and pedestrian traffic, and the location of drainage inlets. The Applicant provided testimony that snow plowing shall be handled by a private contractor hired by the HOA. Two (2) designated snow pile areas are shown on Sheet SP-5.
9. The Applicant shall be aware of their responsibility to repair any damage to improvements within the Grove Avenue Right-of-Way including, but not limited to, any sidewalk, curb, and asphalt, caused by construction activities associated with the improvements on the subject lot. A note to this effect has been added on Sheet SP-3.
10. The final grading of the lot must ensure additional surface runoff does not adversely impact any adjoining properties. Any required modifications shall be the property owner's responsibility, in coordination with their engineer. A note to this effect has been added on Sheet SP-4.1.

#### ADA Facilities

11. All ADA parking spaces, accessible paths and pedestrian facilities constructed on site and within public rights-of-ways must be constructed in accordance with Federal ADA Standards. Compliant Design and Construction Certifications for ADA Facilities must be submitted to the Municipal Engineer. A note to this effect has been added on Sheet SP-3.

#### Parking

12. The number of spaces required for the townhome units per N.J.A.C. 5:21-4.14 is as follows:  
**(2.3 space/two-bedroom unit) x (4 units) = 9.2 spaces**  
**(2.4 space/three-bedroom unit) x (6 units) = 14.4 spaces**  
**= 23.6 spaces**  
**= 24 spaces (say)**



13. The Applicant is proposing a total of **34 parking spaces** including one (1) van accessible parking space and four (4) EV spaces as follows:

(1.0 spaces/one-car garage and no driveway) x (2 units)	= 2 spaces
(2.0 spaces/two-car garage with no driveway) x (3 units)	= 6 spaces
<b>(3.5 spaces/two-car garage and driveway combination) x (5 units)</b>	<b>= 17.5 spaces</b>
<b>Outdoor lot spaces</b>	<b>= 6 spaces</b>
<u>10% EV credit</u>	<u>= 3 spaces</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>= 34.5 spaces</b>
	<b>= 34 spaces (say)</b>

14. The Applicant shall confirm in testimony that the proposed parking layout complies with Residential Street Improvement Standards (RSIS). The Applicant provided testimony that a waiver is required from RSIS for proposed driveway width of 20 feet where 24 feet is required. **The site plan has been revised to increase driveway width to 24 feet therefore, a waiver from RSIS is no longer required.**

15. No driveway parking spaces are proposed along the western townhome units due to the insufficient driveway length of 11 feet. Since a small vehicle could still physically fit within this space, the Applicant shall clarify what measures will be implemented to prevent residents from parking in these driveways. There is also a potential circulation concern as residents of the western townhome units may need to reverse into the eastern townhome driveways to exit the site. The Applicant shall indicate how this maneuvering conflict will be prevented. The site plan has been revised to add a fire lane along the residential units with no driveway parking. The final location of the fire lanes are subject to the approval of the Fire Code Official. **As per the fire official's request, site plan has been revised to add fire lanes at both sides of the drive aisle.**

16. The Applicant is requesting a variance for proposed parking aisle drive width of 20 feet whereas 24 feet is required per Section 150-12.4 A(1). Based on our review, the internal traffic circulation appears very constrained, providing limited room for vehicle maneuvering. We are particularly concerned about access for larger service vehicles such as fire trucks, refuse collection trucks, mail delivery vehicles, and snow plows. Accordingly, the Applicant should provide vehicle-turning analysis exhibits for these vehicles to demonstrate that they can safely enter, circulate within, and exit the site. Vehicle turning exhibits have been provided for passenger car, delivery truck, fire truck, and ambulance. A vehicle turning exhibit shall be provided for a garbage truck to confirm it can safely access the trash enclosure at the rear of the property and exit the site.

The Applicant shall provide testimony regarding how site access will be coordinated between large service vehicles as it appears that only one such vehicle can access the site at a time.

**The proposed pavement area in the rear yard has been expanded to accommodate an on-site turnaround area for the garbage truck. A vehicle turning exhibit has also been provided demonstrating that the truck can safely enter and exit the site.**

17. The proposed van accessible space has been relocated from the rear to the front of the property where it is relatively close to the driveway entrance, potentially creating a safety issue. Additionally,



the access aisle is recommended to be located on the passenger side of the space in accordance with ADA Standards Section 502.3.4. **The Applicant testified that the proposed parking layout complies with Essex County requirements, which require a minimum 20-foot parking setback from the right-of-way line. The access aisle for the ADA space has also been relocated to the passenger side of the space.**

