



TOWNSHIP OF WEST ORANGE

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Department of Planning and Development

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TO: Planning Board Members

FROM: Paul Grygiel, AICP, PP, Township Planner

DATE: April 21, 2023

RE: **PB 23-04/Redwood LLC**
Block: 151; Lot: 33; Zone: IHO-2/R-2
200 Pleasant Valley Way
Seeking preliminary and final major site plan approval for the development of an inclusionary multifamily residential development

INTRODUCTION

The applicant is requesting site plan approval for a proposal to construct a multifamily residential building and related improvements on a property located on the east side of Pleasant Valley Way. The proposed building would have four residential stories over one level of parking and include 142 apartment units, of which 28 units will be set aside for low- and moderate-income households. The property has been previously developed with nonresidential uses, but has been vacant for some time.

It is noted this property was the subject of a Zoning Board development application in 2017, prior to the property being rezoned as part of a settlement of affordable housing litigation between the Township of West Orange, the applicant and Fair Share Housing Center, an advocacy organization that intervened in affordable housing compliance matters in municipalities throughout New Jersey. The IHO-2 Inclusionary Housing Overlay Zone was adopted in 2020 for the subject property, and the proposed development complies with the requirements of this zone.



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LAND USE/CIRCULATION

The subject property is located in the R-2 Residential Zone and the IHO-2 Inclusionary Housing Overlay Zone. Its total area is 5.91 acres (257,557 square feet). The site is a flag lot, with 62.71 feet of frontage on Pleasant Valley Way. The lot's "stem" is over 550 long and is over 60 wide for most of its length, except for a 115 foot long section that is 38 feet wide. The Peckman River runs along the western edge of the main, rear portion of the site. The property was previously developed with nonresidential uses, including a health and racquet club, restaurant, bar and skateboard facility, but has been vacant for over a decade. There have been prior approvals granted for multifamily residential use on this property, but no such development has been constructed.

There are a mix of land uses in the vicinity of the subject property. The Montclair Golf Club borders the site on the north and east, and a vacant Township-owned parcel borders the rear portion of the site on the south. The Brighton Gardens assisted living facility is located to the west of the main portion of the site and to the south of the stem. Other nearby uses include a nursery, a house of worship, a nursery school, a fire station and senior citizen housing to the south; and single-family residential to the southeast and west.

Pleasant Valley Way is a four-lane Essex County Road (Route 636) in front of the subject property. There is no sidewalk on the east side of Pleasant Valley Way in the vicinity of the site, but one is provided on the west side of the street. There are bus stops for New Jersey Transit's 29 bus route to the north and south of the subject property.

SUBMISSIONS

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>SIGNED BY</u>	<u>DATE/REVISION</u>
Boundary and Topographic Survey	Gregg A. Gaffney, P.L.S.	12/17/18
Site Plan (16 sheets)	J. Michael Petry, P.E., P.P., R.A.	3/7/23
Architectural Plans (6 sheets)	Keith A. Michels, A.I.A.	3/9/23
Natural Features Map	J. Michael Petry, P.E., P.P., R.A.	3/7/23
Truck movement plans (3 sheets)	J. Michael Petry, P.E., P.P., R.A.	4/14/23
Stormwater Management Report	J. Michael Petry, P.E., P.P., A.I.A.	3/7/23
Stormwater Management Facility Maintenance Plan Manual	J. Michael Petry, P.E.	3/7/23

VARIANCES REQUIRED

None



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

As noted, the applicant is proposing to construct a multifamily residential building and related improvements on a property located on the east side of Pleasant Valley Way. The proposed building would have four residential stories over one level of parking and include 142 apartment units. Twenty-eight of these units would be set aside for low- and moderate-income households. The affordable units are required to comply with the bedroom type distribution requirements of the West Orange Land Use Regulations Ordinance based on State regulations, and will include four one-bedroom units, 16 two-bedroom units and eight three-bedroom units. The market rate units will consist of eight one-bedroom with den units, 20 two-bedroom units, 74 two-bedroom with den units and 12 three-bedroom with den units.

The building is proposed to include parking and service areas on the ground floor, which will be partly below grade, the lobby, amenity spaces, a pool deck and residential units on the first floor, additional amenity spaces and residential units on the second floor, and residential units on the third and fourth floors. Proposed building materials include cementitious panels, manufactured stone veneer, metal standing seam roofing and asphalt shingle roofing.

