



**Consulting & Municipal
ENGINEERS**
A Subsidiary of Artheon, Inc.

One Market Street, Suite 1F
Camden, NJ 08102
732.410.2651 ☎
www.cmeusa1.com 🌐

April 1, 2026

West Orange Township – Zoning Board
66 Main Street
West Orange, NJ 07052

Re: Northfield Avenue Realty Associates, LLC – Planning Review #1
81 Northfield Avenue
Block 71.01, Lot 43
Zone: Office Building-1 (OB-1)
Our File No. WRZ0071.H02

Dear Chairman and Board Members:

1. Summary

The property is located on Northfield Avenue between Brennan Drive and Hutton Avenue and adjacent to the interchange with Interstate 280. The 86,684.4 square foot (1.99-acre) property is currently developed with a two-story multi-tenant commercial office building. The applicant proposes to use 10 vehicular parking spaces at the rear of the property to park medical transportation vehicles. A d-1 use variance relief is required to permit commercial vehicle storage/parking in the OB-1 zone.





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2. Project and Property Description

The subject property is located on the north side of Northfield Avenue between Brennan Drive and Hutton Avenue, approximately 275 feet west of Interstate 280. The 86,684.4 square foot (1.99-acre) property is currently developed with a 21,600 square-foot two-story multi-tenant commercial office building. The site has two access points, one on Northfield Avenue, and a second on Brennan Drive. The site also has approximately 110 parking spaces, inclusive of 62 spaces on the north side of the site and 48 spaces on the south side of the site.

The surrounding areas include Llewellyn Gates Condominiums and several smaller office buildings to the west, single-family residences to the north and south, and a jug-handle for Interstate 280 to the east across Brennan Drive.

The applicant is proposing to continue the existing office use(s) within the building and seeks to permit the parking of medical transport vehicles on the site within the parking lot. A total of 10 parking spaces on site are proposed to be dedicated to storage of the medical transport vehicles. The existing building, driveway access points and parking spaces would remain. No site improvements appear to be proposed at this time.

3. Zoning Compliance

The property is located within the OB-1 district of the Township.

Use Requirements

Office buildings are permitted as principal uses in the district.

Accessory off-street parking for office or other permitted uses is permitted in the district.

The parking of medical transport vehicles is not a permitted principal or accessory use in the district, and is not necessarily customarily incidental to a general business office use. A d-1 use variance will be required to permit accessory parking of medical transport vehicles on the site.

Bulk Requirements

All development in the OB-1 district is subject to the following bulk regulations:

OB-1 Zone Bulk Requirements			
	Required / Permitted	Proposed	Variance
Min Lot Area	10,000 sf	86,684.4 s.f.	No
Min Side Front Corner Yard (Brennan Drive)	25 feet	25.4 feet	No



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OB-1 Zone Bulk Requirements			
	Required / Permitted	Proposed	Variance
Min Side Front Corner Yard (Northfield Avenue)	25 feet	> 25 feet	No
Min Rear Yard	30 feet	> 30 feet	No
Min Side Yard	10 + 8 feet	> 18 feet	No
Max Building Height	2.5 stories / 35 feet	2 stories	No
Min Buffer Width	20 feet to residential	> 20 feet	No
ENC = Existing Non-Conformance, V = Variance			

Parking & Loading

Off-street parking is required for Office Buildings at a ratio of 1 space per 250 square feet of gross floor area.

- There is 21,600 square feet of gross floor area / 250 = 86.4
 - 87 parking spaces are required.
- 110 parking spaces, including 4 ADA spaces, exist on the site.

4. Variances & Waivers Required

It appears that the following conditions are not in compliance with the Township's land development regulations and may require variance or design waiver relief from the Board to permit the project as proposed:

Variances:

- §25-7.1 Attachment 2 Permitted Uses** – The proposed use as a Medical Vehicle Transportation parking is not a permitted use in the OB-1 district.
- §25-12.1.I Parking in Front Yard** – Parking is not permitted in a front yard, where parking is proposed in the front yard. This is an existing condition.
- §25-12.3.a.2 Loading** – At least one off-street loading space is required, where no designated loading space is provided. This is an existing condition.



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5. Master Plan Considerations

The Township's Master Plan was last reexamined in December of 2019. The following goals, objectives, and recommendations of the Master Plan may be relevant to this application:

- Maintain the existing scale of the community.
- Ensure that the Public's Safety is Secured
- Properly Locate Public, Commercial/Retail, Industrial, Residential and Service Uses
- The master plan should continue to support economic development, including through maintenance and revitalization of commercial and office areas.

