

LAND USE BOARD
BOROUGH OF ALLENDALE
500 West Crescent Avenue
Allendale, New Jersey 07401
May 13, 2026 - Meeting Minutes

A Regular Meeting of the Allendale Land Use Board was held in the Council Chambers in the Allendale Municipal Building, 500 West Crescent Avenue, 2nd Floor, Allendale, NJ 07401 on May 13, 2026. The meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM by Chairman Sirico who read the open public meetings statement and stated the requirements had been satisfied.

Chairman Sirico led the salute to the flag.

ROLL CALL:

The following individuals answered roll call:

Vice Chairman Dalo
Board Member Agugliaro
Chairman Sirico
Board Member Butler
Alternate Johnson

ABSENT:

Board Member Warzala
Board Member Putrino
Councilman Yaccarino
Board Member Conte
Mayor Wilczynski
Alternate Ensenat

The following individuals were also present:
Board Attorney, Lawrence Calli, Esq.
Board Engineer, Mike Vreeland
Land Use Administrator, Joann Catalfumo

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Board Member Agugliaro, seconded by Board Member Butler, that the Minutes of the April 22, 2026, Land Use Board Meeting be approved. There was no discussion.

Roll Call: Board Member Dalo – yes, Board Member Agugliaro -yes, Chairman Sirico – yes, Board Member Butler – yes, Alternate Johnson -yes.

RESOLUTIONS

Application File No.: 2026-03

Resolution No. LUB 26-14

Applicant: **Roger Schlicht**

Address: 58 Midwood Avenue, Allendale, NJ 07401

Block: 2005 Lot: 9

Application: Construct a second-floor addition on top of existing first floor with new portico.

Pursuant to 270-14A, 270-57B, 270-57D, 270-57E1, 270-57F, 270-64C2, 270-63A1, 270-63B, 270-57C, 270-63A-1, 270-64C2 and 270-57C.

Chairman Sirico – Mr. Schlicht came before us two or three times. He made modifications to the last presentation and we all approved.

Larry Calli gave quick summary of resolution

Mr. Schlicht was here on two occasions. The first occasion there was relief for pre-existing conditions, setback conditions, structural setbacks, building area, and FAR

Mr. Schlicht took the board recommendations and tightened plans when presented

He either downward adjusted and/or eliminated variances

It was approved by the board at the 4/22/26 LUB meeting

Any conditions that the applicant comply with the engineering report dated 1/3/26, landscaping on the property shall remain

Modified plans showing the data adjusted relief be submitted to board for review and confirmation of Mr. Vreeland's office.

The applicant shall investigate the satisfactory nature of the utility servicing the property.

The applicant will satisfy the Board Engineer's recommendations related to the stormwater management implementations.

The applicant shall satisfy all approvals, permits required in connection and all standards living conditions as well.

Sirico – all were able to review and Any questions

A motion was made by Board Member Agugliaro, seconded by Vice Chairman Dalo to approve the Resolution. Roll Call: Board Member Dalo – yes, Board Member Agugliaro -yes, Chairman Sirico – yes, Board Member Butler – yes, Alternate Johnson -yes.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Application File No: 2026-08

Applicant: **BCE NJ Solar Ten, LLC**

Site Name: Allendale Industrial Park

Block 601: Lot(s) 4, 4.01, 4.02, 4.03, 4.04, 5, 6

1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 Pearl Court & 59 Rte. 17 South

Pursuant to 270-48.14A Installation of Solar panels

For the record: Christopher Quinn, partner with the firm Pinellas Halpern here on behalf of the BCE NJ Solar 10 LLC. This is an application for a rooftop solar facility within the industry.

Allendale Industrial Park, It's on Pearl Court and one street address is on Rte. 17.

35 acre parcel, E industrial district. The industrial properties and building have been there for many years.

Proposing rooftop solar panels installations on seven of the buildings within this facility. There are eight there.

Rooftop panels will be on the roof.

