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MEMORANDUM

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

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

Date: *February 20, 2024*

Re: *Application No. PB-24-03
Crystal Eagle, LLC
Minor Site Plan - Review #1
Proposed Storage Facility
424 Eagle Rock Avenue
Block 111, Lot 1.08
Our File: VWRP0111.01*

CC: *Paul Grygiel, AICP, PP - Township Planner
Zayibeth Carballo, PE, PLS, PP, CME, CFM, CFS – Ass't Municipal Engineer
Diana McGovern, Esq. – Planning Board Attorney
Crystal Eagle, LLC – Applicant
Scott D. Heller, Esq. – Applicant's Attorney
Anthony Castillo, PE – Applicant's Engineer
Matthew B. Jarmel, RA – Applicant's Architect
Douglas B. Smith, PLS – Applicant's Surveyor*

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

- A set of unsigned Preliminary Minor Site Plan drawings (7 sheets) prepared by Anthony Castillo, PE with SESI Consulting Engineers of Parsippany, New Jersey Dated December 19, 2023.
- A print of a Property Survey (1 sheet) prepared by Douglas B. Smith, PLS with DAB Surveying, Inc. of Kinnelon, New Jersey and bearing a latest revision date of September 18, 2015.
- A set of unsigned architectural plans (2 sheets) prepared by Matthew B. Jarmel, RA with Jarmel Kizel Architects and Engineers Inc. of Livingston, New Jersey and bearing an initial submission date of December 29, 2023.
- A completed Application Form dated January 3, 2024.
- A copy of a January 8, 2024 letter from Cary Heller with Crystal Eagle, LLC of South Orange, New Jersey to the Township of West Orange Department of Planning and Development which summarizes the improvements that are proposed at the site.



Chairman and Members of the West Orange Planning Board
Re: Crystal Eagle, LLC (PB-24-03)
Minor Site Plan - Review #1

February 20, 2024
Our File No. VWRP0111.01
Page 2

- A Verification of Taxes & Sewer Charges Paid from the Office of the Tax Collector dated January 8, 2024 which states that the taxes on block 111, lot 1.08 are paid until January 31, 2024 and the sewer charges are not paid in full for 2023.
- A Buffer Report which lists the owners of property within 200 feet of block 111, lot 1.08 from the Office of the West Orange Assessor dated January 4, 2024.

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

A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The property in question is a flag shaped tract located on the southerly side of Eagle Rock Avenue approximately 310 ft east of the intersection with Prospect Avenue. It is located in the B-2 Zoning District and has an area of 2.63 acres. The site is presently occupied by a vacant 1 story building which was previously occupied by a bowling alley and a paved parking lot surrounding the building. In addition, a paved parking area with 66 angled parking spaces exists on the front portion of the lot within the stem of the flag. Also, there are existing steep slope areas along the southerly and easterly sides of the site.

The Applicant is seeking Minor Site Plan approval to construct various improvements to the existing building to convert it from a bowling alley to two (2) tenant spaces with separate entrances. In addition, new windows are proposed along the front of the building and new signage is proposed for the future tenants. We note that no tenants have been identified at this time.

The Applicant also proposes reconfigure the parking spaces surrounding the building. A total of 97 parking spaces are proposed including 4 handicap accessible spaces and 10 spaces for compact vehicles. In addition, the Applicant proposes to reconfigure the parking spaces within the stem of the flag. A total of 73 parking spaces are proposed within this area for a total of 170 parking spaces at the site. Access will be provided to the site via the existing driveway from Eagle Rock Avenue. The existing driveway currently provides one-way access to the site. The Applicant proposes to convert the existing driveway to a two-way full movement driveway.

B. DESIGN COMMENTS

1. As required by §25-51 in the Township Code, the Applicant must submit a completed Site Plan/Subdivision Checklist and a completed Sustainability Checklist Form.
2. Based on our review, we find that the following items from the Township's the Site Plan / Subdivision Checklist must be addressed:
 - a) Item #8 – *Signature blocks for Chairman, Secretary and Municipal Engineer.*
 - b) Item #14 – *Affidavit of Ownership.*
 - c) Item #23 – *List of required regulatory approvals or permits.*
 - d) Item #24 – *List of variances required or requested.*



Chairman and Members of the West Orange Planning Board
Re: Crystal Eagle, LLC (PB-24-03)
Minor Site Plan - Review #1

