



MEMORANDUM

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To: Montgomery Township Planning Board

From: Michael Sullivan, ASLA, AICP
James Clavelli, PP, AICP
Tristan Harrison, PP, AICP

Re: **HMH Carrier Clinic, Inc.**
Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan and Bulk Variances
Revised Application Submission
252 County Route 601
Block 2001, Lot 2
Block 1001, Lot 14.02
MR Mountain Residential Zone

Date: January 18, 2024

1.0 Project & Site Description

Project Description: The applicant is seeking preliminary and final major site plan approval with bulk variance relief and design exceptions to expand and renovate an existing behavioral health facility. The site is located within the MR Mountain Residential Zone.

The plan proposes to reconfigure the existing Carrier Clinic facility to provide separate units for adolescent patients and relocate administrative offices within the main hospital building. The complex currently has 297 licensed beds, including the 52 beds to be included in the proposed adolescent treatment unit. No additional beds are proposed as the 52 beds are being repurposed.

Proposed development includes a ±45,000-sf. building addition comprising the adolescent treatment unit, a 795-sf. building addition containing offices and conference space and the repurposing of existing treatment rooms to administrative offices. Additional proposed improvements include a masonry sign wall with roof canopy in the rear of the existing main hospital building, a greenhouse, 42 parking spaces, reconfiguration of driveways and parking areas, fences, waste enclosures, stormwater management facilities, pervious pavement, sidewalks, curbs, planting areas, façade signs, and lighting. The plan also includes

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Brian Slauch, AICP

Michael Sullivan, AICP

Michael Hanrahan, AIA

Mary Beth Lonergan, AICP



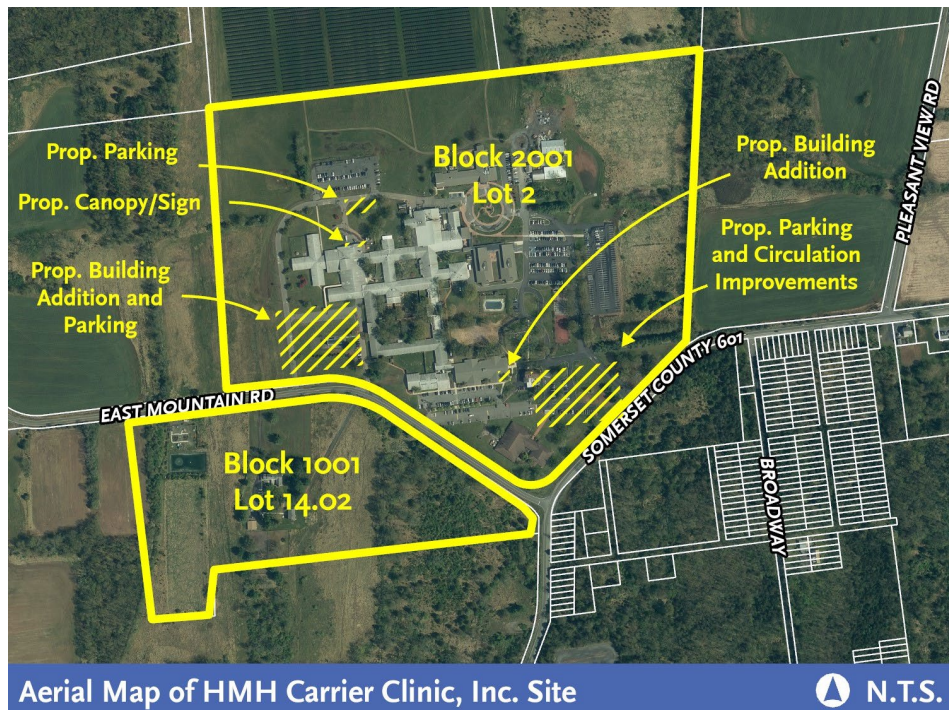
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the removal of existing trees, fences, 63 parking spaces, driveways, walkways, recreation areas, a 9,534-sf. executive building, and a trailer.