There are some additional ground equipment that is associated with the right adjacent to the buildings.

This is permitted in your zone as an accessory use of your ordinance, but it does have a requirement that the power generated from the building from the solar panels goes right into the building. Older more traditional way people looked at solar. Ordinance from 2015.

They do not meet those requirements. This is a project called community solar. It's not that someone's coming out here and trying to utilize it. The power is going into the grid, but a little different. It's a state sponsored program that the legislature adopted in 2023.

Idea behind this is previously the benefit just goes to the owner of the building and reduces electrical bills. Public benefits get effectively if there's less power being drained by those industrial buildings, it eases the grid.

It's meant to benefit anyone that really can't have solar on their homes, renters, low moderate housing, people who live in the shade.

They can subscribe into this program through the state, through the power company. Effectively they get the benefit on their utility bills, not just the building. From a planning perspective, from a visual perspective, operations perspective looks like a permitted use. It operates just like permitted use, except the power goes into the grid and the people getting the benefit of anyone in the community that signed up for the program.

Perspective of this project, part of the process when they go through this with the state with the applicant does, they reach out to the governing body, and they have a letter of support from the mayor.

Technically it does need a use variance because your zoning ordinance says that the power has to go to the building.

The municipal use law does recognize renewable energy as this type of solar installation as a beneficial use. It does promote general welfare and positive for the environment for the community. This is available to the public to utilize it and benefit directly from it.

The municipal also has a provision that says that these types of renewable energy systems on industrial properties over 28 acres in size are permitted as well. This is appropriate use here. It will have no negative impacts. And applies to all of our aspects of the design with the ordinance.

Have two witnesses tonight. We have the representative of the applicant; Mr. Haims is going to talk about the project and answer any questions about community solar. We have our planner, Paul Ricky, who can talk about this coordinate with the law and the people.

Sirico any questions. All ok

Sworn in Jack Haims by Larry Calli

80 Business Park Drive in Airmont, NY 10504

Confirmed Employed by Brightcore Energy and is the parent company of the applicant.

He is a project developer. Familiar with the particular property and the plans submitted for this applicant. He is a factual witness.

Shown an areal map from google map. The intent was to consolidate all the information from the individual site plans into one easy map. Mark this as A1 exhibit. Dated 5/13/26. Identified every building that's being proposed here along the kind of arrow and red box.

This is Pearl Court Industrial Park. It's a commercial industrial campus right off Route 17. There is limited visibility into the property due to surrounding tree coverage. This is a good amount to shield view from outside.

Showing accurate that Brightcore is proposing to install rooftop solar panels on seven of the buildings. Go over the actual specifics of what each installation.

They will be mounted on the rooftop. The panels will be installed on racks, slightly pitched facing south, leaving space around the panels for fire department access as well as walkways to existing rooftop equipment for servicing.

The panels will be pitched less than 1 foot above the grade roof and will not exceed the height of the rooftop mechanical equipment. Additionally, there is a small parapet on the facility of the roof.

The designs have been designed to have a three-foot set back from the roof edge as required by the ordinance.

The solar panels are pitched at 9 degrees the way it lines up vertical distance is under a foot, its about 8 inches.

The panels should not be visible to the public, no glare concerns due to the amount of tree coverage between Rte. 17.

Certain requirements keep aisles for emergency access and rooftop access incorporated into the design. Any cabling associated on the roof; it's not going to interfere with access to the roof.

There is access internally and no external ladders outside the building.

Based on the proposed system sizes, the annual production on the solar system should be just short of three gigawatt hours on an annual basis.

Based on census data, average home consumption is between 10 and 11,000 megawatts per year.

Therefore, we've estimated that these projects should power 256 homes in the local area.

There will be some rack mounted electrical inverter and AC accumulation panels, and that will be before the tie in point for these systems which will be on the secondary side of existing building transformers.

Shown on the exhibits in the black dotted areas. It's located within proximity of the buildings. 500 square feet total.

