

STONEFIELD

November 13, 2019

South Orange Zoning Board of Adjustments
76 South Orange Avenue, Suite 302
South Orange, NJ 07079

**RE: Proposed Two-Family Residential Building
Block 1009, Lot 32
309 South Orange Avenue
Township of South Orange, Essex County, New Jersey**

Dear Board Members,

Stonefield Engineering & Design, LLC is pleased to submit documents to address the comments contained in the Topology and Bowman Consulting Review Letters. Please find the following items enclosed for review:

<i>ITEM DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>DATED</i>	<i>COPIES</i>	<i>PREPARED BY</i>
Existing Conditions Plan and Site Plan	11-14-2019	20	Stonefield Engineering & Design

The following is an itemized response to the comments contained within Topology's Review Letter dated September 30, 2019:

1. The Applicant should provide testimony regarding all existing site conditions and all proposed improvements. Testimony should be provided regarding any potential impacts to the site, adjacent properties, surrounding area, or intent of Zoning and Master Plan related to the proposed non-conforming use.

Testimony has been provided regarding all existing site conditions and all proposed improvements. Testimony has been provided regarding any potential impacts to the site, adjacent properties, surrounding area, or intent of Zoning and Master Plan related to the proposed non-conforming use.

2. The Applicant should discuss the number of proposed tenants, as it relates to bedroom counts and parking requirements. The first floor apartment shows two bedrooms and two bathrooms. The second/third floor apartment shows three bedrooms and two bathrooms.

Plus, there is a room on the second floor with a door, window, and closet that is not labeled. This should be clarified.

Testimony has been provided discussing the number of proposed tenants, as it relates to bedroom counts and parking requirements. Testimony has been provided giving clarification on the room on the second floor with a door, window, and closet.

3. Parking is required at a rate of 2 spaces for every dwelling unit, plus 1 for each roomer, boarder or other individual residing within the unit. Appropriate parking for 5 to 6 bedrooms should be discussed. Based on family and/or renters/boarders, variance relief for the proposed 4 spaces may be required. This should be discussed.

Testimony has been provided discussing the appropriate parking for 5 to 6 bedrooms, as well as a variance relief for the proposed 4 spaces.

4. The rear façade has an entrance that provides access to the basement from the parking lot. The Applicant should testify regarding the use and operation of the basement, as no floor plans were provided, and confirm that this area will not be used for an additional bedroom or a third dwelling unit. There should be a note on the site plan that states that the basement should not be converted into a dwelling unit.

Testimony has been provided regarding the use and operation of the basement and confirm that this area will not be used for an additional bedroom or third dwelling unit. The site plan has been revised to include a note stating “The basement should not be converted into a dwelling unit at any point.” Please refer to the Site Plan (Sheet 2).

5. Testimony should be provided regarding all proposed interior and exterior building improvements. The “Exterior Changes” list identifies the following:
 - Siding and chimney will be repaired,
 - Doors, windows, and front porch will be replaced, and
 - Original entrance on side of building along driveway will be removed

Applicant should provide an overview of colors, materials, and consistency with residential character.

Additionally, the deck in the rear of the property is in a state of disrepair. The Applicant should testify whether it presents a safety risk to the occupants of the property, as well as its negative visual impact to neighboring properties.

Testimony has been provided regarding all proposed interior and exterior building improvements. Testimony has been provided regarding whether it presents a safety risk to the occupants of the property, as well as its negative visual impact to the neighboring properties.

6. Testimony should be provided regarding all proposed site improvements, including driveway pavement, parking, landscaping, tree removal, and lighting, relative to compliance with the ordinance.

Testimony has been provided regarding all proposed site improvements, including driveway pavement, parking, landscaping, tree removal, and lighting, relative to compliance with the ordinance.

7. Particular attention should be given to the rear yard. The ordinance (§185-175) requires that parking for one- and two-family residences occupy no more than 25% of the rear yard. The entire rear yard is paved. The Applicant should provide testimony regarding opportunities to provide a more traditional residential rear yard, with patio or lawn area.

While full compliance with the ordinance may not be practical, reconfigurations of the parking area and removal of excess pavement could provide area for outdoor residential enjoyment and better compliance with the ordinance.

The parking for one- and two-family residences has been revised and has decreased to 25.8% of the rear yard. Please refer to the Off-Street Parking Requirements table on Sheet 2. The site plan has been revised to call for Ilex Glabra ‘Shamrock’ and Taxus X Media ‘Densifomis’ to be planted along the edge of the rear yard. Please refer to the Site Plan (Sheet 2).

8. Parking lot designs are regulated in §185-113, and specific requirements for one- and two- family residential units are provided in §185-175. Of particular importance to this application are the following:
 - a. *All parking areas must have a minimum setback of 5 feet from any property line or building.* We recommend the Applicant comply with this and provide landscaping and fencing in this setback area.

The site plan has been revised to relocate the parking areas at least 5 feet from the property and to provide landscaping and fencing in the rear yard. Please refer to the Site Plan (Sheet 2).

- b. *All parking areas must be enclosed by shrubbery.* The Applicant shows approximately 2' wide landscaping as existing and to remain on the plans, however this is not consistent with the actual conditions. A chain link fence, which is prohibited by ordinance, surrounds the rear of the property. Chain link fences do not provide adequate screening, and the rear parking area is visible from the adjacent residential properties. We recommend that the existing chain link fence be replaced with visually solid fencing.

The site plan has been revised to remove the chain link fence and replace it with a visually solid board fence. The site plan has been revised to enclose all parking areas by shrubbery. Please refer to the Site Plan (Sheet 2).