- 1.1 Existing Site Conditions:** The site is composed of two lots with a total area of 86.645 acres (3,774,256 sf.) at the corner of East Mountain Road and Belle Mead-Blawenburg Road (County Route 601). Existing site improvements include the existing behavioral health complex and associated buildings, sanitary sewer treatment facility, parking areas, walkways, generators, utilities, stormwater management facilities, recreation areas, signs, fences, walls, trees, and planting areas.

Freshwater wetlands and 150-foot wetlands transition areas are located on Lot 2, and a stream corridor is located on Lot 14.02. No critical areas are within the proposed limits of disturbance.



- 1.2 Site Context:** The site has frontage on East Mountain Road and Belle Mead-Blawenburg Road (County Route 601). The frontage on Belle Mead-Blawenburg Road faces undeveloped land in the R-2 Single-Family Residential Zone that is owned by the applicant. Adjacent land immediately to the south, east, and west are owned by Somerset County and form part of Sourland Mountain Preserve.



A parking area and several trailheads for Sourland Mountain Preserve are located approximately 0.7 miles west. A ground-mounted solar array on property owned by the applicant and located in Hillsborough Township is located to the north (rear). Lubas Memorial Field and recreation area is located approximately 700 feet to the south of the site on Belle Mead-Blawenburg Road. Transcontinental Gas Pipeline right-of-way runs north-south just outside the site's west property line.

- 1.3 **Required Relief:** The plan requires 15 variances and 5 design exceptions, pending additional information. A comprehensive list of the required relief can be found in Section 14.0 at the end of this report.

2.0 Use & Bulk Standards

- 2.1 **Optional Development Alternative, Planned Behavioral Health Complex:** The Township Land Development Ordinance permits a Planned Behavioral Health Complex in portions of the MR Mountain Residential district, with optional alternative requirements (§16-6.5.j) that replace the standards of the MR zone. Beyond the specific standards for a Planned Behavioral Health Complex, the design standards contained within other sections of the Land Development Ordinance are still applicable.
- 2.2 **Permitted Principal Uses:** The plan proposes expansion of existing hospital and residential treatment space and office space. Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.3, hospitals, residential treatment facilities, offices, outpatient services, medical offices, and ancillary activities are permitted principal uses within one or more buildings on the premises. The plan complies.
- 2.3 **Permitted Accessory Uses:** The plan proposes outdoor recreation areas, off-street parking, fences, walls, signs, greenhouses, and conference facilities associated with the principal uses. Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.4, these accessory uses are permitted. The plan complies.
- 2.4 **Bulk, Area, and Distance Requirements:** §16-6.5.j.6 provides area and setback requirements for the Planned Behavioral Health Complex. Table 1 indicates the conformance of principal building and tract requirements.



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Table 1: Area, Distance, and Bulk Requirements, Planned Behavioral Health Complex: §16-6.5.j				
	Required	Existing	Proposed	Conforms?
Min. Lot Size (acres)	85	86.645	86.645	Yes
Max. Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	0.15	0.0832	0.0925	Yes
Max. Gross Floor Area (square feet)	570,000	314,018	349,422	Yes
Max. Building Coverage (%)	15	8.32	9.61	Yes
Max. Lot Coverage (%)	45	23.3	24.27	Yes
Max. Building Height (feet / stories)	35 / 3	unspecified	26.68 / 1	Yes
Distance Requirements – Principal Building				
Min. distance to public street (feet) (East Mountain Rd)	100	unspecified	78.0	No (V)
Min. distance to tract boundary line (feet) (West)	25	unspecified	282.6	Yes
(V) = Variance Required				

- 2.5 **Minimum Distance from Principal Building to Public Street (East Mountain Road):** Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.6.a, no building shall be closer than 100 feet to any public street. The plan proposes a building addition within 78 feet of East Mountain Road. **A variance is required.**

3.0 General Requirements for a Planned Behavioral Health Complex

§16-6.5.j.7 contains general requirements for development of a Planned Behavioral Health Complex. Conformance with each standard relevant to this application is indicated below:

