

STANLEY T. OMLAND, PE, PP, LEED AP
ERIC L. KELLER, PE, PP, LEED AP
WILLIAM H. HAMILTON, PP, AICP, LLA, LEED AP
GEOFFREY R. LANZA, PE, PP, LEED AP, CFM
SEAN A. DELANY, PE, PP
JAMES GIURINTANO, PE, PP, CME
MARTIN F. TIRELLA, PLS
THEODORE D. CASSERA, PE, PP
KEVIN P. BOLLINGER, PLS
WAYNE A. CORSEY, PE, PP
ANTHONY J. DILODOVICO, MS
DAVID B. DIXON, PLS, PP
ANTHONY FACCHINO, PE, PP, PLS
R. MICHAEL MCKENNA, PE, PP
JARYD MORAN, LLA
MARC L. OLMEDA, PLS
MICHAEL J. ROTH, PE
JAMES M. WARD, PE
PAUL J. WINTERS, PE, CME
JAMES R. WOODS, PE

MEMORANDUM

To: Township of South Orange Village
Planning Board Chairman & Members

From: Eric L. Keller, PE, PP, LEED AP
Planning Board Consulting Engineer

Re: Application No. 268
109 & 115 South Orange Avenue
Ridgewood Commons
Preliminary & Final Site Plan
Technical Review #2
BCG Project # 080373-SO-018

Date: May 4, 2019

CC: Ojetti Davis, Planning Board Secretary
William Sullivan, Esq., Board Attorney
Greer Patras, AICP, PP, Board Planner
John Wyciskala, Esq., Applicant's Attorney

We have received the following documents for the purposes of conducting an engineering technical review:

1. Preliminary and Final Site Plan set entitled "The Learning Experience, 109 & 115 South Orange Avenue West, Township of South Orange Village, Essex County, NJ, Block 1904, Lots 16 & 17" consisting of twelve (12) sheets prepared by Gerard P. Gesario, P.E., of Jarmel Kizel Architects and Engineers, Inc. dated January 3, 2019 and last revised April 16, 2019;
2. Plan set entitled "The Learning Experience Academy of Early Education, 109 W. South Orange Ave, South Orange, NJ" consisting of four (4) sheets prepared by Matthew B. Jarmel, AIA dated January 24, 2019 and last revised April 10, 2019;
3. Plan set entitled "Proposed Rendering, The Learning Experience, Academy of Early Education 109 W. South Orange Ave, South Orange, NJ" consisting of three (3) sheets prepared by Matthew B. Jarmel, AIA dated January 24, 2019 unrevised;
4. Traffic Impact Study, Proposed The Learning Experience prepared by Stonefield Engineering & Design, LLC, dated April 12, 2019;
5. Letter dated April 18, 2019 from John P. Wyciskala, Esq. of Inglesino, Webster, Wyciskala & Taylor, LLC, which includes an amended application form;

No response letter was provided enumerating the proposed changes to the plans, so we have reviewed the various plan sets in detail and compared to the prior site plans to identify any plan changes. The application proposes to remove the vacant Ridge Tire and Auto Center and construct a 16,327 square foot two-story day care center. Off-street parking will be provided under the proposed structure with one twenty-four (24') foot wide driveway accessing South Orange Avenue.

Our technical review comments on the various submitted documents are as follows:

