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JOHN J. HESS, PE, PP, CME

## **MEMORANDUM**

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

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

**Date:** *December 8, 2020*

**Re:** *Application No. ZB-20-12  
Jesus, Others, Yourself Church of God, Inc.  
Review #2  
Preliminary & Final Site Plan with 'C' and 'D' Variances  
446 Northfield Avenue  
Block 160, Lot 11  
Our File: VWRZ0160.01*

**CC:** *Paul Grygiel, AICP, PP - Township Planning Director  
Leonard Lepore, PE - Township Engineer  
Alice Beirne, Esq. - Zoning Board Attorney  
Jesus, Others, Yourself Church of God, Inc. - Applicant  
Richard S. Schkolnick, Esq. - Applicant's Attorney  
J. Michael Petry, PE, PP, RA - Applicant's Engineer, Planner & Architect  
John J. Butler, PLS - Applicant's Surveyor*

**RECEIVED**

DEC 15 2020

W.O. PLANNING DEPT

Our office has received for review the following documents which were submitted in support of the above referenced application for Preliminary & Final Site Plan approval with 'D' Variance:

- A set of Preliminary & Final Site Plan drawings (2 sheets) prepared by J. Michael Petry, PE, PP, RA with Petry Engineering, LLC of Fairfield, New Jersey and bearing a latest revision date of December 3, 2020.
- A set of architectural plans (2 sheets) prepared by J. Michael Petry, RA dated June 16, 2020. Sheet 1 shows the existing floor plans and sheet 2 shows the existing and proposed elevations.
- A copy of a December 4, 2020 letter from J. Michael Petry, PE, PP, AIA to the West Orange Zoning Board which addresses the comments in our December 1, 2020 review letter and the December 1, 2020 review letter from Paul Grygiel, PP.

In addition to the above, our office previously received the following information as part of the original submission for this application:

- A Boundary Survey (1 sheet) prepared by John J. Butler, PLS with Butler Surveying & Mapping, Inc. of Midland Park, New Jersey dated March 3, 2020.
- A Planner's Report prepared by J. Michael Petry, PP dated September 23, 2020.



West Orange Township Zoning Board  
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- A completed Application Form.
- An unsigned Project Narrative dated September 4, 2020 which describes the proposed use, lists the variances that are required and sets forth the reasons for the requested relief.
- A completed Site Plan/Subdivision Checklist.
- A completed Sustainability Checklist Form.
- A copy of a Property Tax Statement which shows that taxes in the amount of \$4,343.47 are currently due with interest through September 10, 2020.
- A list of property owners within 200 feet of the site prepared by the Tax Assessor's office dated July 2, 2020.

We have reviewed the submitted information and offer the following comments:

#### **A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The property in question is an irregularly shaped tract located on the southerly side of Northfield Avenue approximately 428 ft east of the intersection with Walker Road. It is located in the R-4 Single Family Residential Zone and has an area of 12,555 sf or approximately 0.288 acres. The site is presently occupied by a 2½ story mixed use commercial building with a basement having 2,893 sf of office space. Access is provided to the site via a one way entrance drive at the easterly side of the site and a one way exit drive at the westerly side of the site. In addition, on-site parking is provided for 13 vehicles.

The Applicant is seeking Use Variance and Preliminary & Final Site Plan approval to permit the Jesus, Others, Yourself Church of God, Inc. to occupy the first and second floors of the building. The first floor will include 678 sf of worship space and 138 sf of storage/private office space while the second floor will include meeting rooms totaling 582 sf. In addition, a psychologist currently occupies the office space in the basement of the building which has a gross floor area of 1,022 sf. The psychologist is proposed to remain. Finally, the Applicant proposes to restripe and repair the existing asphalt parking lot.

#### **B. DESIGN COMMENTS AND PLAT DETAILS**

1. It shows on sheet SP-1 that the Turtle Brook runs through the southerly portion of the site. The Applicant should address the Board regarding whether there are any existing approvals and/or environmental restrictions related to this watercourse. In his December 4, 2020 letter, Mr. Petry states *"Our office has researched NJDEP Date Miner files and we find no record of applications or permits related to the subject property, nor do we find any applications or permits associated with the abutting property across the Brook"*.
2. The Applicant should address the Board regarding the days and hours of operation of the various activities that are proposed at the church.



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3. It states in the Project Narrative that there will be small group meetings one or two weeknights per week with a few congregants present for committee work or fellowship meetings. The Applicant should address the Board to demonstrate that the existing parking lot lighting complies with the requirements in Section 25-14 of the Land Use Regulations.
4. It states on sheet SP-1 that 13 parking spaces presently exist at the site whereas 33 parking spaces are required. In addition, it states in the Project Narrative that the Applicant intends to require mandatory carpooling, with a designated Church official organizing and "making sure" that the mandatory car pool policy is strictly enforced. It further states that as an additional safeguard, the Church owns a van and can use the van for pick-ups/drop-offs to lessen parking demand and make sure that the parking facilities meet demand. The Applicant should address the Board regarding the mandatory carpooling and van service to demonstrate that the existing parking will be adequate to service the proposed uses at the site both under current conditions as well as in the future when the congregation grows.
5. Sheet SP-1 should be revised to designate a handicap accessible parking space at the site as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards. In addition, the appropriate handicap accessible parking space signage must be provided. In his December 4, 2020 letter, Mr. Petry states that *"The Applicant will agree to re-stripe the lot and incorporate accessible parking spaces as required as part of any action taken by the Board"*.
6. Sheet SP-1 must be revised to dimension the depth of parking spaces #8 & #9. We note that in his December 4, 2020 letter, Mr. Petry states that *"Many of the spaces are wider than the code requires, but the majority of the spaces are not as deep as the ordinance requires"*.
7. Based on our review of the street view images available on Google Earth, it appears that the existing parking lot pavement is in very poor condition with severe alligator cracking, pot holes and surface raveling. The Applicant should address the Board regarding their plans to rehabilitate the parking lot pavement. In his December 4, 2020 letter, Mr. Petry states that *"The Applicant intends on repairing the pavement and restoring the striping, should the Board approve the application"*.
8. Sheet A-2 of the architectural plans is entitled "Existing and Proposed Elevations". However, the plan appears to only depict the existing conditions at the site. In his December 4, 2020 letter, Mr. Petry states *"At this time, the church does not anticipate any changes, so they represent both existing and proposed conditions"*.
9. The Applicant should address the Board regarding their plans for the disposal of trash and recyclables at the site and the need to provide a trash enclosure. In his December 4, 2020 letter, Mr. Petry states *"Currently, refuse barrels are stored in the rear of the building under an overhang. It is the intention of the applicant to continue this practice"*.



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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.