

MEMORANDUM

TO: Township of West Orange Planning Board

CC: Jamilet Baquerizo Vite, Board Secretary
John R. Dusinberre, Attorney for the Applicant
Geniece Gary-Adams, Township of West Orange Zoning Official
Philip Scott, PE, Planning Board Engineer

FR: Gerard M. Haizel, PP, AICP, Principal & Consulting Planner 

RE: **PB-24-15 - 31-35 Harrison Avenue (Block 141, Lot 1)**
Site Plan Review Advisory Board Report

DT: October 8, 2024

Attendance:

John R. Dusinberre, Esq., Attorney for the Applicant
Luis Crespo, Principal of the Applicant
Joseph Haines, Applicant's Architect
Lee Klein - Planning Board Member
Jerry Guarino - Planning Board Member
Mike Dannemiller - Zoning Board Member
Irv Schwarbaum - Zoning Board Member
Michale A. Fonzino - Director of Health Department
Officer Pat Matullo - WOPD Traffic Division
Jamilet Baquerizo Vite, Board Secretary
Geniece Gary-Adams, Director of Planning & Development/Zoning Official
Gerard M. Haizel - Nishuane Group, Board Planner
Phil Scott - Matrix New World Engineering, Board Engineer

The Township of West Orange Site Plan Review Advisory Board (SPRAB) held a meeting on October 8, 2024. At this meeting, the SPRAB reviewed the above referenced application with the applicant's attorney and architect. The applicant was also present and provided information about the operation of the business and the need for the proposed addition.

The applicant is proposing to construct a one-story, 2,130-SF addition to the rear of an existing commercial building. The proposed addition will trigger a side yard variance in addition to a parking variance.

The following site plan and design issues were discussed at the meeting:

⇒ Layout of the Addition & Side Yard Variance

The applicant's architect, Joseph Haines, provided an overview of the proposed addition and how it will relate to the existing building. He explained the need for the proposed addition, which will accommodate equipment used in the applicant's business. He explained how the proposed addition would fit and relate to the topography of the site, which decreases from its high point in the northwestern area of the site. He was asked about the stormwater runoff from the site in light of the topography and how the proposed addition would impact that. He further explained that the existing topography, coupled with the proposed grading on the southern side of the addition would channel the runoff into the rear yard of the adjoining property as is the current situation. Additionally, the roof runoff will be channeled to the existing drains and flow into the street.

⇒ Drainage

Mr. Haines also identified the side yard setback variance being requested and how it relates to the adjacent property to the south. He explained how the desire to locate an 8-foot door at the southeastern area of the addition was driving the need for the variance. This door would facilitate deliveries and pickups of merchandise. He further detailed the alternative configurations that were considered to position the door so as to reduce or eliminate the need for the side yard variance. After some discussion, the applicant agreed to reduce the size of the door to a 6-foot width, which would reduce the side yard encroachment.

⇒ Parking Variance

The business has an existing parking deficiency, which will be increased by the proposed addition. The applicant, Luis Crespo disclosed the number of employees and stated that there was no increase planned as a result of the proposed expansion. He explained how the business operated currently with the parking deficiency and how it would following the addition. He contended that the existing on-street parking was adequate, due to the nature of the business and the flow of customers.

⇒ Garbage and Recycling

Mr. Crespo stated that the business does not produce much garbage. Most of their refuse was cardboard boxes etc., which is kept in the building and put out for recycling pickup.

The applicant's professional team will make modifications to their submission, based on the input and discussions with the Township and Board Professionals and will work towards meeting the notice requirement for the Planning Board's November 6 hearing date.