



STAFF REPORT

DRCC #: 26-6393
DATE: June 2, 2026
PROJECT NAME: 6 Risler Street -- Addition
Latest Submission Received: May 21, 2026

Applicant:
 Brett Opdyke
 18B Risler Street
 Stockton, NJ 08559
bopdyke13@yahoo.com

Engineer:
 Jeffrey Stocklos
 J&J Design Group, LLC
jstocklos@stocklosdesign.com

Project Location:

Road	Municipality	County	Block(s)	Lot(s)
6 Risler Street (N.J. State Highway Route No. 29)	Stockton Borough	Hunterdon	4	8

Jurisdictional Determination:

Zone A	Minor	Nongovernmental
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Subject to Review for:

Drainage	Visual	Traffic	Stream Corridors
	X		

Documents Received: Architectural Drawings (4 pages) dated May 4, 2026; prepared by Stocklos Design Group, LLC; Survey dated February 2025, last revised May 21, 2025; prepared by Robert Ent, Jr.

THIS STAFF REPORT IS ISSUED AS A GUIDE TO APPLICANTS IN COMPLYING WITH DRCC REGULATIONS. IT IS NOT AN APPROVAL. NO CONSTRUCTION SHALL BEGIN UNTIL A CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL HAS BEEN ISSUED.

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The application is complete and shall be presented to the Commission for their action with a staff recommendation of approval at the June 17, 2026 meeting based upon the following analysis:

Existing Conditions: The project site is a square-foot (0.30 acre) lot located on the northeasterly side of Risler Street in the Borough of Stockton, Hunterdon County, approximately 575 feet east of the Delaware and Raritan Canal and within Commission Review Zone A. The project site is bounded by commercial buildings to the west, single-family residential dwellings to the north, south and east. There are no streams or mapped watercourses on the site, the nearest being a tributary of the Delaware and Raritan Canal, located 250 feet to the southwest.



In the existing condition the site is improved with a two-story frame two-unit residential development constructed in 1850, along with an inground swimming pool installed in the second half of the 20th century. The residence and the swimming pool appear on historic aerial imagery dating to 1961.

Proposed Project: The applicant proposes to add a second story addition to the existing two-unit residential development. The project would not result in the creation of any impervious surface coverage or land disturbance.

Stream Corridor: There are no streams or mapped watercourses on the site, the nearest being a tributary of the Delaware and Raritan Canal, located approximately 250 feet to the southeast. The project does not propose an intrusion into the watercourse; therefore, the project is not subject to stream corridor impact review pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:45-9.1(a).

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Stormwater Runoff and Water Quality: The project does not propose an increase in impervious surface coverage. Therefore, the proposed project is not subject to stormwater runoff and water quality impact review pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:45-8.

Visual, Historic and Natural Quality Impact: N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.2 directs that the Commission shall review all projects in Review Zone A to determine if the project is in accord with the goals for the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park as defined in the park's Master Plan. The visual, historic and natural quality impact review is intended to assure that development within Zone A is not harmful to the character of the environmental types identified in the Master Plan as comprising the park.

The proposed project is located in a "Suburban" canal environment as described in the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park Master Plan (Master Plan). The Suburban canal environment is characterized at N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.2(a) as an area in which there is a dominant feeling of open space, but that space is chiefly defined by structures. Specifically, the Master Plan at Pages 12-13 notes how the canal and the former railroad diverge in Stockton until they rejoin at the Brookville railroad bridge.

The Master Plan also notes on Page 13 how the former railroad cuts through the center of the borough, as well as how the multiuse trail is "edged by backyards for most of its length." The Master Plan calls for improvements to the trail along the flood-guard berm along the Delaware River and selective landscaping to define the park property. Thus, nothing with respect to the proposed residential addition project is incompatible with these provisions of the Master Plan.

The provisions of N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.3(a), which discourage major projects in the Natural, Rural, Transportation, and Special Node Environments of the park in Review Zone A and authorizes the Commission to require specific compensatory measures to mitigate the project's potential for harmful impact, are inapplicable to the proposed project. The provisions of N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.3(b), which direct that for minor projects in the Natural, Rural, Transportation, and Special Node Environments of the park mitigation may be required, are inapplicable to the proposed project, which is located in a Suburban canal environment.

