



MEMORANDUM

To: *Chairman and Members of the
West Orange Planning Board*

From: *John J. Hess, PE, PP, CME
Planning Board Engineer*

Date: *October 30, 2023*

Re: *Application No. PB 23-10
GBSJ, LLC t/a Goddard School
Preliminary & Final Site Plan - Review #1
289 Mt. Pleasant Avenue
Block 83, Lots 1 & 5.01
Our File: VWRP0083.01*

CC: *Paul Grygiel, AICP, PP - Township Planning Director
Leonard Lepore, PE – Township Engineer
Diana McGovern, Esq. – Planning Board Attorney
GBSJ, LLC - Applicant
Walter E. Hanley, III, Esq. – Applicant's Attorney
Gerard P. Gesario, PE – Applicant's Engineer
Cheryl Schweiker, RA – Applicant's Architect*

Our office has received for review the following documents which were submitted in support of the above referenced application for Minor Site Plan approval for the above referenced property:

- A set of Preliminary/Final Site Plan & Lot Consolidation plans (9 sheets) prepared by Gerard P. Gesario, PE with Jarmel Kizel Architects and Engineers, Inc. of Livingston, New Jersey dated September 19, 2023.
- A set of architectural plans (2 sheets) prepared by Matthew B. Jarmel, RA with Jarmel Kizel Architects and Engineers, Inc. dated July 15, 2023.
- A completed Application Form dated September 21, 2023.
- A completed Site Plan/Subdivision Checklist.
- A completed Sustainability Checklist Form.
- A Verification of Taxes & Sewer Charges Paid from the Office of the Tax Collector dated August 28, 2023 which states that the taxes are paid until October 31, 2023 and the 2023 sewer charges are paid in full.
- A List of Owners within 200 Feet of Block 83, Lot 1 from the Office of the West Orange Tax Assessor dated June 6, 2023.



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We have reviewed the information submitted in support of this application and offer the following comments:

A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The property in question is an irregularly shaped tract which is bounded by Marcella Avenue to the north and east, Mt. Pleasant Avenue to the south and Prospect Avenue to the west. It is located in the B-2 General Business District and has an area of 58,344 sf or approximately 1.34 acres. The property is currently occupied by an existing 3 story building, a 1 story building, two (2) radio towers, two (2) sheds and two (2) paved parking lots. The existing 1 story building is occupied by a childcare center (Goddard School) while the existing 3 story building is occupied by a radio station. Access is provided to the site from Mt. Pleasant Avenue to the south and Marcella Avenue to the east. Also, on-site parking presently exists for 45 vehicles including 2 handicap accessible parking spaces.

The Applicant is seeking Preliminary & Final Site Plan approval to demolish one of the existing radio towers and to construct 3 story additions to the rear and westerly sides of the 3 story building. The additions will have a footprint of approximately 761 sf. In addition, the Applicant proposes to convert the 3 story building into pre-school classrooms. The Applicant also proposes to add a landscape area and a trash enclosure along the westerly side of the 3 story building and to provide a crosswalk across the access drive between the 1 story and the 3 story buildings.

B. DESIGN COMMENTS

1. Based on our review, we find that the following items from the Township's Site Plan/Subdivision Checklist must be addressed:
 - a) Item #20 – *Copy and/or delineation of any existing or proposed deed restrictions or covenants.*
 - b) Item #25 – *Requested or obtained design waivers or exceptions.*
 - c) Item #33 – *Existing system of drainage of subject site and of any larger tract of basin of which it is a part.*
 - d) Item #36 – *Proposed utility infrastructure plans, including sanitary sewer, water storm water management, telephone, electric and cable TV.*
 - e) Item #46 – *Solid waste management plan.*
 - f) Item #47 – *Site identification signs, traffic control signs and directional signs.*
 - g) Item #52 – *Plans and legal documents for compliance with West Orange COAH Ordinances.*
2. The Applicant has requested the following waivers:
 - a) Item #9 – *Appropriate certification blocks as required by Map Filing Law.*



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- b) Item #10 – *Monumentation as specified by Map Filing Law.*
 - c) Item #13 – *Metes and bounds description showing dimensions, bearings, curve data, length of tangents, radii, arcs, chords and central angles for all centerlines and right-of-way, and centerline curves on streets.*
 - d) Item #34 – *Drainage Area Map.*
 - e) Item #35 – *Drainage Calculations.*
 - f) Item #48 – *Sight triangles.*
 - g) As required by NJAC 13:40-7.2(a)1, a signed and sealed copy of a survey of the property being developed must be submitted to the Board with the site plan submission.
3. The Applicant should address the Board regarding the proposed hours of operation for the childcare center.
 4. The Applicant should address the Board regarding the existing and proposed usage of the parking lots. In addition, the Applicant should address how the drop off and pick up of students will be accomplished as parking is limited at the site.
 5. The Applicant should address the Board regarding the anticipated Levels of Service (LOS) for vehicles entering/leaving the driveway on Mt. Pleasant Avenue and at the intersection of Marcella Avenue and Prospect Avenue during the peak AM and PM weekday hours.
 6. The Applicant should address the Board regarding their plans to provide make-ready electric vehicle parking spaces at the site as required by Section 25-12.6 of the Land Use Regulation.
 7. The Applicant should address the Board regarding whether any new utility services are required to accommodate the proposed expansion of the 3 story building. If so, the proposed utility services must be shown on the plans.
 8. The Applicant should address the Board regarding their plans to install curbing and sidewalk along the Marcella Avenue site frontage.
 9. We note that the property in question currently consists of two (2) lots. As a condition of any approval granted by the Board, it is our recommendation that the lots be consolidated. Prior to recording, a copy of the proposed Deed of Consolidation must be submitted to the Board for approval by the Board attorney and our office. In addition, the proposed lot number for the consolidated parcel must be approved in writing by the Township Assessor.
 10. Sheet C-001 includes a Drawing Index which shows that each drawing is dated August 22, 2023 with no revisions. However, each sheet bears a revision stating that the Initial Submission date is September 19, 2023. Therefore, the Drawing Index must be updated accordingly.