- 3.1 **The complex shall be served by one or more approved sewage treatment plants and a centralized water source.** The existing complex is served by an existing sanitary sewer treatment facility on Block 1001, Lot 14.02. The existing system is planned for removal. The facility is working with the Township to develop a new pump station which will allow Carrier Clinic to utilize the Township sewer system. The existing treatment plant conforms to the requirement at this time.
- 3.2 **No “critical areas,” as defined in §16-6.4 shall be developed or disturbed.** The plan and survey indicate the presence of wetlands on the northeastern portion of the site, wetlands transition area in the southeast corner, and a stream corridor in the southwest on Lot 14.02. However, the proposed limits of disturbance do not overlap any of these critical areas. The plan complies.



- 3.3 No merchandise, equipment or similar material and objects shall be displayed or stored outside. The plans do not propose outdoor storage or display of equipment, material, or objects. The plan complies.
- 3.4 Any expansion of the existing buildings shall require dedication of additional right-of-way along all abutting public streets, as required by §16-5.14.a.5. The pro-rata share of any improvements deemed necessary by the Planning Board, and as indicated in the June 9, 2010 Traffic Study prepared by Harlyn Associates for Carrier Clinic and submitted to the Board on June 18, 2010, as may be modified at the time of site plan application, shall be provided by the Planned Behavior Health Complex as part of any site plan approval. The existing rights-of-way for East Mountain Road and Belle Mead-Blawenburg Road (County Route 601) are 54 feet and 66 feet, respectively, which satisfy the minimum widths outlined in §16-5.14.a.5. No additional right-of-way dedication appears necessary.
- 3.5 New buildings shall be designed with a conscientious effort to use the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards promulgated by the Green Building Council whenever practicable but shall not be required. The plans do not indicate whether a conscientious effort to implement LEED standards have been made. The plans should demonstrate compliance with this standard.

4.0 Off-Street Parking, Loading and Circulation

- 4.1 **Parking Count Discrepancy:** There may be a discrepancy between the site plan drawing and the parking data table on Sheet G-002. The plan proposes the removal of 63 parking spaces and the construction of 42 new parking spaces, for a net reduction of 21 parking spaces (excluding two proposed spaces for ambulances). However, the parking table indicates a net reduction of 56 parking spaces (658 existing and 602 proposed). **While the site appears to have sufficient existing parking to accommodate the requirements for all existing and proposed uses, the applicant should clarify the discrepancy in calculations and/or revise the plans to identify all parking space totals for all existing and proposed uses. It is recommended that the plans label parking area quantities throughout the complex, including those existing and proposed. This should factor in any parking bonuses received from EVSE and/or make-ready spaces. A diagram that simplifies this for the Board's review would be helpful.**
- 4.2 **Existing and Proposed Parking:** Conformance with the parking requirements of a Planned Behavioral Health Complex pursuant to §16-6.5.j.11 is shown in Table 2, based on the information provided in the applicant's parking table on Sheet G-



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002. The plan appears to comply but the parking data table and/or plans should be revised to address the discrepancy noted above.

Table 2: Parking Requirements (§16-6.5.j.11)						
Proposed Use	Standard	Required (Existing Uses)	Existing Parking	Required (Proposed Uses)	Proposed Parking	Complies?
Addition - Adolescent Unit (Hospital, Surgical Center, Residential Units)	1 space per 3 beds plus 1 space per employee on max shift	See note ⁽¹⁾	See note ⁽¹⁾	8 (for employees)	8	Yes
Addition - Family Resource Training Center (Office Space/ Conference Space)	1 space per 250sf.	n/a	n/a	4	4	Yes
Renovation - Existing Adolescent Unit to Office (Office Space)	1 space per 250sf.	n/a	n/a	47	47	Yes
Demolition - Executive Office Building (Existing Office)	1 space per 250sf.	38	38	0	0	Yes
All Other Existing Uses	(Varies)	514 ⁽²⁾	620 ⁽²⁾	514 ⁽²⁾	unspec. (578) ⁽³⁾	Yes
SITE TOTAL		552	658	573	637	Yes
<p>(1) Parking spaces for the maximum number of state-licensed beds, including the 52 additional beds proposed, have been constructed prior to this application and are included in the 620 existing spaces. Only additional spaces for the eight (8) additional employees is required.</p> <p>(2) Includes spaces all existing spaces not accounted for in the proposed uses in above rows.</p> <p>(3) Based on the net reduction of 21 spaces as shown on the site plan.</p>						