N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.4(a) directs that projects in Review Zone A shall be set back from the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park sufficiently far so that the winter visual and natural quality of the park are not adversely affected [Emphasis added]. The setback, which is measured from the nearest boundary of the park, unless the Commission approves an alternative, for the Suburban canal environment requires that all structures shall be located 200 feet or more from the park [Emphasis added]. The project site is 205 feet from the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park multiuse trail, which is located on the former bed of the Belvidere-Delaware Railroad. Therefore, the project is in compliance with this requirement.

N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.4(b) directs that projects in Review Zone A shall maintain a reasonable height and scale relationship to nearby structures or vegetation. For the Suburban canal environment, structures shall be limited to a height of 40 feet above existing grade where existing vegetation does not provide adequate winter screening. The applicant's

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submission indicates proposed second story addition would not exceed the height of the existing residential building. Therefore, the project is in compliance with this requirement.

N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.4(c) directs that, for projects in Review Zone A, the exterior appearances of a project shall be in keeping with the character of the Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park's individual environments. Specifically, colors used shall harmonize with the manmade or natural surroundings of the project and shall be typical of colors found in the park environment and building materials and texture shall harmonize with the surrounding man-made and natural materials.

With respect to building materials, the applicant's submission indicates that the roof over the addition would be covered in asphalt shingles. The exterior lap siding would be composed of LP[®] SmartSide[®] treated engineered wood product. The applicant proposes "K" style aluminum gutters to match those on the existing portion of the building. The proposed windows would be aluminum and in a four over one configuration. The applicant also proposes to use Azek[®] cellular PVC exterior trim. With regard to building colors, the submitted architectural plans indicate that the exterior features would be white, and that the applicant proposes to paint the existing parged foundation white as well.

Commission staff determines that the proposed materials and colors harmonize with the manmade or natural surroundings of the project and are typical of the built environment of the Borough of Stockton. Therefore, the project is in compliance with this requirement.

The provisions of N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.4(d) 1 and 2, respectively, prescribe standards for electric, telephone, cable television, and other such lines and exposed storage areas, out-buildings, exposed machinery service areas, parking lots, loading areas, utility buildings, and similar ancillary areas and structures. The applicant's submission does not indicate that any new utility lines are proposed; therefore, the project is in compliance with this requirement.

The provisions of N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.4(d)3 and 4, respectively, which regulate the location and dimensions of proposed commercial signs or outdoor advertising structures, are inapplicable to the project, which proposes no signage.

The provisions of N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.4(d)5, which direct that wherever possible, natural terrains, soils, stones, and vegetation should be preserved, and that new vegetation, stones, and soils should be native to the environment in which they are placed, are inapplicable to the proposed project, which proposes no landscaping.

N.J.A.C. 7:45-10.4(d)6 directs that projects which are located in any officially designated Federal, State or local historic district or site shall be assessed for their impact upon that district or site. Recommendations to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate the impacts of a project on a listed property shall be made in consultation with the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office and based upon the United States Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings.

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Commission staff notes that the Delaware and Raritan Canal Historic District encompasses the canal bed and all structures located within 300 feet of the centerline of the canal. The project site, which is located 575 feet from the canal, is not located within the boundaries of this district.

There are no other listed historic districts within the boundaries of the project site [Emphasis added]. In 2002, the DEP State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) opined that a proposed Borough of Stockton Historic District that would encompass most of the present-day borough was eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria “A” and “C”, based respectively, on its contribution to broad patterns of our past and on architectural merit. Further, areas within the district are likely to be eligible for National Register inclusion under Criterion D, for the ability to yield information important in history. However, Register eligibility and Register inclusion are not synonymous terms. Therefore, this provision is inapplicable to the proposed project.

Architectural Background: An architectural assessment and historical architectural survey conducted in 2003 conducted in conjunction with a proposed telecommunications tower project noted that the project site residence was a 19th century two-story stone vernacular house that had been extensively renovated and enlarged in recent decades. The survey authors indicated that the residence did not retain the historic architectural integrity necessary for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.



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Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends approval.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Hutchison". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

John Hutchison
Executive Director

- c. Hunterdon County Planning Board
Stockton Borough Planning Board
Richard Mongelli, Esq. (rich@mongellilaw.com)

Please refer to the Commission project number (DRCC #) when making a submission, a resubmission, or transmitting project correspondence or documents.