



Borough of Highlands LUB Special Meeting Minutes
Community Center, 22 Snug Harbor Ave., Highlands, NJ
December 18, 2025

Chair Knox called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Mayor Broullon, Ms. LaRussa, Mr. Montecalvo, Councilmember Olszewski, Mr. Sayah, Mr. Zill, Chair Knox, Mr. Cramer, Mr. Cody, Ms. Vickery

Absent: Chief Burton, Vice Chair Tierney, Ms. Chang

Also Present: Board Engineer Carmela Roberts, Board Attorney Dustin Glass, Board Planner Susan Gruel, Board Secretary Nancy Tran, and Assistant Board Secretary Alicia Jones

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

HEARING ON NEW BUSINESS:

LUB25-06: Highlands Landing Corp. – 326 Shore Dr., B100 L27

Mr. Glass explained meeting protocol and procedure. Mayor Broullon, Councilmember Olszewski, and Mr. Montecalvo stepped down from the dais.

Salvatore Alfieri, Esq., applicant’s attorney, explained the application and noted his team. Mr. Sayah asked for clarification of the application. Mr. Alfieri explained why they were in front of the Board and that they will get into more details later and will discuss history of the property and business as needed.

Brad Thompson, applicant’s engineer, was sworn in and his credentials were accepted. He described the property and the business operating at the location. He utilized a colorized rendering of the site plan, which now included landscaping. He continued to describe the business and its use during off peak and peak season. Mr. Thompson explained the proposed changes and reconfiguration of the parking lot, traffic flow, parking lot improvements, paving, striping, car lift, drop-off space, sidewalk, and ADA compliance. He added that proposed plan was to maximize the number of available parking spaces allowed for the property.

Mr. Thompson proceeded to note the variances needed – use variance for ferry, Sandbox, and beach, variance for number of parking spaces, and variance for front and side set back. Mr. Sayah asked about the set back for the lift and Mr. Thompson answered that it was one of the set backs that they will be requesting a variance. Mr. Alfieri asked that his professional be allowed to finish his testimony. Mr. Thompson added that they will also need variance for light intensity and lot coverage. Mr. Thompson then noted that the application will be seeking waivers for parking space size, the number of compact parking spaces, the car lifts, and landscaping.

Mr. Thompson then described the proposed lighting and the stormwater management plan. He added that they received approval from Freehold Soil and NJDEP CAFRA, further explaining the CAFRA approval. He addressed the Fire Marshal’s review, noting that they will comply with the striping for the fire lane and that they will work with the fire officials. Mr. Thompson addressed the

Board Engineer's report and stated that they will comply within DEP's requirements. He then noted the Board Planner's review and stated that they will comply except for the parking space widths as that is one of the waivers that they are seeking. He also addressed trash removal and utilities for the property.

Ms. LaRussa wanted to clarify if the application is seeking for a use variance for current business operations without a variance. Mr. Thompson answered that their planner will speak more on that later. Mr. Zill asked for clarification for the current number of spaces, proposed number of spaces with and without the car lift. Mr. Thompson answered and gave their justification for the proposed number of spaces. He added that he had observed the parking lot situation during peak season. Ms. Vickery asked how the compact parking spaces and fire lane would be enforced. Mr. Thompson answered that the compact parking spaces will be angled and that their proposed plans try to prevent users from parking in non-parking spaces. Mr. Alfieri offered that the Borough could be allowed to enforce parking on the private property. Mr. Sayah wanted to know the number of ferry trips per day to better understand the capacity needed. Mr. Glass stated that the applicant's profession for that matter has not testified yet. Mr. Thompson provided an answer but the applicant's planner will have more details later. Mr. Sayah referenced the applicant's 2001 Planning Board resolution.

Chair Knox opened the floor for public questions.

Susan Flannery, Central Ave., asked about the potential noise level of the lifts. Mr. Thompson noted that they will have to comply with State regulated for daytime and nighttime decibel levels but he will get real numbers.

?? ??, Shore Dr., asked for clarification regarding the car lifts, the exhaust from the elevated cars, and justification for the car lifts. Chair Knox reminded the public that this segment is only for public questions. Mr. Alfieri added that Mr. Thompson is not qualified to answer the concerns.

Patricia Huber, Beach Blvd., asked for clericalization of their parking study. Mr. Alfieri suggested to save the question for their planner. She asked why they proposed less parking spaces, if the lifts will require electrical, and whether the Sandbox has been operating illegally. Mr. Thompson answered the first two questions and stated that he was not qualified to answer the last question. Chair Knox reiterated that public questions be limited to Mr. Thompson's testimony.

John Valkos, DSV Management, Bay Ave., wanted clarification of the car lifts and asked if they would be similar to picture he provided (Ex. O-1). He added that the proposed area for the lifts is 3ft higher than the Bayview Condo and thus making them relatively 20ft high for condo residents.