### Architectural

18. The Applicant shall provide testimony as to the proposed interior and exterior architectural features of the buildings, including building materials, color, signage, and lighting. **The Applicant provided testimony during Board hearing.**
19. The Applicant shall provide testimony as to the types and layouts of the individual units as well as the proposed type of ownership of the units. **The Applicant provided testimony during Board hearing.**
20. The site plan on Sheet ZN1 shows proposed HVAC units proposed along the rear of the townhome units. These units require a side yard setback variance. The Applicant shall indicate how these units will be screened appropriately in accordance with Section 150-7.13 of the Township Code and if they can be located anywhere else to eliminate the proposed variance. The Applicant shall provide testimony if any additional mechanical equipment (generator, transformer etc.) will be required for the proposed buildings. **The Applicant provided testimony during Board hearing. The site plan shall be revised to show HVAC units for all residential units.**
21. **The floor areas on Sheet ZN2 shall be revised to be consistent with the site plan.**

### Stormwater Management

22. The Applicant has submitted a Stormwater Management Report. Our office has completed its review, and drainage comments were issued under separate cover on December 4, 2025. We recommend the Applicant resolve the drainage comments prior to the public hearing as they could impact the configuration of the overall site layout. The Applicant noted that drainage comments will be addressed as a condition of approval should the project be approved by the Board.

### Water Supply

23. The size and material of construction for the existing water main in Grove Avenue shall be noted on plan. The Applicant noted that size and material of the existing water main will be added to the plans once water main mapping has been received from the Township.
24. The Applicant shall submit the utility plan to the Fire Code Official to review the proposed fire hydrant location and verify that a fire truck can access it during an emergency. The final location of the fire hydrant is subject to the approval of the Fire Code Official. The Applicant noted that comments from Fire Code Official were received on January 23, 2026. Testimony shall be provided detailing how these comments have been addressed. **The Applicant provided testimony during Board hearing.**
25. The Applicant must submit calculations demonstrating that the water pressure will be maintained at a minimum of 20 PSI at street level under all flow conditions per N.J.A.C. 5:21-5.3(i)3 and N.J.A.C. 7:10-11.10(d). Hydrant tests have to be performed. The Applicant noted that hydrant flow tests will



be performed prior to construction to determine the water pressure. **A note to this effect has been added to Sheet SP-4.1.**

### Sanitary Sewer

26. The Applicant shall verify that the existing downstream sewer system has sufficient capacity to accommodate the proposed development, ensuring that the additional sanitary flow will not compromise the capacity of the existing sewer main. The combined existing and proposed flows shall comply with N.J.A.C. 7:14A-23.6(b), which requires that "gravity sanitary sewers, including outfalls, shall be designed to carry at least twice the estimated average projected flow when flowing half full..." The Applicant noted that capacity of the existing 8-inch PVC sewer main on Grove Avenue with 2% slope is 2.03 cfs. When comparing twice the increase in flow (0.008 cfs) to half of the sanitary sewer's capacity (1.01 cfs), this only represents 0.8% increase, which can be considered de minimus.

The Applicant shall confirm the sewer main size and slope as the Township sewer map shows a 10-inch sewer main on Grove Avenue. **The Applicant noted that should this application be approved, the size of the sewer main within the ROW will be confirmed.**

27. Cleanouts shall be provided for all proposed sanitary sewer laterals. **The utility plan has been revised to provide cleanouts for all proposed sanitary sewer laterals.**
28. In accordance with NJAC 7:10-12.36 (e), all water mains and sanitary sewer lines shall be separated by a horizontal distance of at least 10 feet. If such lateral separation is not possible, the water and sewer lines shall be in separate trenches with the top of the sewer line at least 18 inches below the bottom of the water main. **A note to this effect has been added to Sheet SP-4.1.**

### Tree Removal

29. The Applicant proposes to remove twelve (12) trees on property ranging in size from 6 to 32 inches. A tree removal schedule shall be provided on plan. A tree removal chart has been added to Sheet SP-5. A total of 22 tree replacement trees are required whereas 107 trees are proposed.
30. The Township of Verona has a Tree Removal Ordinance (Chapter 493, Article II) and any trees to be removed are subject to review and approval by permit only. The permit application is available on-line at the Township website and shall be reviewed independently of this review letter by the Township Zoning Official. The Applicant noted that a tree removal permit will be submitted to the Township once the project receives Board approval.

### Retaining Walls

31. The Applicant proposes to construct a 4-foot-high retaining wall along the east and south property line. The wall drains shall be directed to discharge away from the neighboring properties. **A note to this effect has been added to Sheet SP-4.1.**
32. All retaining walls greater than three (3) feet in exposed height require retaining wall stability calculations to be provided by a licensed professional engineer in the State of New Jersey. The calculations must be signed and sealed, for the Township's review and approval prior to construction. The Applicant noted that retaining wall calculations will be provided as a condition of approval.

### Lighting



33. All lights must have backshields and house side shields provided. A note to this effect has been added to Sheet SP-6.1.
34. The Applicant should provide the hours of operation for the parking lot lighting. The Applicant noted that proposed lighting will operate on a dusk to dawn timer. A note to this effect has also been added to Sheet SP-6.1.
35. The Township reserves the right to require modification and changes in the proposed lighting for a six (6) month assessment period after construction of the project is completed and a Certificate of Occupancy is issued so that the Township officials have the opportunity to determine what, if any, changes are necessary to lighting improvements. A note to this effect has been added to Sheet SP-6.1.