4.3 **Electric Vehicle Parking Requirement:** Pursuant to the Municipal Land Use Law (C.40:55D-66.20.3.b), as a condition of preliminary site plan approval, each application involving a parking lot with 50 or fewer spaces, and not involving a multiple dwelling, requires the installation of at least one (1) “make-ready” parking space. The plans do not indicate existing or proposed EV spaces. **The applicant is unable to obtain preliminary site plan approval without compliance with the statute. The plans should be revised to provide at least one EV make-ready space among the proposed 42 parking spaces.**

4.4 **Distance Requirements, Parking:** Table 3, demonstrates the plan’s compliance with the parking distance requirements from public streets and tract boundary



lines pursuant to §16-6.5.j.II. A variance is required for the distance between the proposed front yard parking spaces and East Mountain Road.

Table 3: Distance Requirements, Parking (§16-6.5.j.II)				
	Required	Existing	Proposed	Conforms?
Min. distance to public street (feet) (East Mountain Rd)	60	unspecified	49.7	No (V)
Min. distance to public street (feet) (Belle Mead-Blawenburg Road)	60	unspecified	unspecified (>60)	Yes
Min. distance to tract boundary line (feet) (West)	25	unspecified	unspecified (>25)	Yes
Min. distance to tract boundary line (feet) (South)	25	unspecified	49.7	Yes
(V) = Variance Required				

- 4.5 **Parking Spaces on Through Access Aisle:** Pursuant to §16-5.8.e, no perpendicular or angled parking may be incorporated into through access aisles to parking areas. The plan proposes a row of 11 parking spaces on the existing driveway in the side yard and a row of 9 parking spaces along the same driveway to the rear of the building. **A design exception is required.**
- 4.6 **Parking Space Dimensions, Standard:** Pursuant to 16-5.8f.3, parking spaces shall be dimensioned according to their definition in §16-2.1, which states that parking spaces must be at least nine (9) feet by 20 feet, except that the length may be reduced to 18 feet subject to the approval of the Board in instances where a two foot overhang area exists beyond a curb and where such overhang does not interfere with any proposed and/or required landscaping. The plan proposes 9-foot by 18-foot parking spaces with a vehicle overhang area above proposed sidewalk. **A design exception is required unless the Board determines that the proposed length is appropriate.**
- 4.7 **Parking Space Dimensions, ADA:** Pursuant to 16-5.8f.3, ADA parking spaces shall be dimensioned according to their definition in §16-2.1, which states that ADA parking spaces shall be at least 12 by 20 feet except that the length may be reduced to 18 feet subject to the approval of the Board as noted in 4.6 of this report. The 12-foot width requirement aligns with the N.J. Barrier Free Subcode requirements. The subcode does not appear to specify minimum ADA parking space length, as such, the length appears subject to the standard space length requirements indicated in 4.6. The plan proposes 12-foot by 18-foot ADA parking spaces with a vehicle overhang area above proposed sidewalk. **A design exception**



is required unless the Board determines that the proposed length is appropriate. The plans should ensure that ADA sidewalk clearance requirements are not impaired by vehicle overhang. The plans should be revised to indicate the dimension of the sidewalk adjacent to the front parking aisle.

