

STONEFIELD

August 20, 2020

Ojetti Davis
South Orange Village Planning Board
76 South Orange Avenue, Suite 302
South Orange, NJ 07079

**RE: Vose Avenue & Taylor Place Redevelopment
Block 1006, Lots 1-3, 9-11, 13 & 14
57-65 South Orange Avenue
South Orange Village, Essex County, New Jersey**

Mrs. Davis:

Stonefield Engineering & Design, LLC is pleased to submit documents to address the traffic comments contained in the Bowman Consulting Review Letter dated August 16th, 2020. Please find the following items enclosed for review:

ITEM DESCRIPTION	DATED	COPIES	PREPARED BY
Traffic Impact Study	08-20-2020	20	Stonefield Engineering & Design

The following is an itemized response to the comments contained within the Bowman review letter:

Traffic Impact Study

67. Traffic counts were performed in late February and early March 2020 and are representative days and times for a traffic evaluation. The times of the counts on each day are also representative of the peak commuter hours (weekdays) and retail activity (Saturday).

Response: Acknowledged.

68. As described in the report, the studied intersections generally operate at acceptable levels of service during each of the three peak hours analyzed, except for the southbound left turn on Scotland Road during the evening peak hour.

Response: Acknowledged.

69. Background traffic growth for the 2023 No Build conditions takes into consideration both regional growth through the use of an annual growth factor of two percent (2%) per year but also traffic generated by two other approved developments, the Landmark Restaurant at 101 South Orange Avenue and The Learning Experience child care center located at 109-115 South Orange Avenue. We note that the background growth meets or exceeds the growth rates published by the NJDOT in their Annual Background Growth Rate Table; which results in conservative (or higher) future traffic volume calculations. We note that the 4th and Valley redevelopment project was not included in these no build traffic volume projections and we request testimony as to the potential impacts of this project.

Response: It is our understanding that the approval of the 4th and Valley redevelopment project was granted after the issuance of Stonefield Traffic Impact Study. Testimony will be provided regarding background growth and the potential impacts of the 4th and Valley redevelopment project on the 2023 No-Build Condition.

70. The 2023 No Build capacity analyses indicate that there are no changes to the levels of service with generally nominal increases in the average delay. The only exception is that the southbound left turn movement from Scotland Road is calculated to degrade to a LOS E during the AM peak hour due to general traffic increases at this intersection.

Response: Acknowledged.

STONEFIELDENG.COM

92 PARK AVENUE, RUTHERFORD, NJ 07070 201.340.4468 T. 201.340.4472 F.

71. The trip generation calculations are based upon the ITE Trip Generation Manual, 10th Edition which is the current edition and are accurately calculated. The use of the "Shopping Center" land use code is a conservative approach as the proposed retail spaces are generally small spaces and will likely attract more neighborhood convenience and personal service type tenants, which would have a lower trip generation.

Response: Acknowledged.

72. The traffic report applies various internal trip reductions which account for trip-making among the various proposed uses as well as mass transit reductions for the residential units based upon the proximity of the site to rail and bus service. Pass-by trip reductions are also applied for the retail use; however, it is not clear what pass-by rates were used for the PM and Saturday periods and we request testimony be provided. Regardless, we believe these various trip reductions are reasonable and appropriate for this type of transit oriented, mixed use development. It is also likely that some of the retail-oriented trips will be linked with other retail opportunities in the area and that patrons to the proposed retail tenants will park elsewhere in the downtown area and will walk to this site. Therefore, their trip generation calculations are conservative and more than adequately address the additional traffic to be generated.

Response: The pass-by rates utilized in the traffic analyses were based upon published ITE data for Land Use 820 "Shopping Center" with 34% of the site-generated traffic during the weekday evening peak hour and 26% of the site-generated traffic during the Saturday midday peak hour comprised of pass-by traffic.

73. We request that additional information be provided on the trip assignment of the project's traffic for the residential component for the PM and Saturday conditions as it appears that the driveway volumes are lower than expected based upon the basic trip generation less the transit reduction. Any internal trip capture with the residential use would be as a walk trip not a vehicular trip.

Response: Additional tables have been provided within the revised Traffic Impact Study summarizing the trip reductions applied. It is noted the number of new, vehicular residential trips in Table 5 corresponds directly to the number of trips routed to the residential driveway in Figure 6 of the appendix.

74. The 2023 Build capacity analyses indicate that there are generally no changes to the levels of service with generally nominal increases in the average delay. The exception is that the southbound left turn movement from Scotland Road is calculated to degrade during the PM peak hour with an increase in average delay of 15.1 seconds and during the Saturday peak hour to LOS E. A mitigation plan is proposed to shift three (3) seconds of green time to this movement which will improve the levels of service. The report should be amended to include the 2023 Mitigation Condition for the Saturday peak hour which was not provided. We also request that the applicant contact Essex County and determine if they would be agreeable to this modification as South Orange Avenue is under the County's jurisdiction.