Site Plans

1. The survey provided is called out as a “Topographic Survey”. It is assumed that this survey will also be the source of the boundary information. If this assumption is correct, the survey should be updated per statutory requirements and titled accordingly, including metes and bounds of the internal lot lines;
2. The title policy indicates that there is a water main easement and a grant to PSE&G on Parcel 1 (Lot 17). The location of these easements should be identified and any impact on the proposed development plan identified;
3. Further the title policy indicates that there is a deed notice related to Parcel 2 (Lot 16). The terms and conditions of this deed notice and any impact on the proposed development should be addressed. Copies of these various documents are to be submitted to the Planning Board;
4. The Existing Conditions Plan should be updated to show the top of bank of the watercourse to the east and associated riparian boundary. Should the riparian boundary not extend onto the site, the plan should be updated to indicate same;
5. The Demolition Plan should be updated to show where the connecting pipe to the drainage inlet to be removed is located as well as the discharge locations for the roof;
6. The Demolition Plan indicates several areas where existing pavers will be removed. Testimony should be provided with regard to the reuse of the pavers and/or the ability to match the paver color. We note that the pavers may have faded since installation and our office has concerns with regard to matching the color;
7. The proposed realignment of the crosswalk will be subject to approval from Essex County;
8. The Site Layout & Utility Plan proposes to “Face Form” Belgian Block Curbing. The applicant’s engineer should clarify how this can be accomplished as the footing for Belgian Block Curb extends beyond the face of the cobbles;
9. The Site Layout and Utility Plan shows the head in parking to the first floor area will have bollards at the head of the stall as well as wheel stops. Testimony should be provided as to why full height curb cannot be installed and the wheel stops and bollards removed;
10. The plans propose to install the handicap parking stall placard on a bollard at the head of the parking stall. The applicant may wish to consider relocating the sign and placing same on the face of the building;

11. The two (2) southerly parking stalls on the east side of the entry drive will conflict with incoming traffic. Additionally, these spaces will have no visibility as there is a building wall on the south side of the stalls which will impact sight distance. Our office recommends at a minimum removing one of the stalls and providing an opening in the wall which will provide additional visibility for traffic entering the site while the parking stall is accessed;

5/4/19: The solid building wall adjacent to these spaces has been replaced with a glass storefront which will provide visibility to/from these spaces.

12. The plans propose a dead end parking alignment with an eight (8') foot wide striped area between the building wall and a building column at the end of the striped area. From a circulation standpoint, this is an undesirable condition. Vehicles will have to execute turning movements against a building wall with no buffer;

13. The plans propose four (4) parallel parking stalls on the west side of the entry drive. Parallel stalls are very inefficient for turn over parking and will impact a vehicle's ability to enter the site. Furthermore, for these parking stalls to be accessed, vehicles will need to drive to the end of the dead end row and utilize the striped area noted above. The applicant should consider an alternative to this arrangement;

14. Dimensions should be provided for the parking stall in the northeast corner of the parking lot. Same scales approximately eight (8') feet wide. In addition, this parking stall provides no area to the east to facilitate a k turn when exiting the parking stall;

15. A curb is proposed along the easterly property line which is adjacent to the existing parking area on Lot 15. The grades on the adjacent parking lot should be determined to clearly illustrate grading in this area;

16. Testimony should be provided as to how trash collection will occur. We note that the entry driveway clearance to the parking area under the building is limited to approximately nine (9') per the architectural elevations (which should be dimensioned). Additionally, if a trash collection vehicle is able to access the enclosure under the building, it will need to back out onto South Orange Avenue;

17. Testimony should be provided as to the need to sprinkler the trash enclosure as it is beneath the second floor. The Fire Official should provide commentary with regards to this design;

18. The location of the nearest fire hydrant should be identified and the need for an additional hydrant proximate to this building be discussed. The Fire Official should provide commentary with regards to this issue;

19. Testimony should be provided as to how emergency services will access the site;

20. The proposed landscaping should be further reviewed. The current design selects one type of evergreen tree and two types of shrubs. Additional consideration should be taken to provide a more aesthetic design in lieu of the monoculture element proposed;

21. It is difficult to determine which direction grade is sloping at the rear of the structure. A section should be provided in this area;