Vehicular and pedestrian access will be provided from Pleasant Valley Way via a new two-way driveway and a sidewalk on its south side. The existing bridge over the Peckman River will be replaced. On the main portion of the subject property, the driveway and sidewalk will run around the perimeter of the proposed building. An additional walking path is proposed between the driveway and the west and south boundaries of the main portion of the site. Parking areas will be located along the driveway, as well as underneath the building. Visitor parking will be provided near the front entrance on the west side of the building. A total of 338 parking spaces are proposed: 170 spaces under the building, and 168 outdoor spaces. Included in these totals are 12 ADA accessible spaces and 44 electric vehicle charging spaces. Gates and a turnaround area are proposed where the stem of the lot meets the main portion. Entrances to the garage parking areas are provided on the north and south sides of the building.

Landscaping is proposed around the edges of the main portion of the site and along the south side of the access driveway and along a portion of the north side of the driveway. Two monument signs are proposed, one to the south of the driveway along Pleasant Valley Way and a second where the driveway meets the main portion of the site.

Prior approvals have been granted for multifamily residential use on this property, although the approved development has not been constructed. A 2006 approval for Centex Homes, LLC, New Jersey Division permitted a four-story, 68-unit project. According to Resolution ZB-05-28, this project required a use variance, “d(6)” height variance and bulk variances. In 2008, the Zoning Board of Adjustment approved an extension of the 2006 approval, with the property owner as the applicant, as the prior applicant “elected not to move forward with the project.” Other prior



resolutions of approvals submitted with this application are for the adjacent site now developed with the Brighton Gardens assisted living facility, which was previously in common ownership with the subject property. There was an application submitted to the Zoning Board of Adjustment in 2017 for a 128-unit development which was subsequently withdrawn.

DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

Zoning Compliance

As noted, the subject property is located in the IHO-2 Inclusionary Housing Overlay Zone. The proposed development is permitted in the IHO-2 zone district and complies with its bulk regulations.

Site Plan/Other Issues

The Township of West Orange Site Plan Review Advisory Board (SPRAB) held a meeting on April 11, 2023. At this meeting, the SPRAB reviewed the above application with the applicant's representative, attorney, engineer and architect. Some of the site plan and design issues discussed at this meeting have been addressed. Those that either currently have not been addressed or warrant additional discussion are as follows:

- **Architectural plans:** The applicant's architect was asked to confirm the location and design of the mail/package room with the postmaster. A question was raised about the potential for dens in units to be converted to an additional bedroom. The applicant's architect noted there would not be any window or closets, meaning these rooms would not meet the Building Code definition of a "bedroom." Requests were made to consider eliminating the doors to these rooms and/or to include restrictions in tenants' leases.
- **Motor vehicle circulation and parking:** There were questions regarding the location and design of gates at entrance to the rear portion of the site, and whether it would hinder access to the building for deliveries, ride hailing vehicles, visitors and others. The applicant indicated this issue would be looked into further. A suggestion was made to provide short term parking spaces in the vicinity of the lobby. In response to a question, it was stated that parking spaces in the garage would likely be assigned to specific tenants. The applicant was asked whether a traffic impact study will be prepared. The response was that the applicant will confirm the submittal requirements as this development is permitted as-of-right, but at the least that vehicle turning templates for the site will be provided. The turning templates have been provided.
- **Health Department questions/concerns:** The applicant was asked about trash and recycling storage and pickup. The response was it would be stored indoors, then brought out for pickup when a pickup vehicle is on site. There was concern about trash being left



out overnight, which may warrant this being included as a condition of any approval that is granted. It was also noted the proposed outdoor pool will need to be inspected by the Health Department.

- Other items
 - o The applicant should provide a more legible PDF of the site plan, as some of the information is difficult to read.
 - o Flood elevations should be added to the site plan.
 - o It was suggested that outdoor bicycle parking be provided.

The applicant has provided a copy of the April 6, 2020 Settlement Agreement with the Township of West Orange referenced in the application. In the application submitted to the Board, in the attached section “4A – PROPOSAL” it is stated: “The Settlement Agreement provides relief for the applicant to not require an Environmental Impact Statement, Soil Removal Permit and Tree Renewal (sic) Permit. I was not able to locate this provision in the Settlement Agreement. The applicant must provide a reference to this provision in this document or elsewhere, submit those documents, or request a waiver from submitting them.