- 4.8 **Public Sidewalks:** Pursuant to §16-5.14c.1(d), sidewalks shall be provided along all existing streets upon which all residential and nonresidential development abuts, except for all local, rural collector, and scenic collector roads in the MR district. East Mountain Road and County Route 601 (Bell Mead-Blawenburg Road) are collector roads in the MR district and exempt from the sidewalk requirement. The plan complies.
- 4.9 **Loading Space:** *More information is required.* Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.12(a), each principal building or group of buildings shall provide at least one off-street loading space either within the building or outside at the rear or side of the building with suitable screening. **The plans do not indicate existing or proposed loading spaces. Testimony should be provided to ensure that existing loading areas are sufficient to serve the proposed building addition and changes of use.**
- 4.10 **Solid Waste and Recycling Disposal:** *More information is required.* Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.12(b), there shall be at least one waste/recycling disposal location within convenient access to the building being served, and the location shall be provided either within the building being served or in a pick-up location outside and proximate to the building. **The plans do not indicate existing or proposed areas for waste storage and disposal. Testimony should be provided to ensure that existing solid waste disposal facilities are sufficient to serve the proposed addition and changes of use.**
- 4.11 **Emergency Vehicle Access:** Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.6.f, all buildings shall be reasonably accessible to emergency vehicles, and in the case of buildings housing residential units, both the front and rear of all principal buildings shall be reasonably accessible for firefighting purposes. The plan proposes two (2) ambulance stalls to the rear of the proposed building addition and two (2) 15-foot by 25-foot ambulance turnaround areas. **This office defers to the Board Engineer and Township officials for a determination of reasonable emergency access.**



5.0 Landscape Design & Plantings

The following is a review of basic dimensional and quantitative regulations; however, the technical review of plantings is deferred to the Board Landscape Architect.

- 5.1 **Plantings On Portions of Lot Not Covered by Buildings or Structures:** *More information is required.* Pursuant to §16-46.5.j.7(f), all portions of a lot not covered by buildings or structures shall be suitably landscaped with grass, shrubs, and trees and shall be maintained in good condition. In any case, no less than 50% of the area of any lot shall be so landscaped, and the landscaped area may include approved detention and/or retention basins and approved septic fields. Approximately 23.3% of the site is proposed to be covered by buildings and structures. Much of the remaining property is to be dedicated to bioretention basins, plantings, lawn cover, and pervious paver driveways. **The plans should be revised to indicate the percentage of land that is to be landscaped and maintained. A variance may be required.**
- 5.2 **Buffer Width (East Mountain Road):** Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.6(d), buffer screening of 50 feet is required between developed portions of the site and any public street or any other tract boundary line. The plan proposes a landscape buffer area of 34.6 feet consisting of evergreen trees planted in a staggered row with clustered shrubs, perennials, and lawn along East Mountain Road. **A variance is required.**
- 5.3 **Driveway Within Buffer (East Mountain Road):** Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.6(d)(3), no parking area, loading area, driveway or other structure (except for approved accessways, signs and fencing) shall be permitted in the required landscape buffers. The plan proposes a driveway aisle that is 34.6 feet from East Mountain Road and within the required 50-foot planting buffer. **A variance is required.**
- 5.4 **Utilities Within Buffer (East Mountain Road):** Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.6(d)(4), utilities and passive recreational facilities may be located within the required landscape buffer, provided that landscape treatments are provided to effectively screen the interior of the site. Existing sanitary sewer lines and gas lines are located within the required 50-foot buffer area along East Mountain Road. The plan proposes a landscape buffer area of 34.6 feet in front of the utilities composed of evergreen trees planted in a staggered row with shrub masses, perennials, and lawn. **This office defers to the Township Landscape Architect regarding the composition effectiveness and planting species within the proposed buffer.**



- 5.5 **Equipment Screening.** Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.7.(d), mechanical and emergency electrical equipment serving a building or buildings shall be screened from view. The plan proposes a concrete generator pad to the rear of the proposed building addition that is screened on two sides by evergreen plantings. **This office recommends additional plantings on the western side of the concrete pad to further screen the generator from East Mountain Road, size and species to be determined by the Board Landscape Architect.**
- 5.6 **Trees Required, Gross Tract Area:** *More information is required.* Pursuant to §16-5.6.d.3, a minimum of 14 trees per acre of gross tract shall be planted throughout the tract in the case of nonresidential development. The site is 86.645 acres, requiring a total of 1,213 trees. **A design exception may be required unless the Board favors calculating tree requirements based on disturbed land, below.**

Table 4: Tree Requirement Based on Gross Tract Area (§16-5.6.d.3)	
Required Trees (14 trees per acre)	1,213 (86.645 acres x 14)
Existing Trees (Identified on Tree Removal Plan)	- 98
Trees to be Removed	38
Trees Proposed ⁽¹⁾	15 (2.5 - 3" caliper)
Net Total Trees Proposed	75 (DE)
(DE) = Design Exception Required	
(1) Pursuant to §16-5.6.d.3, any trees provided to meet the required street tree and/or buffer requirement shall not be counted towards the minimum tree requirement.	