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11. The Zoning Schedule on sheet C-001 shows that the existing 1 story building has a footprint of 8,800 sf, the existing 3 story building has a footprint of 1,316 sf and the proposed buildings (with additions) will have a footprint of 10,877 sf.
12. The Parking Requirements table on sheet C-001 shows that the required parking is 58.1 spaces based on the proposed building footprint of 10,877 sf. However, the parking calculation doesn't take into account the fact that the 3 story building has a gross floor area of 6,231 sf. Therefore, the actual gross floor area of the 2 buildings will be 15,031 sf which requires 70 parking space. This discrepancy must be resolved.
13. Sheet C-001 should be revised to include a table which shows the existing and proposed impervious cover at the site.
14. The Applicant should address the Board regarding their plans to mitigate the increase in runoff from an increase in the impervious cover at the site.
15. Sheet C-100 must be revised to dimension the existing buildings and show the existing gross floor area of each building.
16. Sheet C-100 must be revised to show the dimensions of the existing parking spaces and drive aisles.
17. It shows on sheet C-300 that a tower and two (2) sheds located on the westerly side of the existing 1 story building are to remain. The Applicant should address the Board regarding the purpose of tower and two (2) sheds.
18. Sheet C-300 must be revised to dimension the building additions and to show the proposed gross floor area of the 3 story building.
19. Sheet C-300 must be revised to dimension the widths of the proposed concrete walkways on the sides of the 3 story building.
20. It shows on sheet C-300 that the Applicant proposes to install a trash enclosure adjacent to the southwest corner of the 3 story building. The trash enclosure will restrict the width of the adjoining drive aisle to 19.54 ft whereas a minimum drive aisle width of 24 ft is required. The Applicant should address the Board regarding the feasibility of relocating the trash enclosure to another location which will not impact the width of the circulation aisle.
21. Sheet C-300 shows a proposed infill area. The purpose of the infill area must be clarified.
22. Sheet C-300 shows that a stripped crosswalk is proposed from the 3 story building to the 1 story building. Therefore, a detail of the stripped crosswalk must be added to the plans.
23. The Applicant should provide testimony to demonstrate that the trash enclosure will have adequate capacity to accommodate the trash and recyclables that will be generated at the site.



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24. Sheet C-900 must be revised to include a parking lot pavement restoration detail.
25. Sheet C-300 shows that a Watch for Pedestrians" sign is proposed. Therefore, a sign and sign post detail must be added to the plans.
26. Sheet C-900 includes a 6" Concrete Curb detail. Therefore, sheet C-300 must be revised to identify the locations where concrete curb is proposed.
27. Sheet C-900 includes details of a Crashcore Deep Mounted Bollard and a Shallow Mount Crashcore Bollard. The plans must be revised to identify where each type of bollard is proposed. We note that sheet C-300 has a callout for a Proposed Bollard(Typ.). However, there appears to be no symbol associated with the callout so we are unable to determine how many bollards are proposed.
28. Sheet SA-1.12 of the architectural plans must be revised to dimension the length of the staircase addition on the westerly side of the building and to dimension the various rooms within the proposed addition on the northerly side of the building.

C. LANDSCAPING AND LIGHTING

1. The appropriate planting details must be added to the plans.
2. NJ native plant materials have been selected; however, our office has concerns with their ability to establish on the rocky hillside as proposed. Some of the species selected require a loamy soil and moist conditions. This should be reviewed.
3. Review and revise the 'Plant Schedule', sheet C-600, to ensure plan accuracy, specifically, for proposed CA (New Jersey Tea).
4. If deer are present in the area, provide rigid, plastic, open mesh trunk guards for all deciduous trees, to protect from the irreparable damage from buck rub.
5. A note should be provided that all dead and dying plant material installed at the Goddard School should be replaced during landscape installation for the proposed Annex.
6. Based on recent aerial and street view images, it appears some of the existing trees are in poor condition that could affect the safety of this site. Trees should be reviewed to determine ownership and removed as deemed necessary.
7. It is unclear which light fixtures are existing and which are proposed. Revise the plans to clarify any new proposed light fixtures, for further review.
8. Provide isolux pattern details, for all proposed fixtures, to include a scale and graph.
9. Revise the plans to indicate proposed color and finish for all light fixtures and poles.



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The Applicant is hereby advised that any revised plans or other documents submitted to the Board should be accompanied by a cover letter which addresses each of the comments in this review letter and also details any other changes that have been made to the plans as these may not be readily apparent.