

**READINGTON TOWNSHIP ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT MINUTES  
REGULAR MEETING  
October 17, 2019**

The Meeting was called to order by Chair Goodwin at 7:30 p.m. stating that the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act have been met and that this meeting had been duly advertised.

Board Attorney Warner swore in the Board members as follows:

1. Samuel Tropello - Regular Member
2. Karen Mittleman - Alternate #1
3. Chad Maurer – Alternate #2

**ROLL CALL**

Albrecht, C.  
Goodwin, M.  
Harwick, A.  
Kirk, T.  
Maurer, C.  
Mittleman, K.  
Mueller, A.  
Ryan, P.  
Tropello, S.

**Others Present:**

Board Attorney Steven Warner, Esq.,  
Board Planner Andrea Malcolm  
Kelley O'Such, PE for Board Engineer John Hansen  
Board Traffic Engineer Jay Troutman  
Board Environmental Consultant Jack Szczepanski  
Christina Schwartz, Zoning Officer  
Board Secretary Ann Marie Lehberger

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair Goodwin and Mr. Mueller abstained

Mr. Harwick moved, and Ms. Albrecht seconded a motion to approve the August 15, 2019 minutes as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Black River Roasters  
Application No. ZB17-008, Block 7 Lot 4, 424 US Highway 22  
Request for Extension of Conditions of Site Plan Approval – Storage Barn

Attorney John Ursin, Esq. was present on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Ursin explained that the applicant received approval in February 2018 to demolish an existing 500 square foot detached garage to construct a 1,200 square foot barn structure that would be used for storage and coffee roasting. Mr. Ursin explained that the resolution had several conditions that had to be met within 180 days of adoption. He noted that the applicant was delayed because they were considering an alternate option but have now decided to move forward

with the original 2018 approval. They are seeking a six-month extension to complete the resolution compliance. He noted that several of the conditions have already been satisfied.

The Board questioned when the applicant planned to begin construction.

Chris Merton, owner of Black River Roasters explained that they would like to start as soon as possible however the cold weather may delay them until spring.

The Board discussed and agreed to provide a nine-month extension to June 17, 2020.

Mr. Mueller moved, and Ms. Albrecht seconded, a motion to approve the resolution for the extension for Black River Roasters. The roll call vote follows:

<b>Member</b>	<b>Motion</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Not Eligible</b>	<b>Recused</b>
Albrecht		X	X					
Goodwin			X					
Harwick			X					
Kirk			X					
Mueller	X		X					
Ryan			X					
Tropello			X					
Mittleman (Alt #2)								
Maurer (Alt #2)								

Chair Goodwin explained that she is recused from the Hunterdon Brewing application and left the meeting. Vice Chair Harwick took over the meeting.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**Hunterdon Brewing Company LLC**

Appl# ZB 17-011

Block 36 Lot 44.02 – 12 Coddington Road

Preliminary Major Site Plan with Variances for Site Modifications

Nicole Voigt, Esq. was present on behalf of the applicant. Ms. Voigt provided an update of the application status noting some changes that had occurred since the last meeting in August. She explained that Hunterdon Brewing Company has recently secured a contract with a commercial facility in Branchburg that will allow them to be able to stage some trucks at this offsite location. She noted that they therefore are no longer considering a slip lane. She also explained that if there is a need during peak season for the staging of a truck on site that will need to leave before 7am, they will be able to pull the truck inside the warehouse.