Each of these systems will have a 24/7 accessible emergency disconnect switch that will achieve a safe and efficient system shutdown that will always be accessible to emergency first responders. They will be wired to rapid shutdown devices where in any case of emergency it will create a fast drop in voltage to a safe level for emergency service to the roof.

Each of these buildings complies with the ordinance requirements for setbacks and all within outside the wetlands.

There will be mapping associated with each building given to the fire official require your permits.

Board engineer has minor concerns about some of the locations of working on some details and meeting onsite reviews of any requested changes and comply with whatever requirements are laid out by the town engineer.

Mike Vreeland – Reviewed the application. had a conversation advanced the hearing go over few of the items that we had observed on the ground. The plans submitted regarding some of the ground-based equipment are somewhat general in nature. There's some grading, some vegetation areas that may be impacted by the ground-based equipment, need to ask council if they consider additional approval, should the board act favorable on this application to meet with us in the field prior to permits this application being submitted and provide conditional details we feel necessary in order to ensure the ample space sidewalk, small retaining wall that may be necessary.

They will comply.

These systems are monitored remotely.

The site will comply with all building codes requirements.

A structural feasibility report that is stamped by a licensed in New Jersey will be provided to the team.

The height of the panels will be well below the height of the mechanical equipment.

We are not proposing any lighting part and no glare generated because of the panels and orientation and buffering.

Argument of the variance is the community solar project.

The community solar program was adopted by the state in 2023.

A permanent program which follows up on a successful 7-year pilot program.

It allows renters who cannot put solar on their roof to subscribe to energy from solar not on their property at a discount from utility rates on average to save around 10% on their utility bills. At least 50% of the subscribers to the program need to be low to moderate income.

Its advantageous to reduce the stress on our electric grid by local green, local generation that beat the grid and reduce reliance on some of the other supplies.

It will ultimately have a reduction of the grid.

Question to Michael Vreeland. He is ok with what he heard

Chairman Sirico – 1. panels are tilted south. Across the street of commerce -question on glare and detriment to our neighbors in Saddle River. Concerned to the east.

There is a lot of landscaping and tall trees steer the view from anybody to the south. There is quite amount of buffering to the west.

2. what is the weight of one cell regards to the panel?

One panel is around 200 lbs. designed to spread out the load across the roof. Any localized area, there is no more than 5 lbs. per square foot.

This has to be verified, making sure the building will support that.

A licensed structural engineer will provide that as part of the permit.

Mr. Agulara – what is the dimensions. I only see 3 ½ width, I do not see the length.

Forth sheet it shows a side view.

It's six feet in length.

Correction of the weight of the panel is 77 lbs.

Mr. Johnson –does the panels have to be fastened directly to the roof structure or they are held down by ballast.

There is a racking system that rails will be mounted to the roof with a combination of ballast and mechanical attachments depending on how much the roof can hold.

The racking is bolted to the roof.

Mr. Agugliaro – maximum wind speed.

Not sure but will refer to OSCI requirements based on where the building is, their geography.

There is a requirement that the maximum wind velocity would be governed by.

We will comply.

The panels are tilted toward the south, going to get a higher yield out of the panels in terms of how much energy is generated.

10 degrees is much lower than what is optimal for solar performance.

Chairman Sirico asked what is optimum:

22 degrees is optimum.

All the structural evaluations are based on existing roof decking and how it was designed and how it was built.

Mr. Butler – most of these buildings were build with no expectations of adding another floor. Do you have to redo the structure internally.

All the structural evaluations are based on existing roof decking how it was designed. There are no proposed modifications to the roof. All these sites, the roof membranes are being swapped out to reduce the impact of the solar system on the roof structure. If you reference the exhibit, you will see the ones that are white have already been replaced and the ones that are black are being replaced and 100% will be prior to starting construction.

