

TOWN OF WESTWOOD By: Westwood Town Clerk
COMMONWEALTH of MASSACHUSETTS

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
PLANNING BOARD

DECISION OF THE PLANNING BOARD

Minor Modification of Consolidated Environmental Impact and Design Review, Water Resource Protection Overlay District Approval, & Flexible Multiple Use Overlay District Special Permit
August 19, 2025

PROPERTY LOCUS	26 Dartmouth Street Assessor's Map 38, Lots 002 & 005 24M
APPLICANT/ PROPERTY OWNER	PPF Industrial 26 Dartmouth LLC 535 Boylston Street, 11th Floor Boston, MA 02116
APPLICATION	#PB-25-41
ZONING & OVERLAY DISTRICTS	Industrial (I) Water Resource Protection Overlay District (WRPOD) Flexible Multiple Use Overlay District 1 (FMUOD1) Adult Uses Overlay District (AUOD) Wireless Communications Overlay District (WCOD)

BACKGROUND AND PROJECT SUMMARY

PPF Industrial 26 Dartmouth LLC (hereinafter "Applicant") filed an application (hereinafter "Application") requesting a third modification to a consolidated Environmental Impact and Design Review (EIDR) Approval pursuant to Section 7.2, Water Resource Protection Overlay District (WRPOD) Approval pursuant to Section 9.3, and Flexible Multiple Use Overlay District (FMUOD) Special Permit pursuant to Section 9.5 of the Town of Westwood Zoning Bylaw (hereinafter "Zoning Bylaw") previously granted on January 3, 2023 (PB-22-39) to renovate the existing building for 24M, a battery testing facility; amended on October 15, 2024 (PB-24-45) to allow for administrative approval for future chemical inventory changes; and later modified for electrical power supply on June 17, 2025 (PB-25-38). The Applicant proposes rerouting pedestrian access between the main parking lot and auxiliary parking lot due to CSX's denial to add a sidewalk that crosses the rail tracks. The modified plan removes the previously approved sidewalk crossing the rail tracks and crosswalk running parallel to the eastern side of the tracks while replacing it with a crosswalk running parallel on the western side of the tracks, pedestrian refuge areas on each side of the tracks, and signage.

STATEMENT OF FINDINGS

Having reviewed the plans and reports filed by the Applicant and its representatives and considered the technical analysis, supplemental information provided during the course of the public meeting, correspondence and testimony from the various boards, commissions, Town departments, and all other interested parties, the Town of Westwood Planning Board (hereinafter "Planning Board") determined the following procedural and project findings:

PROCEDURAL FINDINGS

1. In July 2025, the Applicant notified Planning Division staff that CSX had denied their request to install a sidewalk across the freight railroad tracks that intersect the project site (hereinafter, "Project Site"), making satisfying condition #4 from the original consolidated EIDR Approval, WRPOD Approval, and FMUOD Special Permit (#PB-22-39) unachievable.
Condition #4: "Prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, the Applicant shall obtain approval of the final pedestrian route plans by the Planning Board or the Town Planner. In connection with the foregoing, the Applicant shall continue working in good faith with CSX to develop a safe pedestrian route across the railroad tracks, similar to that shown on submitted sidewalk plans, to the extent practicable and subject to CSX's approval of the same."
2. In a letter dated April 3, 2024, CSX denied the request to allow a pedestrian crossing on its tracks per the CSXT Public Project Manual, which restricts pedestrian pathways from crossing tracks at grade outside of existing highway easements.
3. After review from the Town Planner and Building Commissioner, it was determined that a modification application to the Planning Board was required to alter the pedestrian route. The Applicant submitted an Application requesting a Planning Board Modification of the consolidated EIDR Approval, WRPOD Approval, and FMUOD Special Permit pursuant to Sections 7.2, 9.3, and 9.5 that was filed with the Town Clerk on August 8, 2025.
4. The Planning Board provided digital copies of the Application to Town boards, commissions, departments, and officials – including, but not limited to, the Board of Health, Building Commissioner, Department of Public Works, Conservation Commission, and Fire and Police Chiefs on August 11, 2025.
5. Public meeting for the Application was held on August 19, 2026 remotely via Zoom, during which Westwood Planning Board Members Ellen Larkin Rollings, Philip M. Giordano, Michael J. Derderian, and Maureen Collins-White deliberated.
6. In a roll call vote with four (4) in favor and none (0) opposed, the Planning Board found that the proposed modifications to be minor in nature.

