BOROUGH OF BOGOTA
PLANNING & ZONING BOARD
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES – APRIL 14, 2026

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 PM.

II. FLAG SALUTE

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT

The statement of compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act was read into the record, confirming proper notice was provided, published, and posted on the Borough website.

IV. ROLL CALL

Present:

- Mayor Fede
- Councilman Mitchell
- Corrado Mancini
- Yesenia Frias
- Rebecca Foster
- Daniel Schnipp
- Anthony Teresi
- Robert Foster
- Robert Robbins

Absent:

- Samuel Harris
- Arthur Sopelsa

Also Present:

- Board Attorney Jason Shafron
- Board Secretary Melissa Baque
- Board Engineer Robert Costa
- Board Planner Paul Grygiel

V. Public Comment (Non-Agenda Items)

Motion to open to the public by Councilman Mitchell, seconded by Mr. Robbins. All in favor.

1. A representative from Trinity Lutheran Church inquired about installing a digital sign.

The Board advised the applicant to consult with the Zoning Officer/Construction Official and, if necessary, file an application.

No further public comment.

Motion to close public comment by Mrs. Frias and seconded by. Teresi. All in favor.

VI. Public Hearing – Application

1. 151 JPD Realty LLC
151 West Fort Lee Road
Block 64.01, Lot 11.01
Proposal: Conditional Use Variance Approval for Modifications to Existing Automobile Service Station
Attorney: David C. Russo, Esq.

During the variance application, a conflict of interest was identified by Mayor Fede but since the matter was the Zoning Board configuration she and Councilmember Mitchell were excused as they are only on the Planning Board.

Application Summary Mr. Russo gave opening

The applicant proposed:

- Replacement of underground fuel tanks (required by NJDEP)
- New canopy installation (larger than existing)
- Increase from 3 pumps to 5 pumps (8 fueling positions)
- Addition of diesel fuel service
- Reduction of auto repair bays from 4 to 2
- Reduction of building size (~2,100 sq. ft. to ~1,300 sq. ft.)
- Site circulation and access improvements

Variances Requested

- Conditional use variances (D variances)
- Lot size, frontage, and depth deficiencies (pre-existing)
- Setback variances (fuel dispensers, rear yard, canopy)
- Canopy in front yard (accessory structure)
- Height variance for canopy (17.5 ft vs. 15 ft permitted)
- Building coverage increase (31% to 32.5%)
- Impervious coverage variance (87.7% vs. 85% permitted)
- Signage variance (canopy signage area)

Testimony

1. Engineer – Tyler VanderValk (Civil Engineer)

- Presented site plans and revisions dated March 18, 2026 Exhibit x
- Described site layout, circulation improvements, drainage, and lighting

- Confirmed improvements reduce building size and improve site functionality
- Explained variance justifications

2. Applicant Representative (Gurpal Singh)

- Testified regarding operations
- Gas station hours: approximately 5:00 AM – 11:00 PM
- Fuel deliveries typically occur early morning or late night to avoid peak hours
- Agreed to reasonable delivery timing conditions

3. Board Engineer Comments

- Requested clarification on parking layout and retaining wall design
- Noted need for construction details and possible screening
- Discussed circulation concerns and parking feasibility

4. Additional Surveyor – Steven Koestner

- Testified regarding utilities and site conditions
- Confirmed sewer depth and feasibility
- Addressed retaining wall replacement and grading

5. Tank Contractor

- Estimated construction duration: approximately 2+ months
- Site to be fully fenced and closed during construction
- Police traffic control to be used if necessary

Board Discussion & Conditions

Key conditions discussed and agreed upon:

- No outdoor vehicle repairs
- No vehicle storage outside
- No painting of vehicles (indoors or outdoors)
- Landscaping to be installed and maintained
- Signage limited to plans and non-essential signage removed
- Lighting to be shielded and directed downward
- Deliveries to avoid peak school hours where possible
- Striping and traffic flow improvements required
- Compliance with prior approval conditions
- Agreed to remove two parking spots by pylon sign.

Public Comment on Application: No one from public.

Questions raised regarding:

- Traffic circulation and safety
- Driveway access and congestion

Applicant and professionals responded accordingly.
Mr. Russo closed with argument on reasons to approve the variance balancing positive and negative criteria

Board Deliberation

Board members expressed that:

- The site is pre-existing and undersized
- Proposal represents a significant improvement
- Reduction in repair operations improves site conditions
- Overall benefits outweigh requested variances

Vote: Motion to approve the application with conditions by Rebecca Foster and seconded by Yesenia Frias. Roll Call Vote: All board members present votes yes. Motion Carried.

VII. RESOLUTIONS – Mayor Fede returned to meeting

- 2026-1 Reorganization Meeting for 2026

Vote: Motion made by Mrs. Frias and seconded by Mrs. Foster. All board members present voted yes. Motion Carried.

- 2026-2 The Planning/Zoning Board of the Borough of Bogota Adopting a Housing Element and Fair Share Plan for Round Four

Vote: Motion made by Mr. Robbins and seconded by Mr. Schnipp. All board members present voted yes, except for Mr. Mancini & Mr. Teresi who abstained. Motion Carried.

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Regular Meeting Minutes – 02-24-26

Motion made by Mrs. Foster. All board members present voted yes, except for Mr. Mancini & Mr. Robbins who abstained. The motion passed with a voice vote.

- Regular Meeting Minutes –03-24-26

Motion made by Mrs. Foster. All board members present voted yes, except for Mayor Fede who abstained. The motion passed with a voice vote.

IX. CORRESPONDENCE

Mrs. Frias advised the board that a new application for a house on River Road was received and it is under review by the Completeness Committee.

X. PAYMENT OF BILLS

- Costa Engineering – Inv#23739 – $675.00 – (151 W. Fort Lee Rd. Application)

Vote: Motion made by Mrs. Frias and seconded by Mrs. Foster. All board members present voted yes. Motion Carried.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn by Mrs. Foster and seconded by Mrs. Frias. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:15 PM.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this is a true copy of the minutes.

Melissa Baque,
Board Secretary