



JOHN H. ALLGAIR, PE, PP, LS (1983-2001)
DAVID J. SAMUEL, PE, PP, CME
JOHN J. STEFANI, PE, LS, PP, CME
JAY B. CORNELL, PE, PP, CME
MICHAEL J. McCLELLAND, PE, PP, CME
GREGORY R. VALES, PE, PP, CME

TIM W. GILLEN, PE, PP, CME (1991-2019)
BRUCE M. KOCH, PE, PP, CME
LOUIS J. PLOSKONKA, PE, CME
TREVOR J. TAYLOR, PE, PP, CME
BEHRAM TURAN, PE, LSRP
LAURA J. NEUMANN, PE, PP
DOUGLAS ROHMEYER, PE, CFM, CME
ROBERT J. RUSSO, PE, PP, CME
JOHN J. HESS, PE, PP, CME

MEMORANDUM

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

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

Date: *April 29, 2021*

Re: *Application No. PB-21-04
Tompkins Street Apartments Urban Renewal, LLC
Proposed Affordable Housing Development
Preliminary & Final Major Site Plan with "C" Variances
Review #1
Tompkins Street
Block 6, Lot 36.01
Our File: VWRP0006.01*

CC: *Paul Grygiel, AICP, PP - Township Planning Director
Leonard Lepore, PE - Township Engineer
Kenneth D. McPherson III, Esq. - Planning Board Attorney
Tompkins Street Apartments Urban Renewal, LLC - Applicant
William C. Sullivan, Jr., Esq. - Applicant's Attorney
Sean M. Savage, PE - Applicant's Engineer
Mary M. Johannesen, RA - Applicant's Architect
Frank J. Barlowski, PLS - Applicant's Surveyor*

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

- A set of Preliminary & Final Major Site Plan drawings (10 sheets) prepared Sean M. Savage, PE with Matrix New World Engineering, Land Surveying and Landscape Architecture, PC of Eatontown, New Jersey dated March 11, 2021.
- A set of unsigned architectural floor plan and elevation drawings (2 sheets) prepared by Stephen L. Schnoch, RA with Kitchen & Associates of Collingswood, New Jersey dated March 10, 2021.
- A color rendering of the proposed building (1 sheet) prepared by Kitchen & Associates dated December 16, 2020.
- A print of a Boundary & Topographic Survey (1 sheet) prepared by Frank J. Barlowski, PLS with Matrix New World Engineering, Land Surveying and Landscape Architecture, PC dated September 14, 2020.
- A completed Application Form dated March 17, 2021 including a Rider which lists the variances that are requested.



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- An unsigned and undated Proposal which describes the proposed development and sets forth the reasons why the requested relief should be granted.
- A completed Site Plan/Subdivision Checklist.
- A completed Sustainability Checklist Form including a list of sustainable/green features.
- A Buffer Report which lists the owners of property within 200 feet of Block 6, Lot 36.01 from the Office of the West Orange Assessor dated December 17, 2020.

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 rectangular tract which fronts on the westerly side of Tompkins Street, has an area of 14,787 sf or approximately 0.34 acres and is currently vacant. The property is located in the Industrial R-M Zoning District.

The Applicant is seeking Preliminary & Final Major Site Plan approval to construct a new 3 story building containing 17 affordable housing apartments and a 700 sf management office. The proposed apartments will consist of 3 one-bedroom units, 10 two-bedroom units and 4 three-bedroom units.

B. WAIVERS AND/OR EXCEPTIONS FROM THE RESIDENTIAL SITE IMPROVEMENT STANDARDS (RSIS)

This application is subject to the requirements of the Residential Site Improvement Standards (RSIS) adopted as NJAC 5:21-1, et seq.

1. The Applicant has not requested any waivers from the RSIS.
2. The Applicant has not requested any *de minimis* exceptions from the RSIS.

C. 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 #21 – Any existing or proposed easement or land reserved for or dedicated to public use.
 - c) Item #23 – List of required regulatory approvals or permits.
 - d) Item #46 – Solid waste management plan.



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- e) Item #52 – Plans and legal documents for compliance with West Orange COAH Ordinances.
- 2. The Applicant has requested the following waivers:
 - a) Item #33 – Existing system of drainage of subject site.
 - b) Item #34 – Drainage Area Map.
 - c) Item #35 – Drainage Calculations.
 - d) Item #52 – Plans and legal documents for compliance with West Orange COAH Ordinances. The Applicant states that this information will be provided as a condition of approval.
- 3. The Applicant should address the Board regarding whether any free standing or building mounted signs are proposed at this site. If any signs are proposed, they should be shown on the plans and the appropriate details provided.
- 4. The approval block on sheet 1 of the site plan drawings must be revised to reference the Planning Board, not the Zoning Board.
- 5. It states on sheet 1 that the address of the property is 20 Tompkins Street which is incorrect. It is our understanding that no street address is currently assigned to the property in question. Therefore, the plans should be revised to eliminate the reference to 20 Tompkins Street. In addition, as a condition of any approval granted by the Board, the Applicant must contact the Municipal Engineer to have a street address assigned to this property.
- 6. The Applicant has requested a variance from the requirement to provide on-site parking for this project. We note that 35 parking spaces are required for this project based on the RSIS requirements. The Applicant proposes to reserve 17 parking spaces (one per unit) in the recently approved Mixed-Use Development at 8-10, 18 Central Avenue for use by the tenants of this project. The Applicant should address the Board regarding whether the parking spaces will be signed to show that they are reserved for the tenants of this project.
- 7. It is our understanding that the parking spaces proposed to be reserved for this project in the Mixed Use Development will be located closest to Mitchell Street. We note that 27 parking spaces are located in this area of which 22 of the spaces are for compact vehicles.
- 8. The Applicant should provide the Board with an analysis of the total parking demand for both the Central Avenue project and the Tompkins Street project. The analysis should include data from similar type developments to determine the average number of vehicles that are anticipated per occupied dwelling unit. The analysis should also account for visitor parking demand.