PROJECT SPECIFIC FINDINGS

1. The project site (hereinafter "Project Site" or "Property") is comprised of a 6.9-acre parcel containing a battery research and development facility, which is a conforming

use under Section 9.5.8.2.6 [Additional Uses Permitted by FMUOD Special Permit in FMUOD1].

2. The Property is bordered by a mix of commercial and industrial uses to the north, west, and south, along with the MBTA Commuter Rail (Providence/Stoughton Commuter Rail Line) and Amtrak rail tracks and Neponset River to the east. The Property is intersected by the CSX freight rail tracks.
3. The proposed modification does not affect the volume of cut and fill, trees, stone walls, wetland vegetation, stormwater flow from the site, soil erosion, or threat of air and water pollution per Section 7.2.9.1.
4. The proposed modification maximizes pedestrian and vehicular safety on the site and egress to and from the site within the limitations imposed by the freight tracks using signage to warn drivers and pedestrians of the perpendicular crossing of both types of movement per Section 7.2.9.2.
5. The proposed modification does not affect scenic views from publicly-accessible locations per Section 7.2.9.3.
6. The proposed modification does not affect visibility of parking, storage, and other outdoor services areas from public ways or residential zones per Section 7.2.9.4.
7. The proposed modification does not affect glare from headlights and lighting intrusion per 7.2.9.5.
8. The proposed modification does not minimize unreasonable departure from the character, materials, and scale of buildings in the vicinity, as viewed from public ways and places per Section 7.2.9.6.
9. The proposed modification does not affect contamination of groundwater from on-site operations involving hazardous substances or alter the use of hazardous substances per Section 7.2.9.7 and 9.3.
10. The proposed modification ensures compliance with the provisions of Section 7.2.
11. The beneficial effects of the project will outweigh any adverse impacts on the Town or the neighborhood, in view of the particular characteristics of the site, and of the Project in relation to that site, and the uses allowed are in harmony with the general purpose and intent of Sections 7.2, 9.3, and 9.5 of the Zoning Bylaw.
12. The Project, as modified by the Conditions of this Decision, will not be detrimental to the Town or to the general character or visual appearance of the surrounding properties, and will be consistent with all applicable standards set forth in Sections 7.2, 9.3, and 9.5 of the Zoning Bylaw.

APPLICATIONS AND PLANS

The Planning Board evaluated the Application filed by or on behalf of the Applicants in the Office of the Town Clerk on August 8, 2025 and all material submitted through the close of the public meetings on August 19, 2025. All of the following plans and materials are hereby incorporated by reference and made part of this Decision:

1. EIDR Approval, WRPOD Approval, and FMUOD Special Permit Modification Application PB-25-41 submitted by the Applicant and received by the Town Clerk on August 8, 2025, consisting of four (4) pages (as supplemented through August 19, 2025)
2. Detailed project description letter from Brian P. Dundon, President, RJO'Connell & Associates, Inc. of 80 Montvale Avenue, Suite 201, Stoneham MA 02180, to the Westwood Planning Division, regarding, "FMUOD Special Permit #22-39, Minor Modification Request, 26 Dartmouth Street, 22010.05," consisting of two (2) pages
3. Proposed site plans entitled, "Pedestrian Access Route to Remote Parking Lot," prepared by RJO'Connell & Associates, Inc., stamped by Registered Professional Engineer Brian P. Dundon, dated August 7, 2025, consisting of one (1) sheet
4. Previously site plans entitled, "Utility Plan," prepared by RJO'Connell, stamped by Registered Professional Engineer Brian P. Dundon, dated August 15, 2022 and revised through May 22, 2025, consisting of one (1) sheet
5. CSX rejection letter from Michael Sliper, Project Manager II – Public Projects, CSX of 1 Bell Crossing, Selkirk, NY 12158, to Brian Beck, Vice President, Project Management, Seyon Management of 535 Boylston Street, 11th Floor, Boston, MA 02116, regarding, "Westwood, Norfolk County, Massachusetts; Redevelopment of 26 Dartmouth Street, Northern Zone, Framingham Subdivision; QVL-216.78," dated April 3, 2024, consisting of two (2) pages
6. Site photo entitled, "Railroad Crossing View 1," prepared by RJO'Connell & Associates, Inc., dated August 7, 2025, consisting of one (1) sheet
7. Site photo entitled, "Railroad Crossing View 2," prepared by RJO'Connell & Associates, Inc., dated August 7, 2025, consisting of one (1) sheet
8. Site photo entitled, "Railroad Crossing View 3," prepared by RJO'Connell & Associates, Inc., dated August 7, 2025, consisting of one (1) sheet
9. Property owner authorization entitled, "Property Owner Application Authorization," signed by Bryan Blake, Authorized Signatory of PPF Industrial 26 Dartmouth LLC, dated August 5, 2025, consisting of one (1) page