22. Inlet #1 should be relocated from the corner of the parking lot as it is not possible to construct a curb inlet in this manner. Further, the current design indicates that this inlet encroaches onto Lot 15. Additional spot grades should be provided;
23. Roof leader discharge locations should be provided;
24. A drainage narrative should be provided. While the site is reducing runoff, it appears that a majority of the site will have the site stormwater directed toward South Orange Avenue where in the existing condition a significant portion of the site may not have flowed in this direction;
25. The Grading and Drainage Plan shows what appears to be curb crossing the sidewalk at the site driveway. Same should be clarified;
26. Testimony should be provided with regard to site lighting and its compliance to the code;
27. The plans should be updated to show where the various pavement treatments such as road and sidewalk pavers are proposed. We note that the road paver should be used in the site driveway;
28. As the project will have a zero front yard and a driveway discharging across a public sidewalk, the applicant should consider additional safety measures at the driveway such as change in pavement material, signage, signals, etc.;
- 29. A 6 foot high aluminum ornamental fence has been added around the perimeter of the site connecting with the previously proposed 4 foot high fence on the east side of the parcel. The need for a 6 foot fence as compared to a 4 foot fence should be discussed in testimony, also the ability to install this along the northern portion of the eastern boundary as the proposed curb is very close to the property line.**
- 30. The site plans also note that the utility room (floor plans indicate this as “Mech.”) has a different floor elevation. This should be affirmed as access to this space is now internal instead of from the sidewalk.**
- 31. The building mounted sign details have been eliminated from the site plans. Sign details are to be provided.**

Architectural Plans

- 32. There are minor changes within the Licensing Calculations as compared to the prior review memorandum, however, none of these changes the number of children or teachers.**
- 33. The area of the play area has been reduced from 5,038 square feet to 4,017 square feet. It appears this is a result of shifting the fence in a southerly direction away from the parapet wall. Testimony should be provided as to the sufficiency of this outdoor play area for the number of children**
- 34. There are minor changes to the floor plans, including a reconfiguration of the Pre-K/K space, various door locations, the addition of an electrical room and a change to Stair A. It does not appear that the floor area has changed however testimony should be provided affirming this.**
- 35. The façade elevations have been modified, with the building mounted sign moved lower on the building to a more pedestrian scale. It appears storefront windows**

extend across the mechanical space, testimony should be provided as to how these windows will be treated so as not to view this space.

- 36. The parking layout now shown on Sheet SA-1.1 does not match to the site plan (Sheet C-300). These discrepancies should be reconciled.**

Traffic Impact Study

- 37. The traffic counts were conducted on an appropriate date and at appropriate times of the day for the proposed use. Also, the study area including Church Street and the site driveway is appropriate.**
- 38. The applicant's traffic engineer should provide testimony as to the appropriateness of relocating the crosswalk from the easterly approach of South Orange Avenue to the westerly side. Curb bump outs are provided at the current location to minimize the distance that pedestrians are in the roadway. Moving this crosswalk to the westerly approach will create a much longer crossing distance as South Orange Avenue widens out. Testimony should also be provided as to the need to reconstruct the median island to accommodate pedestrian traffic as it appears the median is within the desired crosswalk alignment.**
- 39. The background growth rate used is consistent with the NJDOT Annual Growth Rate Table. While there are other approved developments proximate to this site, the level of traffic from these projects is reasonably contained within the annualized growth rates.**
- 40. We believe the site generated traffic volumes are overstated by approximately 50 percent as the square footage used includes the outdoor play area. Therefore, the capacity analysis results are conservative, and continue to provide acceptable levels of service.**
- 41. Testimony should be provided as to the appropriateness of a driveway serving a more intense traffic use than what exists being located within the full width of a left turn lane. Observations as to the typical and maximum queue in the westbound left turn lane should be provided in testimony; and the ability of site traffic to make lefts into and out of the site driveway.**
- 42. The report indicates that 21 spaces are required whereas the site plans indicate 14 spaces are required. The basis for this discrepancy is the building area used to calculate the demand, where this report again included the outdoor play area. Testimony should be provided as to the appropriate calculation procedure and required parking.**
- 43. Testimony should be provided on the utility of and how the parallel parking spaces will be accessed/used. Turning templates may be necessary to illustrate the required maneuvers.**

Any revised plans and other documents should be accompanied by a cover letter responding individually to each of the comments presented in this review letter.

The cover letter should also outline those changes to the plans that were required, as well as those not readily apparent.

Chairman and Members of the South Orange Village Planning Board
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