Response: The Traffic Impact Study has been amended to include a 2023 Mitigation Condition for the weekday evening and Saturday midday peak hours. A similar timing adjustment to the weekday evening peak period is suggested for the Saturday midday peak period. The applicant will coordinate with Essex County regarding County approval of the signal timing modifications, note that the County will not act upon this application until the municipal Planning Board has acted upon the application.

75. The report indicates that the queue along southbound Vose Avenue currently extends past the site's driveways and this will continue under Build conditions. Testimony should be provided as to any means to reduce the length of queue that occurs along this street to minimize the impacts on the redevelopment project.

Response: Testimony regarding queuing along Vose Avenue will be provided. Potential mitigation measures of the queue's impact at the proposed site driveway include signal retiming and peak-hour turning movement prohibitions.

76. We request clarity as to whether the bike storage is solely for residents or if it is available for the office/retail tenants of the building.

Response: Testimony regarding bike storage will be provided.

77. While the report states that there will be an increase of 23 parking spaces on the public parking level from what currently exists in the surface lot, the retail and office components of the proposed redevelopment require 79 spaces of the 80 spaces provided. There is no discussion of the existing parking occupancy of this municipal lot and where these existing users will be accommodated. A calculation of the parking demand for the existing buildings on-site (excluding the house and childcare center which appear to have their own parking facilities) should be prepared and compared to the proposed parking demand per Township code requirements.

Response: The total area of commercial/retail portion of the proposed development is relatively consistent with the total area of commercial/retail users of the existing site. Under the proposed condition, the public parking on the subject site (which is utilized by patrons throughout Downtown South Orange) would be increased by 23 parking spaces. The proposed retail users on-site would likely capture a portion of trips from other users downtown via "trip chaining" or from tenants living on-site who do not need to re-park in public spaces. As such, the proposed increase of 23 public parking spaces would be sufficient to account for the public demand and would provide a net benefit by increasing the public parking supply.

78. No parking occupancy studies of the existing Taylor Place lot were provided in the report. This lot is restricted for short-term users (2-hour limit) with no permit parking. We reviewed the parking occupancy data for this lot which was collected in November and December 2016 as part of the redevelopment of the former Village Hall. However, these data only address evening conditions (6:00 PM to 9:00 PM) on a Thursday, Friday and Saturday; and on a Sunday from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM. These data indicate that the Taylor Place lot operates at approximately 90 percent capacity (57 available spaces) on Thursday and Friday evenings; 50 percent on a Saturday evening and 42 percent midday on Sunday. Testimony is to be provided as to the disposition of current parkers in this lot.

Response: As stated in the previous response, the parking demand for the subject site is anticipated to remain generally similar with any increase in parking demand being satisfied by the 23-parking-space increase.

79. While it is stated that the tandem spaces in the upper parking level would be reserved for office tenants, this limits their general utility as they would have to be reserved and therefore, may not be used on any given day. Additional testimony on the operational characteristics of this spaces should be provided.

Response: Testimony regarding the operational characteristics of the tandem spaces in the upper level of the parking garage will be provided.

80. We are concerned with the narrowness of the residential access (20 feet) and the proximity of the parking spaces to the entry point. This driveway has a fairly short throat from the curb line of Vose Avenue to the first parking spaces which will make maneuvering into these spaces difficult. We request that a turning template diagram be prepared showing how a car will enter and exit the first parking spaces.

Response: Testimony will be provided regarding the width of the residential driveway and the proximity to the parking spaces near the entry point.

81. There are a number of parking spaces that are adjacent to walls with no buffer area. The utility of these spaces and the ability to get into and out of these spaces should be addressed.

Response: Testimony will be provided regarding the parking spaces adjacent to walls with no buffer area and the ability to get into and out of these spaces.

82. Parking spaces that are perpendicular to other parking spaces should have a curb or wheel stop to prevent a car from pulling too far forward and impacting the other parking space.

Response: The site plan will be amended to provide curb or wheel stops for parking spaces that are perpendicular to other parking spaces.

83. We note that the proposed retail spaces fronting on South Orange Avenue do not have direct access to the upper parking level. Testimony should be provided as to the need for a secondary access to these tenant spaces and the viability of access into the garage, at least for employees.

Response: Testimony will be provided regarding the need for a secondary access to the proposed retail spaces along South Orange Avenue in upper level of the parking garage.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Best regards,



Matthew J. Seckler, PE, PP, PTOE
Stonefield Engineering and Design, LLC



John R. Corak, PE
Stonefield Engineering and Design, LLC

Sent via FedEx to Addressee

cc: Eric L. Keller, PE, PP, LEED AP – Bowman Consulting – Planning Board Consulting Engineer
Greer Patras, AICP, PP – Topology – Planning Board Consulting Planning

Z:\Rutherford\RUT\2020\RUT-200075 Hub Realty - 52 Taylor Place, South Orange Village, NJ\Correspondence\Outgoing\Municipal\2020-08-20_Response Letter.docx