- 5.7 **Trees Required, Limit of Disturbance:** Pursuant to §16-5.6.d.3(b), where the applicant has demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Board that it is impractical or undesirable to provide the required number of trees then the Board may require the applicant to plant a minimum of 14 trees per acre of disturbed land, which shall be of a substantially larger caliper based on consultation with the Township Landscape Architect. Per this standard, 88 total trees are required for the proposed 6.27 acres of land disturbance, whereas 60 existing trees are proposed. **It appears that the tree removal plan may not include all existing mature trees on the site such as trees located in the rear and near the traffic circle. The plans should be revised to determine compliance with this standard. A design exception may be required.**



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Table 5: Tree Requirement Based on Limit of Disturbance (§16-5.6.d.3)

Required Trees (14 trees per acre of disturbance)	88 (6.27 acres x 14)
Existing Trees (Identified on Tree Removal Plan)	- 98
Trees to be Removed	38
Trees Proposed ⁽¹⁾ (of larger caliper)	0 (15 trees of standard minimum caliper)
Net Total Trees Proposed	60 (DE)
(DE) = Design Exception Required	
(1) Pursuant to §16-5.6.d.3, any trees provided to meet the required street tree and/or buffer requirement shall not be counted towards the minimum tree requirement.	

- 5.8 **Label Discrepancy:** The planting plan indicates 15 plantings labelled “TPGG” around the proposed generator pad, whereas no such label is included in the plant lists. **The plans should be revised.**

6.0 Lighting

- 6.1 **Existing and Proposed Lighting:** Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.10(a), the primary outdoor lighting permitted shall be that which is minimally necessary for security and the safety of patients, employees and visitors of the Planned Behavioral Health Complex. The plan proposes to retain all existing light poles except for those within the area that the adolescent unit addition is proposed. The plan proposes an additional two (2) types of pole-mounted lights, varying in light intensity, mounted at 16 feet within the proposed parking lots and circulation areas in the front, rear, and interior of the site. **The plan should contain information as to how the proposed lighting meets the minimum required for safety and security purposes.**
- 6.2 **Non-Glare Lighting: *More information is required.*** Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.10(d), light fixtures are required to be non-glare lights with recessed lenses focused downward and with cut-off shields. The plans and details do not appear to include BUG (Backlight, Uplight, Glare) ratings. **The applicant should testify as to whether the proposed lighting produces any glare and provide BUG ratings for the proposed light details, if available. A variance may be required.**
- 6.3 **Lighting Timers:** Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.10(e), lighting for security and safety purposes shall be the minimal amount necessary and/or advisable for security and safety purposes, and shall be specifically reviewed and approved by the



Planning Board. All other lighting shall be controlled by circuit timers so that lights are turned off after business hours. The plans do not include hours of operation or notes regarding light timers. **The applicant should provide testimony clarifying that all proposed lighting is necessary for security and safety purposes and/or a note should be added to the plans. A variance may be required.**

- 6.4 **Lighting Color:** The plan proposes a lighting color temperature of 4000K. This office recommends 2,700K or lower to give a warmer (more yellow) appearance.

