TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE
Engineering Department

TO: File

FROM: BK Brenda Kraemer, P.E., Assistant Municipal Engineer

SUBJECT: Bulk Variance Application No. ZB-6/26
Janusz, Pilgrim Avenue
Tax Map Page 4, Block 406, Lots 16-17

DATE: September 22, 2026

General:

The applicant has requested a bulk variance for construction of a single-family dwelling. A variance is required as the existing combined frontage will be 50', where 60' is required per the R-4 Zone standards. Lots 16 and 17 will be consolidated. Public utilities are available in Pilgrim Avenue.

The applicant's engineer shall address the technical comments in our detailed report.

Detailed Report:

1. The property is located in the R-4 Zone and the lot characteristics are similar to other single-family properties. The applicant obtained a SFLA (square footage of living area) calculation from the Zoning Department and the proposed architectural plans comply.

2. A wavier has been requested for removal of a 36" diameter specimen pine tree in the rear yard. We will defer to the Planning Consultant.

3. The grading plan shows swales to be constructed along the side property lines to direct runoff to the rear yard. There are several grading and drainage issues to be addressed.

    a. The plans currently show swale depth 1-2" below existing grade on adjacent properties which is not sufficient to prevent cross lot drainage.

    b. If a sump pump is required in the basement, there is no viable outlet design provided.

    c. A mitigation measure is required to prevent all runoff accumulating in southeastern corner of the property and impacting Lot 18.

4. A 3" caliper street tree shall be provided. It may be located on the property, instead of within the right of way.

5. A deed of consolidation is required. The property address will be 727 Pilgrim Avenue, Lot 16.01.

    Street opening permit requirements shall be included in the new lot deed. The applicant should be aware that Pilgrim Avenue is planned for re-surfacing in 2027. All utilities must be extended to the site prior to commencement of roadwork.

6. The soil erosion plans shall be removed from the set. Approval will be issued during the plot plan process. Note that the stockpiles currently shown in the rear yard will not be permitted without an appropriate setback for equipment.

7. The location plans shows the neighbor's chain link fence on the applicant's property. The applicant's attorney shall address how the situation will be resolved.

8. Availability of service letters are required from the utility companies.

Documents Reviewed

- Application documents and plans submitted with September 10, 2026 letter.

BK:las

November 4, 2026

KMA
KYLE+MCMANUS ASSOCIATES
POLICY
PLANNING
DESIGN

Lawrence Township Zoning Board of Adjustment (via e-mail)
2207 Lawrenceville Road
PO Box 6006
Lawrence Township, NJ 08648

Re: Grzegorz Janusz and Marek Koziatek – ZB-6/26
Block 406, Lots 16 and 17 – 727 Pilgrim Avenue
Bulk Variance Relief
R-4- Residential 4 District

Dear Board Members:

Pursuant to the Board's request, we have reviewed the above captioned matter for compliance with the Land Use Ordinance of the Township of Lawrence. The material reviewed, as supplied by the Township, included the following:

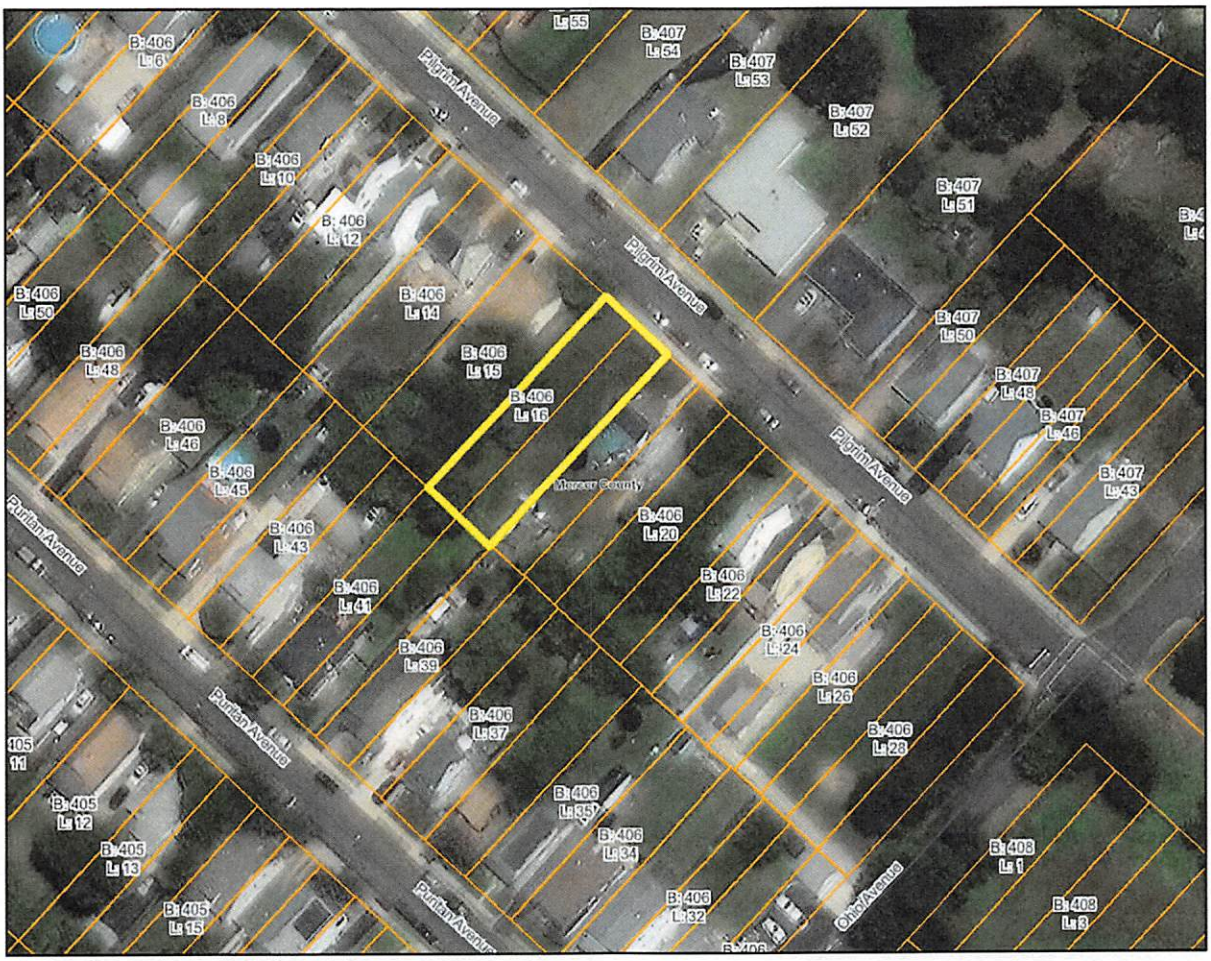
1. Land Use Application ZB-6/26 and supporting documents.
2. House Location and Utility Plan, prepared by Joseph Mester, PE, of Trenton Engineering Co., Inc., dated October 20, 2025 and last revised August 30, 2026, consisting of 7 sheets.
3. Architectural Plans prepared by Patrick Hirsz, RA, dated October 20, 2025, consisting of 7 sheets.

Based on the information provided with the submission, the applicant is merging two nonconforming lots and seeks bulk variance relief to construct a detached single-family dwelling on the above referenced property. The proposed two-story dwelling will contain 4 bedrooms on the second floor along with 2 full baths, while the first floor includes a 1-car garage, living room, dining room, kitchen, office, laundry and mud room along with 1 half bath. The dwelling will also have a full basement, which is not shown to be finished. A total width of 29'-6" and depth of 52' is proposed and the dwelling includes a 6'x 16'-6" front porch.

The subject property, known as Block 406, Lots 16 and 17, with a street address of 727 Pilgrim Avenue, is located on the southwest side of the street closer to Ohio Avenue to the south. Totaling 7,500 square feet in area together, the two vacant lots individually are nonconforming as to minimum lot area and minimum lot frontage. At only 25' wide, neither could reasonably support a dwelling alone, and the applicant proposes to merge

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them. Many of the homes in this neighborhood are constructed on 2 or more lots and many of those do not meet the minimum lot frontage requirement for the R-4 District. Surrounding uses on Pilgrim Avenue and adjacent blocks are all residential in nature, with commercial uses farther north along Brunswick Avenue and Hero Dog Park to the south along Ohio Avenue. The May 2026 aerial photo below depicts the subject properties outlined in yellow along with surrounding uses.