Mr. Agugliaro – mentioned the walkway width and fire department access. Talked about the rapid shutdown switch. How long does it take to reactive for a complete shutdown?

The rapid shutdown devices that are wired to each module on the roof that will occur within seconds and the emergency disconnect switch on the ground level will be immediately.

Mr. Agugliaro– 1. Doing this in such a large area, your company is opposed to doing training, sort of walking through with the local police and fire department. So, they can see what needs to be done and shut down.

That can be accommodated.

2. If a panel needs to be removed, is there anything that stops it from generating power?

The inverters that are connected to the panels are grid interactive, meaning that if there's any lack of voltage the entire system will shut down.

Turning off the inverter will allow that section of the grid to be accessible and swap out the panels.

Chairman Sirico – 1. what if there's a situation at 95 degrees outside, the panels are aligned with metal, do they get crazy hot?

The panels have an operating temperature, the standard conditions of how they operate.

2. 24/7 emergency switch, how often are they tested? And who tests them. Looking for protection.

They do hire a maintenance company that will service the system on a regular basis. At least annual checkups and monitor remotely.

They will work with your owners and have people on site that they can contact. Will provide the township with an operations and maintenance manual, which will outline the safe operating procedures for all the associated hardware. This can be given to the township and maintenance people onsite.

Mr. Butler – emergency disconnect switch for the system is on the ground? Yes

Chairman Sirico – clarify each building will have disconnect switch.

Is the ground mounted equipment protected by a fence to protect the public from access?

The equipment is all lockable. The design on the exhibit and in the site, plans is that 6 out of 7 areas have bollards. If the township for safety purposes to put a fence or whatever is wanted.

Mr. Agugliaro – each building has a knock box. It's fire department access box in case of emergency. Can there be a key to those panels incorporated into the boxes, so there are keys to them?

For the simple reason, if the unit needs to be shut down in an emergency.

We can work with the fire department to make sure it's appropriate, whatever they deem appropriate. So, they have access to the shutdown, if needed.

For clarity, these panels don't provide power to the buildings they reside in, they only provide power to the grid?

Yes, the program is set up, the on-site building is referred to as the anchor tenant. Care out of how much of the system generation is allowable to be used on site. Some of the energy will go there. How much percentage of the power can go to this anchor tenant, but they will be subscribers to the projects.

Chairman Sirico – these panels were not intended to take these seven buildings off the grid. These buildings are anchor to the buildings for the generation of electricity to be sold into the grid. And maybe the building may get a little of it.

What is the impact of parking with this project?

There is no change to the parking spaces. The exhibit is a mismatch between the exhibit and the site plans.

Clarifying the orange checkered spots and the little circles on the diagram. The ballots marked on the yellow diagram.

Chairman Sirico – asked if they have done this type of project before, similar in size to this project.

In Bergen County recently about 10 projects between Fairfield and Pine Brook, NJ. Kind of in conjunction with this. 3 projects in Mahwah and developing projects in Oakland and Richfield. Portfolio of 19 rooftop projects that are very similar in nature that are operational since 2023. With no issues. With respect to community solar projects.

The Allendale project is not one of the biggest projects they have done. The Morristown it was portfolio of 19 projects that were all similar in size to this.

Question for our engineer.

Seven separate properties, seven applications and seven site plans. It was decided for clarity that minimize confusion if it was presented.

It will be seven building permits as well.

Clarifying the racking system with the panels, bolted connection was referring to the panels to the racking system itself.

The racking system will be fastened to the roof with a combination of mostly ballast, as well as some mechanical attachments as needed, mechanical fasteners to the roof structure. Typical for all types of solar.

Chairman Sirico – we do the best we can to prepare for hurricane or tornado. Are we going to have these panels peeling off the roof.

Codes are written that way and updated consistently. They adhered to the most up-to-date requirements set forth by the state.

Questions to the board.

Questions open to the public.

Bring it back to the board.

Mr. Ricky, swear in and testimony by Larry Calli.