The following individuals were present for the applicant:

Paul Sterbenz, PE, applicant's engineer

Brian McGuire, VP of Operations for Hunterdon Brewing Company

Ryan Walsh, Operations Manager for Hunterdon Brewing Company

James Kyle, PP, applicant's planner  
Raymond Liotta, LLA, applicant's landscape architect  
Ed Caballero, PE, applicant's stormwater engineer  
Jack Zybura, PE applicant's acoustical engineer

Exhibits presented:

- A-4 Photograph showing the entrance where trucks can enter the warehouse
- A-5 Landscape Exhibit dated 9/19/19
- A-6 Proposed Conditions Exhibit dated 8/15/19
- A-7 Aerial Photograph of the Site
- A-8 Series of three photos of the western buffer area adjacent to the residences

Ryan Walsh, operations manager for Hunterdon Brewing Company and Brian McGuire, VP of Operations for Hunterdon Brewing Company were present. It was noted that they were both previously sworn. Mr. Walsh explained that they have secured a new commercial location that will be used for staging trucks that need to leave before 7:00 am. Mr. Walsh also explained that other operational changes have been made so that no trucks will be moving on site after 10 pm or before 7 am. Mr. Walsh noted that if the need arises during their busy season, they have made room inside the warehouse so that it would be possible for three trucks to be moved into the warehouse to be staged if needed.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Walsh confirmed that no trucks would be parked in the driveway. He explained that trucks may sit for 15 to 20 minutes while deliveries are being made, but that they will not remain permanently. Mr. Walsh further explained that unhitched trailers would not be stored on the driveway.

Vice Chair Harwick opened the public portion of the meeting.

Lori Potter of 3 Tunis Cox Road was present and expressed concern about trucks idling on Coddington Road in the morning. Mr. Walsh stated that Hunterdon Brewing Company does not allow their trucks to do this but noted that they have no control over the third-party trucks. The Board advised Ms. Potter to contact the police department to report any trucks idling on Coddington Road.

Ed Caballero, PE, the applicant's stormwater engineer was sworn in for testimony and accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Mr. Caballero explained that the applicant is proposing a comprehensive stormwater management plan that can accommodate the increased impervious coverage. He further explained that the applicant would adjust and regrade the existing retention basin to accommodate the additional runoff. Mr. Caballero noted that the basin has been designed in accordance with NJDEP regulations. He explained that the basin will have two 5-foot-wide safety ledges; one of which will be 1.5 feet above the permanent water level and one of which will be 2.5 feet below the permanent water level.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Caballero explained that the basin was originally designed to be used as a fire suppression system but has been used for runoff which has resulted in siltation and reduced flow of water in the basin. He further explained

that the basin would be regraded to restore volume and will also include water quality treatment devices.

The Board questioned the size of the basin. Mr. Caballero stated that the basin is 87 feet wide along the bottom, 180 feet wide at the base and is 5 feet deep.

The Board questioned how much water was typically in the basin. Mr. Caballero noted that there is usually a few feet of water in the basin.

The Board questioned whether a maintenance plan for the basin was needed. The applicant agreed to submit a stormwater management maintenance and operations manual for review by the Board's engineer and environmental consultant.

The Board questioned whether a fence was necessary around the basin for safety. Mr. Caballero explained that there is a fence between the basin and the railroad tracks, but no fence is proposed around the basin. He further explained that the safety ledges will be installed and noted that employees do enjoy walking around the pond/basin during lunch and breaks.

Mr. Szczepanski, the Board's Environmental Consultant confirmed that temporary fencing should be installed around the basin during construction but, once complete, no fence would be necessary for safety purposes given the proposed ledges.

Vice Chair Harwick opened the public portion of the meeting for questions of Mr. Caballero. There were no questions.

Raymond Liotta, LLA, the applicant's landscape architect was sworn and accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Mr. Liotta explained that the applicant had revised the landscape plan in response to comments from the Board Planner to include additional, larger evergreen trees along the western property line near the residential development. Mr. Liotta noted that 106 evergreen trees were initially proposed but that has been increased to 169 trees and now includes different species as recommended by the Board Planner. Mr. Liotta explained that the required street trees have been added along Coddington Road as well shrubs to screen the utility pads and equipment. Mr. Liotta noted that the applicant agrees to install decorative shrubs and trees along the basin as recommended by the Board's environmental consultant.

In response to a question from the Board, Mr. Liotta confirmed that the basin would still be used for fire suppression purposes and the proposed plantings would not interfere with any pumper truck or hoses associated with the fire suppression system.