### Landscaping

36. The proposed tree planting schedule on Sheet SP-5 includes several exotic species such as autumn gold and skylands. Native species are preferred over exotic species. The Applicant shall review the Township's recommended plant selection list and revise the proposed tree species accordingly. The Applicant noted that the landscape plan has been revised to address the comments from the Shade Tree Commission.

### Soil Movement

37. The Applicant shall provide the estimated overall excavation and fill quantities in cubic yards for this development. A total of **320 CY cut and 2,633 CY fill** is proposed for the development as noted on **Sheet SP-4.1**.
  - a. Any excess excavated soil shall be trucked offsite. Any fill to be imported to the site shall be certified as clean in accordance with NJDEP standards. A note to this effect has been added to Sheet SP-7.2.
  - b. Additionally, The Applicant is required to provide evidence to the source of any fill to be brought to the site. A note to this effect has been added to Sheet SP-7.2.
38. The Township of Verona has a Soil Removal Ordinance (Section 440) and any soil to be moved is subject to review and approval by Township Council. A note to this effect has been added to Sheet SP-7.2.
39. The proposed site disturbance is noted to be 34,000 SF as indicated on Sheet SP-7.2. The application will require Soil Erosion Sediment Control Plan Certification from the Hudson-Essex-Passaic Soil Conservation District. The Applicant noted that application to HEPSCD will be submitted for review and approval.
40. Any damage to the Township roadway, curb or storm drainage will be the responsibility of the property owner to satisfactorily address as per the Township Engineer. The contractor must maintain soil erosion and sediment control measures throughout the duration of construction. A note to this effect has been added to Sheet SP-3.



### **Signage**

41. The Applicant shall provide testimony regarding any proposed signage and its compliance with Section 150-7.9 of the Township Code. The Applicant noted that no signage is proposed other than traffic signage for this development.

### **Roof Leaders, Sump Pump Discharge, Grading and Property Maintenance Guidelines**

42. The Owner/Applicant must submit an As-Built Survey, post construction, mapping all the improvements, including the stormwater system. This survey must include finished elevations.
43. Sump pump, roof leaders and storm water pipe drain discharge shall preferably be directed onto an absorbent surface as grass, mulch, rock or soil so the discharge will be dissipated and not immediately drain to the Township Right-of-Way or adjacent properties. The discharge location shall be as approved by the Engineer or Public Works Manager or his/her designee. In the event it is not feasible to direct discharge on to an absorbent surface, the discharge may be directed to a storm sewer, swale, ditch, detention basin, drainage basin or other drainage facility or location as approved by the Engineer, Public Works Manager or his/her designee. If a connection to the storm sewer is approved, a permit will be required from the Engineer, Public Works Manager prior to installation. The connection must also be inspected by the Engineer or Public Works Manager.
44. The discharge location shall not create a public nuisance. This includes any condition or act which is or may become injurious or hazardous to the public.
45. The discharge shall not create a build-up of icing, standing water or algae growth on the street, sidewalk or public Right-of-Way.
46. The discharge shall not be directed towards an adjacent property in such a manner as to cause damage to the adjacent property or create a nuisance.
47. No person shall connect, or cause or permit to be connected, any sump pump, pipe drain, floor drain, surface drain, subsoil drain or leader pipe with the house sanitary sewer, or to use the sanitary sewer connection or any pipe or drain connected therewith for the purpose of receiving and discharging drainage of any kind other than from plumbing fixtures.
48. Sump pump and pipe drain discharges may not be directed into a Township Street or Right-of-Way unless permission is granted by the Engineer, Public Works Manager or his/her designee.
49. Roofs and outdoor areas shall be sloped to direct water away from buildings. Roof drains shall be connected to an approved storm water drainage system where and when possible. If a subterranean leader system is to be utilized, the system must be approved by the Township Engineer.
50. Please note the following:
  - a. Water runoff which historically flowed from one property to another prior to an uphill home or developed area being built may continue to flow in the same direction after the home is built or area developed only if:
    - There is no diversion or channeling which results in the water flow being concentrated in one area, and;
    - There is no substantial construction on the uphill lot resulting in increased rates of surface run-off.



- b. If a detrimental change in the natural pattern of drainage on an uphill lot has occurred, the uphill property owner is responsible for interception and piping or directing surface water to a natural drainage area or a storm water drainage system.
- c. The downhill property owner is responsible for providing proper drainage for water flow that occurs in accordance with natural drainage patterns, which existed prior to construction.
- d. Due to the inherent difficulty in accurately predicting post-construction water flow from a property, changes in water flow may not be discovered until well after the construction is completed. In such cases, if it is determined the lot is generating an additional flow or intensity of storm-water across an adjacent property, in excess of what existed prior to construction, the Applicant, at the Applicant's expense, will be responsible for all measures necessary to abate the excess flow of stormwater.

Thank you for your kind attention to this matter. Should you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

Sarfeen Tanweer, P.E.

ST/da

cc: Kathleen Miesch – via email