Planning licenses remain in good standing since you last appeared last Wednesday in my presence. Clarify as an expert witness.

Licensed professional planner since 2000. Master's degree in city regional planning. I am currently in this planning consultant in seven towns. I testify regularly in front of board, and I've been qualified in every county in the state.

Never in Allendale, over 250 towns. Grown up in Montvale.

I visited the site, and reviewed application and spoke with the applicant team, asked my questions and reviewed your code, your master plan and like, based on that, was able to form a planning opinion. I spent a decent amount of time reviewing the community solar program with the state.

It's the combination of these properties is approximately 35 acres. They're in your E industrial district. It's important to recognize, we may not meet the entire intent of this provision as there were multiple applications that are filed, but it's important to recognize, this will manually recognize if it's used in section 40ttD 66.11. Wind and solar facilities are permitted in industrial zones. It provides a renewable energy facility, and that includes facilities producing electric energy from solar and photovoltaic technologies. Twenty or more continuous acres under common ownership shall be a permitted used with every industrial district. The state is trying to push these facilities into industrial districts.

The past years there are a lot of complaints associated where farmland was being replaced with solar panels. The state really had to focus on placing these on roofs. I'm a city planner; every warehouse gets these panels on top of them.

The use is also inherently beneficial use, and that's a use that is determined to promote the general welfare of the community.

From a land use planning perspective, as a matter of law, inherently beneficial use is considered appropriate in any district throughout the municipality.

The state says they're appropriate for large lots of industrial zones. Says that they're appropriate anywhere. Distinction realistically is the residential zone, on a much smaller scale on rooftops than you may see in an industrial zone.

We reviewed your ordinance provisions were created, looked in the code in 2015, before the state enacted some of these changes to miscellaneous law.

Going through the requirements under the law. The only provision that we do not meet is that your ordinance requires these panels to be used in an accessory manner for the onsite buildings. Based on our testimony, we're looking for these panels to service the greater community, and to meet that state community that was testified to.

This use is also anticipated under your code to the municipal land use with that one caveat. Because we technically have the use variance when different than other use variance applications, when the use is inherently beneficial.

We automatically meet the positive criteria, and the focus is on the negative criteria. Other use variance applications, the board typically needs to show needs to show suitability for the site. We need to reconcile the use with the plan.

Those are not required for beneficial uses. We're required to review under the scope of specific case, which is a four-part balancing test does, it asks you to identify the public interest at state.

The negative impacts associated with use, whether those impacts are mitigated, and then it asks the board to balance the benefits versus the detriments. The law suggests that the board should approve an application.

It's to provide power to low-income households and other individuals in the community through federal programs that advance renewable energy generation, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and supports energy affordability through community subscriptions.

The issues of safety must be addressed through building permit process.

The community solar program is the state energy master plan and requires us to provide that service offset. There is a direct conflict were implementing state policy and code. The benefit outweighing the detriments.

Because this is a roof mounting project, there's minimal site disturbance, limited visibility and minimum visual impact.

Tremendous community benefits and regional benefits associated with the solar corrupt and inherently benefits and nature of project.

The applicant is going to adhere to all the safety requirements of its use in any litigation through the board and through that very strict permitting process that this applicant must go through.

For the reasons I mentioned I think this is a very strong application for a use variance.

Mr. Quinn – the applicant has already agreed to comply with the ordinance and comply with all code requirements and meet with the fire department, to meet with the board engineer and give additional sense of information exchange and security and comfort level.

Any questions engineer.

Any questions to the board

Bring it back to the public.

Larry Calli – we discussed the statutory approach that would be the enhanced rights on the photovoltaic systems. I do have some conditions of prospective approval of the board looks favorably. I'll share the resolution and draft with you before it's adopted at the next meeting and if the board takes further action this evening.

Any question

Mr. Agugliaro – if property changes hands, what happens to this asset?

Mr. Quinn – it would stay the same just like a lease.