- c. *Parking areas shall be landscaped to minimize glare, noise, and other types of adverse impacts.* At a minimum, we recommend evergreen landscaping along the residential property lines and visually solid fence along the commercial property lines.



The site plan has been revised to provide evergreen landscaping along the residential property lines and visually solid fence along the commercial property lines. Please refer to the Site Plan (Sheet 2).

- d. *All parking areas shall be suitably drained and graded to provide for the adequate drainage of surface water.* The rear of the site is downward sloping and paved in its entirety. The Applicant should provide testimony for how they propose to provide for drainage and stormwater management. We recommend a combination of reduced impervious coverage in the rear, landscaping around rear and side perimeters, and the use of drywells, bio-retention swales, and/or raingardens to minimize on-site and off-site impacts.

The proposed site will mimic existing grading and drainage patterns. We have also proposed a small raingarden in the rear yard to further reduce runoff existing the site. Please refer to the Site Plan (Sheet 2) and the Construction Details (Sheet 5).

- e. *Parking lots must be curbed, and parking stalls shall be clearly marked and delineated.* The Applicant should provide testimony as to whether striping should be provided for the parking spaces. We also recommend that either wheel stops or timber rails be laid to prevent parking from encroaching into buffers.

The site plan has been revised to include striping and curb for the parking lot. Please refer to the Site Plan (Sheet 2).

- f. *Parking areas shall be maintained in good condition, be kept free of any hazards, and not fall into a state of disrepair.* All pavement, landscaping, lighting, and other features shall be kept in a good and workable condition. The design should facilitate long term, low-maintenance success. Applicant should discuss maintenance. A trash enclosure with adequate screening should also be installed and shown on the plans.

The site plan has been revised to include a garbage pail area behind the building. Please refer to the Site Plan (Sheet 2).

9. The documents submitted by the Applicant refer to an easement that gives tenants of the adjacent commercial property on Lot 31 access to the driveway and part of the rear parking area. The Applicant should submit a copy of the easement and discuss the relationship of the sites. It appears from site visits that tenants of this adjacent commercial building are parking on the subject lot.

We recommend some consideration be given to the proper separation, buffering, and screening of these two uses.

The site plan has been revised to include buffer landscaping between the two lots. Please refer to the Site Plan (Sheet 2).

10. The Applicant should discuss landscaping and improvements proposed for the front of the property. The plans show that existing vegetation will be protected however the locations of the actual plantings differ from the plans. We recommend landscaping typical with residential properties be planted to enhance the character along the frontage.

The site plan has been revised to call for Buxus Microphylla Insularis 'Green Mountain' in front of the building. Please refer to the Site Plan (Sheet 2).

11. The Applicant should provide testimony regarding proposed lighting at the building entrances and at the rear parking area. No details were provided. We recommend all fixtures be mounted less than 10' high, be downward facing and full cut-off, bulbs be less than 3,500K, that lights be operated only on motion-sensors overnight, and that footcandles not spill onto adjacent residential properties. All fixtures should be shown on the plans to demonstrate compliance.

The plan set has been revised to include a Lighting Plan (Sheet 3) to comply with the regulations mentioned above.

12. Air conditioning compressors were included in the Applicant's list of exterior changes. No compressors are shown on the site plan. The site plan should be corrected, and the location of the compressors clearly shown. The compressors should also be placed and/or screened, to minimize their impact to adjacent uses.

The site plan has been corrected to show the air conditioning compressor and its location.

13. The height provided in the bulk chart states that the height is under 35 feet. The site plan should be corrected to show the actual height of the structure.

The building height has been indicated in the land use and zoning table on the Site Plan (Sheet 2).

14. The site plan incorrectly states that the existing rear yard setback is non-conforming. This error should be corrected.

The site plan has been corrected regarding the removal of the statement that the existing rear yard setback is non-conforming.

The following is an itemized response to the comments contained within Bowman Consulting's Review Letter dated October 22, 2019:

1. A list of proposed exterior improvements has been prepared which results in no altering of the layout of the site. Testimony should be provided as to the impact that any of these improvements will have on the existing drainage path(s).

Testimony has been provided as to the impact that the proposed exterior improvements will have on the existing drainage path(s). The site plan has been revised to include a rain garden in the rear yard.

2. The locations of the proposed HVAC condensers should be shown on the plan.

The site plan has been revised to show the location of the proposed HVAC condenser.

3. Testimony should be provided addressing the continued use of the driveway for lot 31 and interaction between the two properties. Any impacts during construction regarding the use of this driveway by lot 31 should be addressed in testimony. This should include the construction vehicles used and where they will remain when not in use due to the property being adjacent to a County Road.

Testimony has been provided addressing the continued use of the driveway for lot 31 and interaction between the two properties. Testimony has been provided regarding any impacts during construction regarding the use of this driveway by lot 31.

4. The limit of the driveway should be clearly shown and any provision for landscaping beds along the side and rear of the structure.

The site plan has been revised to show the limit of the driveway and provision for landscaping beds along the side and rear of the structure. Please refer to the site plan (Sheet 2).

5. The parking is compliant with RSIS for two apartments, however testimony should be provided regarding the need for an ADA parking space and associated accessibility.

Testimony has been provided regarding the need for an ADA parking space and associated accessibility.

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

Best regards,



Arthur Kuyan
Stonefield Engineering and Design, LLC

Sent via FedEx Standard Overnight to Addressee

cc: Greer Patras, AICP, PP – Board Planner, Topology (Via FedEx Standard)

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