DECISION

On August 19, 2025, the Planning Board evaluated the Application in relation to the above Findings and – as the approving authority – on a roll call vote with four (4) in favor and none opposed, hereby **grants** the requested minor modification of a consolidated EIDR Approval, WRPOD Approval, and FMUOD Special Permit pursuant to Sections 7.2, 9.3, and 9.5 of the Zoning Bylaw for the Project as described above and in the Application therefore

filed with the Town Clerk on August 8, 2025, subject to the Conditions stated herein, all of which are an integral part hereof:

CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

1. Except as modified by the conditions and finding hereof, the Project shall comply with the Project Plans, and with the conditions of all prior decisions for the Property, in all respects, and the Applicant shall pursue completion of the Project with reasonable diligence and continuity.
2. If the Project, or any condition imposed in this Decision, requires any other permit, license, or other approval from any Town of Westwood board, commission, or agency, or other Commonwealth or federal regulatory agency, the Applicant shall make an appropriate application for the same and shall obtain all required approvals prior to the start of any work. If any condition of such permit, license, or other approval from any other board, committee, or agency is inconsistent with this Decision, the Applicant shall make application to the Planning Board for an amendment of this Decision, and the Planning Board shall consider such application in accordance with the requirements of M.G.L. Chapter 40A §9 and all applicable Planning Board rules and regulations.
3. Any proposed alterations, modifications, deletions, or changes to the Decision shall be requested in writing to the Town Planner and Building Commissioner prior to implementation.
 - a. Proposed alterations which are considered de minimis by the Building Commissioner may be accepted as a note to the file.
 - b. Proposed alterations which are considered minor by the Building Commissioner shall require the filing of a Modification Application of said approval for review by the Planning Board at a publicly posted Planning Board meeting.
 - c. Proposed alterations which are determined to be major by the Building Commissioner or by the Planning Board, shall be considered by the Planning Board as a formal Amendment to the approval and will require a new public hearing before the Planning Board.
4. Prior to construction the applicant shall submit a revised site plan demonstrating compliance with all applicable accessibility requirements for the full path from the satellite parking area to the new sidewalk at 26 Dartmouth Street, including without limitation, the installation of tactile warning strips wherever appropriate, and demonstrating the method for removal of the newly painted crosswalk on the east side of the railroad tracks which was installed prior to the CSX denial. The revised site plan shall also satisfactorily address all concerns raised by the consulting Town Engineer and all concerns expressed by a majority of Planning Board members in the course of the August 19, 2025 meeting. Said plan shall be submitted to the Town Planner for review and approval prior to the issuance of a final Certificate of Compliance for the 24M facility.
5. A copy of this Decision and the Project Plans shall be kept on the Project Site at all times during construction.

6. All Project-related construction activities shall comply with the timeframes set forth in the Town's General Bylaws Chapter 292, for Noise and Construction, which allow such work Monday through Saturday between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., and Sunday between the hours of 12:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
7. The Applicant shall submit As-Built plans at the conclusion of construction, which shall indicate the location of all water quality units, underground storage tanks, pipes and/or appurtenances that remain on the site, prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy or Use. The As-Built plans shall be delivered in a format approved by the Information Systems Director for compatibility with the Town of Westwood GIS database.

RECORD OF VOTE

The following members of the Planning Board voted to grant the Minor Modification of consolidated EIDR Approval, WRPOD Approval, and FMUOD Special Permit for the abovementioned Project with conditions as set forth above: Ellen Larkin Rollings, Philip M. Giordano, Michael J. Derderian, and Maureen Collins-White.

The following members of the Planning Board voted in opposition for the abovementioned Project: none.

There was a vacant position on the Planning Board at the time of voting.



Elijah Romulus, *Town Planner*
August 25, 2025