



**TOWNSHIP OF VERONA PLANNING BOARD
COUNTY OF ESSEX, STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-22

RESOLUTION GRANTING WAIVER OF SITE PLAN REVIEW

Wassem Arsheed / Dear Jac Café —573 Bloomfield Avenue, Block 1806, Lot 17— TC Zone

WHEREAS, Wassem Arsheed, having an address of 4 Laurel Court, North Caldwell, New Jersey 07006 (the “Applicant”), proposes to occupy the first floor of the premises known as 573 Bloomfield Avenue and designated as Block 1806, Lot 17 on the Tax Map of the Township of Verona (the “Property”), owned by WNA Realty, LLC and located in the TC (Town Center) Zone District, for the operation of a café and quick-serve restaurant to be known as Dear Jac Café (the “Proposed Use”); and

WHEREAS, the first floor of the Property was previously occupied as an optical office / retail, and the Applicant proposes an interior renovation of approximately 599.43 square feet, including a dining area of approximately 504.4 square feet exclusive of the stairwell, involving removal of the existing restroom and kitchenette, removal of all interior walls except the interior staircase wall, removal of a column and its replacement with a beam, removal of the existing rear windows and radiators, replacement of the entry door, installation of an additional egress door in the kitchen, a new ADA-compliant restroom, prep area and kitchen with new exhaust, relocation of existing mechanical equipment to the basement, relocation of the electrical panel, and new plumbing, lighting, outlets and finishes; and

WHEREAS, the Proposed Use constitutes both a change of use and an alteration of a building within the meaning of § 430-3A of the Code of the Township of Verona (the “Code”), such that site plan review and approval would otherwise be required; and

WHEREAS, the Zoning Official of the Township of Verona, by Zoning Permit Review No. 2026-127 dated July 9, 2026, determined that a café is a permitted principal use within the TC Zone District under § 150-17.14B of the Code; that the Proposed Use is fast-casual in character, with customers ordering at a counter and without full wait-staff service; that the proposed signage complies with § 150-7.9 of the Code; that the structural change consisting of the new egress door is de minimis; and that a Zoning Permit be issued, approved as to zoning only, pending site plan approval or waiver thereof by the Planning Board; and

WHEREAS, the Applicant, has requested that the Planning Board waive site plan review pursuant to § 430-3D(1) of the Code, and the Zoning Official has presented that request to the Board with her recommendation that a waiver be granted; and

WHEREAS, the Proposed Use involves no addition, no new construction, no increase in gross floor area, no change to the building footprint, no new or altered curb cut, driveway or access point, no change to off-street parking or loading, and no change to site lighting, drainage or impervious coverage; and the only alterations affecting the exterior of the building consist of the replacement of the entry door, the removal of existing rear windows and the installation of a rear egress door, all of which the Zoning Official has found to be de minimis; and

WHEREAS, with respect to off-street parking, § 150-12.1B(3) of the Code provides that in the Town Center zoning district parking requirements shall not apply except in the case of additions and/or new construction of greater than 1,000 square feet of gross floor area, or for cafeterias, full-service restaurants, snack and nonalcoholic beverage bars, and limited-service restaurants with a seating capacity of greater than fifty (50) patrons; and the Board finds that the Proposed Use involves neither an addition nor new construction, and that its seating capacity does not exceed fifty (50) patrons, such that no minimum off-street parking is required; and

WHEREAS, § 430-3D(1) of the Code authorizes the Planning Board to waive site plan review where the impact of the proposed development on the community, surrounding neighborhood and site will be minimal, upon a finding, based on a sketch plan, that the principles and standards of § 430-17 of the Code are substantially satisfied and that no further determination is required; and § 430-7A of the Code requires no public hearing where the Board so waives review; and

WHEREAS, the Board considered this matter at its regular public meeting of August 27, 2026, and, having reviewed the Zoning Official's July 9, 2026 recommendation

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning Board of the Township of Verona that a waiver of site plan review is hereby granted for the Proposed Use at the Property, subject to the following conditions:

1. Aggregate seating capacity, including all seating at tables, at counters, on benches and any outdoor seating, shall not exceed fifty (50) patrons. Any increase beyond fifty (50) patrons shall void this waiver and shall require a new application to the Board demonstrating compliance with Article XII of Chapter 150 of the Code.
2. The premises shall not be used as an event space, event venue, banquet hall, party hall, dance hall or nightclub, nor for any use primarily characterized by assembly-based or episodic gatherings, nor rented to any private group or individual for events unrelated to the principal café use, in accordance with §§ 150-2.3 and 150-17.14F of the Code.
3. No outdoor amplification, broadcast sound or exterior speakers shall be permitted, in accordance with § 150-17.14H(1) of the Code.
4. Prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy, the Applicant shall submit to the Zoning Official information regarding the location and operation of refuse and recycling storage and removal, which shall comply with § 150-7.15 of the Code.
5. The rear egress door shall be subject to the review and approval of the Bureau of Fire Prevention, the Construction Department and such other departments as may have jurisdiction. The Applicant shall submit a survey sufficient to establish the dimensions of the rear alley into which the egress door opens.
6. Signage shall conform to § 150-7.9 of the Code and to the dimensions reviewed by the Zoning Official. Structural detail for the proposed signage shall be submitted to the Construction Department. No business sign shall be illuminated between 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. except as permitted by § 150-7.9S(4).
7. Any outdoor or sidewalk seating shall require separate approval under §§ 150-7.22 and 150-7.23 of the Code and shall count toward the seating limitation in Condition 1.

8. No exterior alteration of the building or site beyond that described herein shall be undertaken without further application to the Board.
9. The Applicant shall obtain all other required approvals, including those of the Construction Department, the Bureau of Fire Prevention and the Health Department, shall pay all fees and escrows, and shall be bound by all representations made to the Board.
10. This waiver is limited to the Proposed Use as described herein and grants no variance or other relief. Any change or deviation from the plans reviewed by the Zoning Official shall first be approved by the Zoning Official, and any future change may require application to the Board of Adjustment pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution is adopted pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40:55D-10(g), and that the Board Secretary shall cause notice of this decision to be published in accordance with N.J.S.A. 40:55D-10(i) and shall transmit copies hereof to the Applicant, the Owner and the Zoning Official.

MOVED: Chair Pearson **SECOND:** Mr. Freschi

ROLL CALL VOTE:

	Y	N	Abstain	Absent		Y	N	Abstain	Absent
Mr. Magarrell (Alt. 2)				X	Deputy Mayor McEvoy	✓			
Mr. Day (Alt. 1)				X	Mayor Tamburro	✓			
Mrs. Parker	✓				Township Mgr O'Sullivan				X
Mr. Lilley	✓				Vice Chair Hyndman				X
Mr. Camuti	✓				Chair Pearson	✓			
Mr. Freschi	✓								

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the Planning Board of the Township of Verona at its regular public meeting held on August 27, 2026.

Dolores Carpinelli
Dolores Carpinelli,
Secretary, Planning Board

Jessica Pearson
Jessica Pearson,
Chairperson, Planning Board

Dated: August 27, 2026