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9. The Applicant should address the Board regarding the adequacy of the on-street parking to accommodate visitors to the site. It is our understanding that many of the homes on Tompkins Street do not have driveways; and as a result, on-street parking is at a premium.
10. Since the residents of this project will be required to park at the nearby Mixed-Use Development, the Applicant must demonstrate that a safe walking route is provided between the two properties. If they do not exist, handicap ramps and cross walks should be installed on Mitchell Street to accommodate the anticipated pedestrian traffic.
11. It is our recommendation that the Applicant request approval from the Township Committee to permit the installation of a handicap parking space in Tompkins Street in front of the property in questions to serve the needs and the residents and visitors.
12. The Applicant has requested a waiver from providing any on-site drainage improvements. As a result, the stormwater runoff will be allowed to discharge undetained to the street and the adjoining properties. The Applicant should provide testimony to the Board regarding the reasons why the increase in stormwater cannot be mitigated on-site.
13. It shows on the Grading and Utility Plan (sheet 4) that the rear yard and portions of the side yards are graded to drain onto the adjoining properties. The Applicant must demonstrate that the proposed grading will not cause drainage issues on the adjoining properties. In addition, it is our recommendation that consideration be given to the installation of dry wells to mitigate the increase in runoff from the proposed roof area.
14. It shows on sheet 4 that a retaining wall is proposed along the northerly side of the building. Therefore, a retaining wall detail must be added to the plans.
15. It shows on sheet 4 that a fence or railing is proposed adjacent to the retaining wall. The plan must be revised to label what is proposed adjacent to the retaining wall and the appropriate detail must be added to the plans.
16. The Belgian Block Curb detail on sheet 9 must be revised to show that the concrete will be Class B, air entrained as required by the Residential Site Improvement Standards.
17. The Concrete Sidewalk detail on sheet 9 must be revised to show that the concrete will be air-entrained and will have a 28-day verification strength of 4,500 psi as stipulated in the Residential Site Improvement Standards.
18. The Pavement Repair Strip detail on sheet 9 shows that 4" of bituminous stabilized base course and 2" of bituminous concrete surface course are proposed whereas the Typical Full Depth Pavement Repair Section shows that 6" of dense graded aggregate, 3.5" of hot mix asphalt base and 1.5" of hot mix asphalt surface are proposed. The Applicant should clarify why the same specifications are not used on each detail. It is our recommendation that both details specify 6" of dense graded aggregate, 4" of bituminous stabilized base course and 2" of bituminous concrete surface course.



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D. LANDSCAPING COMMENTS

19. In accordance with Section 25-8.15, all utility structures shall be screened on at least three (3) sides by four-season landscaping; whereas none has been proposed.
20. The plans depict two (2) existing shade trees along Tompkins Street; however, it appears that only the northernmost tree currently exists. This should be revised to prevent confusion during construction.
21. Staff recommends additional trees to be provided to enhance site aesthetics. The Applicant should consider an ornamental tree or columnar tree species for the northwest and southwest corners of the site, such as Flowering Dogwood, Redbud, Japanese Tree Lilac, columnar European Hornbeam, Green Pillar Pin Oak, etc.
22. Staff recommends additional screening and foundation plantings be provided to enhance site aesthetics. The Applicant should consider providing upright Junipers along the west property, such as Robusta Green Juniper, Spartan Juniper, Wichita Blue Juniper, etc. Foundation landscaping should be provided along the southern side of the building as well. Additional shrub species should be incorporated into the plan. Currently, the Applicant has provided only one (1) species for this site.
23. Staff recommends providing groundcover in the vicinity of the two (2) proposed AR (Red Maple), such as Liriope, Carpet Rose, Russian Cypress, Deutzia, etc., to enhance site aesthetics.

E. LIGHTING COMMENTS

24. In accordance with Section 25-14.1d, the maximum illumination level shall not exceed 0.30 footcandles at any property line abutting a property used by or zoned for residential use; whereas the proposed lighting provides 2.0 footcandles at the property line.
25. Revise the plans to provide full ordering information for the proposed wall mounted light fixture, including proposed Kelvin light temperature, color and finish, timers and hours of operation.

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.