February 20, 2024
Our File No. VWRP0111.01
Page 3

- e) Item #25 – *Requested or obtained design waivers or exceptions.*
 - f) Item #38 – *Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plan.*
 - g) Item #46 – *Solid waste management plan.*
 - h) Item #47 – *Site identification signs, traffic control signs, and directional signs.*
 - i) Item #48 – *Sight triangles.*
 - j) Item #52 – *Plans and legal documents for compliance with West Orange COAH Ordinance.*
2. It states on sheet S-1 of the Site Plan drawings that the plan is based on a Property Survey prepared by DAB Surveying Inc. dated July 9, 2015 with a latest revision date of September 26, 2019. However, the Property Survey submitted with this application has a latest revision date of September 18, 2015. This discrepancy must be resolved.
 3. As required by §25-12.1.b of the Township Code, the entire perimeter of all parking areas shall be curbed. Therefore, the plans must be revised to provide curbing along the easterly side of the building and along the sides and rear of the parking area at the rear of the building.
 4. It shows on sheet S-1 that a row of 38 parking spaces is proposed along the easterly side of the stem. §25-12.1.o of the Township Code stipulates that that maximum length of a single row of parking spaces shall be 20 spaces at which point a landscape area with a minimum width of 8 ft shall be provided.
 5. As required by §25-12.1.o of the Township Code, in parking areas with 30 or more parking spaces, there shall be a minimum of 1 tree plus ground level planting for each 10 parking spaces which may be provided within and/or on the perimeter of the parking area.
 6. The Applicant should address the Board regarding their plans to provide make-ready electric vehicle parking spaces at the site as required by §25-12.6.d.2 of the Township Code.
 7. It shows on sheet S-1 that 9 parallel parking spaces are proposed. These spaces will have a length of only 20 ft which is quite short. It is our recommendation that the parallel parking spaces have a minimum length of 23 ft.
 8. The Applicant should address the Board regarding the feasibility of providing a sidewalk along the stem from Eagle Rock Avenue to the building.
 9. Sheet S-1 must be revised to show the locations of the proposed handicap signs for the 6 handicap accessible parking spaces. If the signs are proposed at the head of the parking spaces, then the Applicant must address how they will be protected from damage by vehicles using the spaces.



Chairman and Members of the West Orange Planning Board
Re: Crystal Eagle, LLC (PB-24-03)
Minor Site Plan - Review #1

February 20, 2024
Our File No. VWRP0111.01
Page 4

10. Sheet S-1 should be revised to provide a stop sign and stop bar at the site exit onto Eagle Rock Avenue.
11. The Applicant should address the Board regarding their plans to provide wheel stops for the angled parking spaces that are proposed on the easterly side of the building in order to protect the building from damage by the vehicles utilizing these parking spaces.
12. It shows on sheet S-1 that a concrete ramp with railing is proposed in front of the building. Therefore, a detail of the concrete ramp with railing must be added to the plans.
13. It shows on sheet S-1 that the Applicant proposes to eliminate at least one vehicular connection to the existing parking lot on adjoining lot 1.07. The Applicant should provide testimony to the Board to demonstrate that the elimination of these connections will not cause any circulation issues on the adjoining property.
14. The plans do not show that any loading spaces are proposed. The Applicant should address the Board regarding their plans to provide loading spaces to accommodate deliveries to the site as required by §25-12.3 of the Township Code.
15. The Applicant should provide turning movement plans to the Board to demonstrate that adequate circulation is provided for delivery trucks, trash collection trucks and emergency vehicles.
16. It shows on sheet S-1 that a trash enclosure is proposed at the rear of the site behind the building. The Applicant should provide testimony to the Board to demonstrate that the dumpster will have adequate capacity to accommodate the trash and recyclables that will be generated at the site.
17. The Applicant should address the Board regarding their plans to provide access to Crystal Lake which is owned by the Township. In addition, the Applicant should address the Board regarding their plans to set aside several parking spaces for use by visitors to Crystal Lake.
18. Sheet G-1 must be revised to show the proposed top of curb and gutter grades along the new curbing that is proposed in the within the stem.
19. Sheet G-1 must be revised to provide additional detail to demonstrate that the proposed handicap accessible parking spaces comply with the ADA grading requirements for both the parking spaces and the handicap ramps. In addition, a handicap ramp detail must be added to the plans.
20. Sheet D-1 includes a Drop Curb Detail at Driveways. Therefore, sheet S-1 must be revised to show where the drop curb is proposed.
21. The Masonry Wall Trash Enclosure on sheet D-1 must be revised to either specify the use of a split face block for the wall or to show that the masonry block wall will be parged or otherwise finished in an aesthetic manner.