Zoning

The subject property is located in the Residential 4 (R-4) District, which permits the single-family detached dwelling proposed. As noted previously, while the two lots individually are nonconforming as to both minimum lot area and minimum lot frontage, together they meet minimum lot area but are deficient in lot frontage, as only 50' can be provided where 60' is required. Based on the location and utility plan, conditions proposed on the plans fully comply with the area, yard, height and building coverage requirements for the R-4 District as outlined in §407.E of the Land Use Ordinance. Bulk variance relief is required from §407.E.1.b for lot

frontage.

Consideration of Bulk Variances

The Board has the power to grant c(1) or hardship variances "(a) by reason of exceptional narrowness, shallowness or shape of a specific piece of property, (b) or by reason of exceptional topographic conditions or physical features uniquely affecting a specific piece of property, or (c) by reason of an extraordinary and exceptional situation uniquely affecting a specific piece of property or the structure lawfully existing thereon, the strict application of any regulations...would result in peculiar and exceptional practical difficulties to, or exceptional and undue hardship upon the developer of such property." The Board may also consider the grant of c(2) variances where the purposes of the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law would be advanced and the benefits of the deviation would substantially outweigh any detriment. In either case, the Board cannot grant "c" or bulk variances unless the negative criteria are satisfied, or that there is no substantial impact to surrounding properties (first prong) and the grant of the variance will not cause substantial impairment to the intent and purpose of the zone plan (master plan) or zoning ordinance (second prong).

Related to the positive criteria, the Board should consider that both adjacent lots and the lot behind the subject property are fully developed with single-family dwellings. All are nonconforming as to required frontage, so additional property cannot be acquired to increase the frontage of the subject property. This could potentially support a finding of hardship when considering the relief under c(1) criteria. Relative to the negative criteria, as noted previously there are a number of dwellings in the neighborhood constructed on a combination of two nonconforming lots that have similar nonconforming frontage. What is proposed does not appear out of character with the neighborhood. Notably, the applicant is not requesting relief for any other requirement and largely conforms to the area, yard, height and building coverage requirements for the R-4 District.

General Comments

1. §504.N, Table 5.2 requires 2.5 parking stalls for a four bedroom single-family detached dwelling. The one car garage and driveway only provide 2 spaces, as the driveway is not long enough to accommodate a second car. RSIS permits on-street parking stalls to fulfill requirements provided the Board feels they are reasonably available, so the applicant should provide testimony regarding on-street parking. This neighborhood is characterized by narrower lots, which means driveways are closer together, limiting the number of on-street parking stalls. As the applicant is well under permitted impervious coverage, perhaps one additional off-street stall could be accommodated by widening the driveway to 20' closer to the garage. An exception may be required, however a de minimis exception from the RSIS is not required.
2. §525.C.1 requires street trees between the curb and the sidewalk, and §525.C.2 requires street trees be spaced 20' to 40' apart depending on whether they are small, medium or

large trees. Given that overhead wires are present on the frontage, we suggest a single street tree be planted just outside the right of way to avoid the need for drastic trimming in the future. 1 medium tree per §525.C.3, Table 5.5, would likely be the best approach in place of the Sweetbay Magnolia.

We trust the Board will find this information useful in consideration of the matter at hand. We will attend the hearing on November 18th and reserve the right to provide additional comment based on the applicant's presentation. Should you wish to discuss this review memo, please feel free to contact our office.

Sincerely,



James T. Kyle, PP, Board Planner

Cc: Brenda Kraemer, PE (via e-mail)
Ed Schmierer, Esq., Board Attorney (via e-mail)
Dino Spadaccini, Esq., Applicant's Attorney (via e-mail)
Craig Stratton, PLS, Trenton Engineering (via e-mail)