Chairman Sirico – who owns this property. Leasing the space. It's owned by the company.

Mr. Quinn – just like a lease of the property and the landlord moves. The commercial leases for any rights. Just like any commercial lease it will be transferred to the new tenant.

Chairman Sirico – another question, if the tenant says they don't want the panels on the roof. Can they take it off.

Mr. Quinn - No it's a lease and right to the property, they cannot take it off. It's the right of the building. It's a contract.

Open to the public

Bring it back to the board

Mr. Butler – looking at the array on top of the building. It's a lot of coverage of the existing rooftop. From a fire standpoint. Inquired about the training class. Plus, one thing your ordinance does include is incorporated design in our assessment. There is aisle requirement to make sure there's proper access. That is incorporated in your code as it stands.

Chairman Sirico – we never heard it unless you were here tonight discussing this application if it meets the zoning requirements. This is the first time I have heard this type of request. That's why there are questions.

Mr. Butler – basically the who roof covered, except for a three-foot of swath around the perimeter of the building.

Mr. Quinn – required access. Access aisles that are required. It is incorporated into the plans. We appreciated all your questions. The applicant is certainly worth going to work and doing what's necessary to make the board feel comfortable. All these were already incorporated into here. Fairly comprehensive and detail-oriented ordinance that was adopted by the company.

Chairman Sirico – if we didn't have in that ordinance that we want the power that's generated to remain on the property, we wouldn't hearing this.

Mr. Calli – triggered site plans. It would have been a conforming site plan before the planning board composition to this board and statutorily beyond the ability to deny it the use issue is what brings them here to the board jurisdiction and then it's the site for reviewable component which is limited by Mr. Vreeland decision that initial report it's effectively conforming.

Discussed a few conditions:

Permanent documents will be reviewed and scrutinized by all departments having jurisdiction, including fire official.

Pre and post install site inspection with your office to ensure conformance with the borough mandate controls for both rooftop and ground mounted equipment.

Special feasibility report to be provided with the permit filing documents.

Applicant undertake the site available for walk-through fire department personnel for training and educational purposes post implementation.

The applicant will entice the access panels and the existing boxes in the buildings if the fire department is appropriate to access the physical shutdown if necessary.

That's all I have unless I miss something from the board or council. Let me know if disagree.

Board any questions

Board Member Agugliaro motion to approve, Vice Chairman Dalo second.

Chairman Sirico – to be clear, we are approving disputes in this rea for this application.

Mr. Calli – this is for record's sake. Its own merit and subject to the parameters they got with the property that they're looking to develop the part with that programming. The testimony was particular and specific in support of the relief for this site, this site only with the specific type of use and the specific deviations that the applicant presented to the board. Another applicant walking through the door for a different site to the borough just because the board may act favorable on this application. The applicant had a full deck of witnesses, a fac witness and an expert witness who I can thoroughly explain the program and proposed and statutory criteria supporting the implementation of the program. Another applicant cannot ask for a similar type of development without putting their proof on the records for the satisfaction of the board in conflict with the statutory requirements, simply by rely on an action that might be taken here.

Go to a Vote:

Vice Chairman Dalo – yes, Board Member Agugliaro – yes, Chairman Sirico – yes, Board Member Butler – yes, Alt. Johnson – yes.

Thank you for your presentation.

Open to the public for questions or comments.

OTHER BUSINESS

Chairman Sirico – texting to the Board is working. Any questions or comments. Just for informational purposes. All board business is sent on email.

Mr. Calli – Anyone tries to print document, apparently that’s going to be discoverable. So keep it all there on email. Still on record. We can always go into closed sessions for anything that warrants closed session, not just litigation, but threat of litigation.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Board Member Agugliaro, second by Vice Chairman Dalo, with all members present voting in favor, the meeting was adjourned at **8:33 PM**.

Respectfully submitted,

Joann Catalfumo

Joann Catalfumo
Land Use Administrator