The Board questioned if there were any overhead utility wires that may interfere with the plantings. Mr. Liotta stated that he did not believe there were any overhead utility lines that would conflict with any of the proposed improvements but noted that if there is a conflict between the plantings and the utility lines on Coddington Road, the applicant would relocate the trees to avoid the conflict.

The applicant agreed to walk the site with the Township Planner to mark the trees proposed to be removed to try to preserve as many of viable trees as possible and ensure that the newly installed plantings will thrive.

Vice Chair Harwick opened the public portion of the meeting for questions of Mr. Liotta. There were no questions.

The Board took a break at 9:20 pm and returned at 9:30 pm with all members present.

Jack. Zybura, PE., the applicant's acoustical engineer was sworn and accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Mr. Zybura explained that he had done an investigation to determine where trucks can be parked on site and still comply with the maximum 50 decibel nighttime sound level requirement. He confirmed that trucks can start their engines at the western property line without exceeding the permitted decibel levels.

The Board questioned whether any daytime sound level readings were done. Mr. Zybura explained that they conducted a set of 24-hour measurements along the westernmost paved parking area and the driveway near the loading bay. He further explained that within the site, the trucks approached a noise level of 65 decibels, but at the edge of the property line, where the sound levels are measured for compliance purposes, the sound levels are fully compliant.

The Board questioned if they considered the proposed landscaping in the sound level calculations. Mr. Zybura stated that they do not take foliage into account when doing calculations.

The Township Zoning Officer confirmed that the number of noise complaints had been reduced significantly given the operational changes implemented since 2017.

The applicant agreed to conduct testing on the property during the last week of June during their busy season to ensure sound levels comply during the day and night as requested by the Board.

Vice Chair Harwick opened the public portion of the meeting for questions of Mr. Zybura. There were no questions.

James Kyle, PP, the applicant's planner was sworn and accepted by the Board as an expert witness. Mr. Kyle gave an overview of the existing conditions at the site. He explained the requested design waiver and variance relief being requested and provided testimony as follows. The applicant is seeking a use variance for outdoor storage, which is permitted provided it is sufficiently screened. Although they cannot completely comply with the screening requirements, due to the location of the driveway on the adjoining Fimble property, the applicant complies with 90 to 95% of the screening requirement. The site is particularly suited to outside storage by the nature of what occurs on the site, the unique topography of the site and the existing vegetation that can be used to help screen the use. The proposed screening along the western property line will create an effective buffer, given the existing landscaping and the proposed 8 to 10-foot-tall evergreens and spruces

that will be installed. Mr. Kyle explained that there is a common area behind the residential lots that creates an effective buffer and that the existing trees are almost as tall as the second story of the adjacent residences. Mr. Kyle noted that the applicant's proposal complies with the intent of the Master Plan, particularly given the extensive screening proposed.

Jay Troutman, The Township's traffic engineer was sworn and explained that the applicant agreed to move the automatic gate from the proposed 60 feet to the road to 80 feet as suggested in their review letter. Mr. Troutman noted that this allows more room for a tractor trailer to fit in the driveway without sticking out onto Coddington Road.

The Board questioned whether the applicant proposed to install sidewalk along Coddington Road. Mr. Kyle explained that no sidewalks are proposed since there are no existing sidewalks to the north or south of the property.

Vice Chair Harwick opened the public portion of the meeting for questions of Mr. Kyle. There were no questions.

There were no questions or comments from the public.

Ms. Voigt provided closing comments and the Board began deliberations and discussed conditions of approval.

Ms. Kirk moved, and Mr. Tropello seconded, a motion to approve the application for Hunterdon Brewing Company with conditions. The roll call vote follows:

Member	Motion	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Not Eligible	Recused
Albrecht			X					
Goodwin								X
Harwick			X					
Kirk	X		X					
Mueller			X					
Ryan			X					
Tropello		X	X					
Mittleman (Alt #2)			X					
Maurer (Alt #2)								

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Ryan moved, and Ms. Kirk seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Ann Marie Lehberger  
 Zoning Board Secretary