Chairman and Members of the West Orange Planning Board
Re: Crystal Eagle, LLC (PB-24-03)
Minor Site Plan - Review #1

February 20, 2024
Our File No. VWRP0111.01
Page 5

22. Note #4 on the Typical Handicap Sign Detail on sheet D-1 must be revised to reference the New Jersey Department of Transportation.
23. The Mill and Overlay Detail on sheet D-1 shows a 3" bituminous concrete base course. The purpose of the base course layer must be clarified as only a mill and overlay is proposed.

C. LANDSCAPING

1. The plans indicate a portion of asphalt will be removed west of the building, near Crystal Lake. Currently, a diagonal row of BO (Boxwood) are proposed at this area. Revise the plans to remove these shrubs and provide native deciduous trees in a natural layout, to revegetate this area. The Applicant should consider American Elm, Red Maple, Sycamore, etc., as these are species currently present near the lake.
2. Revise the shrub layout within the two (2) parking lot islands within the stem parking lot to provide six (6) HJ (Bar Harbor Juniper) at the front of the bed in one grouping and provide six (6) shrubs in one grouping west of the grouping of 6 HJ, to provide a layout that is aesthetically pleasing and will require minimal maintenance. Our office recommends a hardy, native flowering shrub, such as Potentilla, rather than proposed SJ (All Gold Shore Juniper), which is another prostrate evergreen ground cover.
3. Revise the proposed landscaping for the sign foundation, to enhance the area. It appears this location will be too shady for proposed MG (Muhly grass) and HJ (Bar Harbor Juniper) will barely be visible. If an ornamental grass is desired, Northern Sea Oats does not need full sun. Our office recommends Potentilla, as this is a native shrub that tolerates dry, rocky and poor soil conditions.
4. Revise the landscape schedule, sheet 6 of 7, to provide the following:
 - a. Remove the 'Mature Size' column as none of this information is correct.
 - b. Provide a specific size for proposed shrubs. Our office recommends a minimum of 18-24" in height/spread. Currently, only a container size has been indicated. However, most of the container sizes are too small.
 - c. Clarify proposed DT as the botanical name indicates a flowering pear tree, which is invasive and not acceptable, but the common name indicates a dogwood tree.
 - d. Four (4) of the five (5) trees proposed for the site have been specified with an installation size of 2-3 feet tall or in a shrub sized container. These are not acceptable sizes for installation.
 - e. CB (Barberry) is a highly invasive species and is not acceptable. Provide an alternative species.



Chairman and Members of the West Orange Planning Board
Re: Crystal Eagle, LLC (PB-24-03)
Minor Site Plan - Review #1

February 20, 2024
Our File No. VWRP0111.01
Page 6

- f. Indicate a specific cultivar for proposed RM (Red Maple) and correct the spelling.
5. Our office strongly recommends a licensed landscape architect prepare the plans as the landscape layout and species selection do not make sense and will not enhance the aesthetics of the site.
6. It appears one (1) Red Maple to match existing trees within the parking lot can be provided in the long island north of the building, to be positioned out from under the overhead utilities.
7. Revise the 'Typical Tree Planting' detail, sheet 6 of 7, to indicate rigid plastic open mesh trunk guards to be provided to protect from the irreparable damage from buck rub.

D. LIGHTING

1. Lighting information has only been provided for the parking lot area around the existing building. The Applicant should provide testimony regarding light levels in the stem of the parking area to ensure adequate illumination is provided, in accordance with Section 25-14.1a.1.
2. In accordance with IES (Illuminating Engineering Society) standards, parking lots are to meet a minimum of 0.50 footcandles throughout, whereas this has not been provided.
3. It appears light spillage occurs over the east property line. This should be revised to maintain light levels within the property lines.
4. The Applicant has provided a note that light fixtures are to remain on from dusk till dawn. If the site is not a 24/7 operation, light fixtures should be turned off (except for security lighting) during non-operational hours, to reduce light pollution.
5. Revise the plans to provide manufacturer's catalog cuts and isolux pattern details for all proposed fixtures. Also, indicate proposed color and finish for all light fixtures.

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.