



TOWNSHIP OF WEST ORANGE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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WALT KIPP
Forester

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TO: PLANNING BOARD
FROM: WALT KIPP, FORESTER
DATE: October 23, 2023
SUBJECT: WEST ORANGE PLAZA

I have reviewed the latest architectural drawings and testimony of the applicant with regard to the proposed plantings for this application. The applicant has reviewed my report of September 18, 2023, and complied with and in some areas exceeded recommendations.

Healthy vibrant trees, evergreens, and seasonal plantings in the West Orange Community are just some of the environment's greatest assets. They provide shade, decrease stormwater runoff, break up the visual, add to the overall green environment, and contribute to the vitality of the Township. Pollutants partially controlled by trees include nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxides, carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide (required for normal tree function), ozone, and small particulates less than 10 microns in size.

The proposed landscaping will serve to help rehabilitate a previously covered asphalt parking lot, by the addition of over 39,000 sq feet of trees, evergreen, and planting islands. There will also be several evergreen plantings along the Prospect Avenue side of the parking lot from the most northerly portion to the southerly portion where now there are only some sparse tree plantings.

These islands and peripheral plantings will also serve to ameliorate wind forces for pedestrians as they move through the site.

The applicant has agreed to expand the volume of the planting islands in the parking lot directly to the east of the Whole Foods marketplace. This will be done to increase the viability of the trees and plants.

After evaluation of the site, the applicant has agreed to work to control the Japanese Knotweed on the site.

The applicant will install a pollinator garden at various locations to be determined.

The dead and noxious trees along the perimeter of the site will be removed.

There will be a watering and maintenance plan for the trees and greenery to be provided by the applicant to my office for approval.

There was testimony by the applicant that the roof runoff would be directed to the groundwater through a system of gutters and leaders.

I recommend a yearly evaluation of the parking lot island trees and perimeter trees and shrubs be submitted to this office and the Director of Planning by the applicant. The applicant should be required to maintain all plantings that are indicated on the final plan to be submitted by the applicant.

I will be working with the applicant through the process to ensure that native trees, evergreens and other non-invasive plantings are placed and maintained on the site.