6. Planning Comments

- a. The applicant should discuss the proposed project, addressing the general scale and scope of improvements proposed for the site. Testimony should be provided addressing the anticipated operations of the medical vehicle transportation parking use on the site, including the following:
 - i. Hours of operation,
 - ii. Number of drivers on the site.
 - iii. Types of vehicles to be stored,
 - iv. Will the vehicles have identified and dedicated parking spaces?
 - v. Frequency of vehicles departing and returning to the site,
 - vi. Impacts to parking for existing and future office tenant users,
- b. The applicant should discuss the nature of the business' use of the office space itself beyond just the parking of vehicles. The OB-1 district permits office uses, which would be inclusive of general administrative functions, professional offices, and similar offices, but not necessarily medical transport/dispatching services. The applicant should clarify the extent to which the existing and proposed use is primarily an office function for a medical transportation business as the principal use, with accessory parking for vehicles, or if the primary use of the site is a transportation dispatching center as its own distinct principal use that also has accessory office space in the building.
- c. Typically, even if not expressly stated in an ordinance, permitted accessory uses are interpreted as being inclusive of any use that is customarily incidental and subordinate to the principal use on the site. For an office use, parking of standard vehicles for employees or visitors to the office during office hours is considered "*customarily incidental and subordinate to*" the office use. Parking of medical transport vehicles is not something that



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you would typically expect to find at any office building, but is unique to this particular business use, and therefore requiring a use variance.

- d. The courts have previously held that where an accessory use or function on a site is not expressly permitted, and is not otherwise customarily incidental and subordinate to the permitted principal use of the site, a d-1 use variance is required, and should be treated similarly to a d-1 use variance for a non-permitted principal use.
- e. With any 'd' variance, the applicant has an enhanced burden of proof to demonstrate that both the positive and negative criteria can be satisfied before the Board can grant a 'd' variance:
 - i. Positive Criteria: The applicant must show that there are special reasons to grant the variance. Special reasons can come in one of three forms: 1) that there is an economic inutility in using the property for one of the permitted uses in the district; 2) that the proposed use is considered "inherently beneficial"; or 3) that the proposed use would promote the general welfare by advancing one of the purposes of zoning, and that the site is particularly suited for the use.
 - ii. Negative Criteria: The applicant must show that the proposed use will not have a substantial detrimental impact on the public good and will not substantially impair the intent and purpose of the zone plan.
- f. The applicant should provide testimony addressing how this particular site was identified for this business, whether there is a need for this type of use in the area, and how the site is suited for use as a medical vehicle transportation business and vehicle storage.
- g. The application will also technically require bulk or 'c' variances for parking in the front yard and the absence of loading spaces. These conditions are existing non-conforming conditions and are not proposed to change at this time.
- h. We defer any comment on grading, drainage, utilities, and stormwater management to the Board Engineer.
- i. The applicant should address the status of any necessary outside agency approvals.



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If you have any questions about this report, please do not hesitate to reach out to our office.

Sincerely,

CME Associates

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Dochney'.

Christopher N. Dochney – PP, AICP
Senior Program Manager
Board Planner

CD

cc: Geniece Gary-Adams – Township Zoning Official
Zayibeth Carballo, PE, PLS, PP – Township Engineer
Kelly Carey, Esq. – Board Attorney
John Hess, PE, PP, CME – Board Engineer
Ryan MacNeill, PE – Board Engineer
Northfield Avenue Realty Associates, LLC - Applicant
James M Spanarkel. – Applicant's Attorney
Kerry Ann Pehnke, P.E. – Applicant's Engineer
Sean Moronski, PP. AICP – Applicant's Planner



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7. Materials Submitted

The following materials have been submitted and reviewed in association with this application:

- A Zoning Board of Adjustment Application and supplemental materials.
- A one-page sheet survey of the property prepared by Jack L Held, PLS & PP and dated October 8, 1999.
- An eight (8) page planning report prepared by Sean Moronski, P.P. AICP of Langan Engineering and Environmental Services, dated February 27, 2026
- A traffic statement report prepared by Kerry Ann Pehnke, P.E. of Langan Engineering and Environmental Services and dated February 27, 2026.
- A two-page letter prepared by James M. Spanarkel, Esq, dated February 27, 2026.