Cindy Zipf, Mountain St. and Clean Ocean Action, was concerned about water quality and stormwater management. She asked if the stormwater management report referenced could be shared with the public. Ms. Tran asked the applicant to forward the pdf to post to the Borough website. Mr. Alfieri clarified that the applicant did not make a formal written response to the Board Engineer's report. Ms. Zipf continued asking questions regarding the stormwater management plan, control of litter entering the water system, oil, suspended solids, and bathroom spill plans,

Darden ??, PTAK Towers, asked applicant's plans to raise the floodplain level, striping on gravel, frequency of striping, plans for permanent bathrooms, lift operations, and lighting. Mr. Thompson provided some answers and Mr. Alfieri added that his client will provide more details if the Board requires it. Chair Knox noted that the Board prefers to have more details on the operation of the lifts.

Chair Knox and Mr. Glass again explained the meeting procedure and that public comment will be allowed at the conclusion of all testimony.

Rick Jones, Mountain St., asked about the drainage situation, the square footage of the gravel area, drainage during storm event vs. during flooding event. Mr. Thompson noted that his analysis ends after the 25 year storm scenario as the entire property would be underwater in all scenarios thereafter. He addressed the current pipe size and the proposed pipe size, that is required and approved by DEP.

Alyssa Cowen ??, Shore Dr., asked if the lifts could be relocated away from residential properties. Mr. Thompson gave their justification process for the location.

Frank Montecalvo, Portland Rd., asked for clarification of the stormwater pipes and drainage. He asked how any comparison can be made when the pipes are currently clogged. Mr. Thompson answered that their analysis is based on modelling that everything works as it should and that they worked with DEP for the plans.

Nancy Abrams ??, Shore Dr., asked about the noise ordinance. Mr. Thompson and Mr. Alfieri answered that it is a state law that they have to comply.

Dan T??, Sandpiper Condos, asked about the number of lifts.

Mr. Valkos came up again to ask if there will be fencing by the lifts and who will own the lifts. Mr. Thompson answered that there is nothing proposed and that he was not sure who owns the lifts.

Mr. Montecalvo came up again to ask for further clarification of the proposed pipe pitch.

Jim Talcott, Sandpiper Condo, asked about the proposed lighting and their hours of operations. Mr. Thompson answered that there are 30 poles proposed with varying number of lights on each. Mr. Alfieri added that he will get the answer for the lighting hours of operation.

Andy Savas, Beach Blvd., asked about the corrosiveness of the lifts material near saltwater conditions and consideration of flaking rust entering the water system. Mr. Thompson answered that the lifts are designed to work outside.

Carol Schimenek, Shore Dr., asked about users and landscaping of the overflow parking lot and who best to contact regarding landscaping maintenance concerns.

Mr. Zill asked for ridership data as ridership has increased and parking spaces is decreasing. Ms. LaRussa asked for clarification of the actual number of parking spaces.

Ms. Roberts asked for clarification of Mr. Thompson’s response that he would comply with her report except where DEP requires otherwise. She requested that he respond in writing how he will resolve issues she raised in her report. Mr. Thompson responded that he will do so. When Ms. Roberts asked how they will address the parking deficit, Mr. Alfieri suggested that she wait to ask their traffic expert, John Rea. Ms. Roberts asked if they would consider relocating the lifts to the center of the property and additional questions regarding the operation of the lifts. She recommended that they provide a noise expert to testify. Mr. Sayah asked if they considered valet service to the overflow parking lot so that no lift would be needed at all. Ms. Gruel agreed with Ms. Roberts suggestion for a noise expert. She asked for the justification for the proposed number of lifts, whether consideration of adjacent properties were taken into account, bike use, and sidewalk width. Ms. Roberts asked how they calculated the existing number of parking spaces. Mr. Sayah added that the 2001 resolution noted 848 spaces. Ms. Vickery asked what happens to the lifts when there’s no electricity. Mr. Sayah thought that the Highlands ferry was at full capacity.

The Board took a break at 9:14pm and returned at 9:23pm. **Second roll call:**

Present on the dais: Ms. LaRussa, Mr. Sayah, Mr. Zill, Chair Knox, Mr. Cramer, Mr. Cody, Ms. Vickery

Ineligible: Mayor Broullon, Mr. Montecalvo, Councilmember Olszewski,

Absent: Chief Burton, Vice Chair Tierney, Ms. Chang

Also Present: Board Engineer Carmela Roberts, Board Attorney Dustin Glass, Board Planner Susan Gruel, Board Secretary Nancy Tran, and Assistant Board Secretary Alicia Jones

Mr. Alfieri requested to adjourn to allow his traffic expert to address questions raised so far. Mr. Glass stated that the application will be carried to Tuesday, January 13, 2026 – after the Land Use Board Reorganization meeting on January 8, 2026 – without further notice.

Mr. Sayah added that he would like a maritime log to determine the number of ferry trips each day. Someone in the public asked if they could participate remotely and Mr. Glass answered that the meetings are in person only. Another public member asked about the 200ft list and notification requirements and Mr. Glass answered that the applicant is responsible for mailing out the notices to list provided by the tax assessor but not whether the post office delivers the mail.

ADJOURNMENT

Offered by Mr. Sayah and seconded by Mr. Cody. All in favor. None opposed. Meeting adjourned at 9:28 pm.

I, Nancy Tran, certify that this is a true and correct record of the actions of the Borough of Highlands Land Use Board December 18, 2025

Nancy Tran, Land Use Board Secretary