7.0 Signs

- 7.1 **Sign Plan and Composition:** *More information is required.* Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.13(d), all signage within [the complex] shall be compatible in terms of design, materials, colors, lettering, lighting and the positions of the signs on the various buildings, and at the time of application for preliminary site plan approval, the applicant shall submit a comprehensive plan of (this office notes that the Ordinance says “or”, not “of”, though this appears to be a typo) the signage throughout the complex. **A variance is required. The architectural elevations indicate attached façade signs that appear to be compatible with each other, but a comprehensive sign plan showing existing signs, proposed sign lighting, and other sign attributes has not been submitted.**
- 7.2 **Façade Signs, Quantity:** Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.13(c), each building shall be permitted a sign attached flat against the building at the main building entrance. The plan proposes three (3) façade signs on several portions of the brick hospital building (Adolescent Unit addition and rear sign wall) and two (2) façade signs on the ancillary services building (FRTC addition) for a total of five (5) façade signs. **A variance is required. However, pursuant to §16-6.5.j.13(e), additional signage may be permitted by the Planning board for good cause shown by the applicant, provided that such additional signage must be specifically approved by the Board. Testimony is recommended.**
- 7.3 **Façade Sign Area, Adolescent Unit (Front):** Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.13(c), the size of each façade sign shall not exceed ½ square foot of sign area per one linear foot of the façade to which the sign is to be attached, but in no case shall the size of the sign exceed 50 square feet in area. The plan proposes a façade sign area of 118.8 square feet at the main entrance to the proposed Adolescent Unit building addition. **A variance is required.**



- 7.4 Façade Sign Area, Family Resource & Training Center (Side):** Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.13(c), the size of each façade sign shall not exceed ½ square foot of sign area per one linear foot of the façade to which the sign is to be attached, but in no case shall the size of the sign exceed 50 square feet in area. The plan proposes a façade sign area of 64 square feet at the Family Resource & Training Center building addition entrance. However, the elevations delineate a sign area that appears much larger than the sign shown. **The plans should be revised to clarify the correct area of the proposed sign. A variance may be required.**
- 7.5 Façade Sign Area, Rear:** Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.13(c), the size of each façade sign shall not exceed ½ square foot of sign area per one linear foot of the façade to which the sign is to be attached, but in no case shall the size of the sign exceed 50 square feet in area. The plan proposes two (2) façade signs with an area of 28.5 sf. and 32.5 sf. on a wall that is 42.5 feet long to the rear of the existing building. A maximum of one 21.25-sf. sign is permitted on this façade ($42.5 \times 0.5 = 21.5$). **Two variances are required (one for each sign).**
- 7.6 Existing Freestanding Sign:** Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.13(a), one freestanding sign along each public street is permitted, provided there is at least 250 feet of unbroken frontage. One freestanding sign exists at the westernmost driveway. The plans do not indicate any changes to this freestanding sign nor construction of any additional freestanding signs. The plan complies.
- 8.0 Fences and Walls**
- 8.1 Proposed Fences:** The plan proposes four types of fences: (1) a 14-foot anti-climb fence attached to the Adolescent Unit building addition, (2) a 10-foot chain-link fence in the side yard, (3) the relocation of an existing fence with brick columns in the front yard, and (4) a wood split-rail fence within the stormwater basin.
- 8.2 Distance Requirements:** Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.4(e), no fence may be located within 60 feet of any public street or 25 feet of any tract boundary line. Compliance with fence distance requirements is shown in Table 6. **Three (3) variances are required.**



Table 6: Distance Requirements for Fences and Walls				
	Required	Existing	Proposed	Conforms?
Min. distance to public street (feet) (Anti-Climb Fence, East Mountain Rd)	60	n/a	unspecified (>60)	Yes
Min. distance to public street (feet) (Relocated Fence w/Columns, East Mountain Rd)	60	unspecified (±34)	unspecified (±27)	No (V)
Min. distance to public street (feet) (Split-Rail Fence, East Mountain Rd)	60	n/a	unspecified (±54)	No (V)
Min. distance to tract boundary line (feet) (Chain-Link Fence, West)	25	unspecified (±21)	unspecified (±14)	No (V)
(V) = Variance Required				

- 8.3 Distance from Public Street, Relocation of Fence with Columns:** The plan proposes to relocate approximately 47 feet of an existing fence with brick columns in the front yard to align with the drive aisle of the proposed front yard parking area. Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.4(e), no fences or walls may be located within 60 feet of any public street or 25 feet from any tract boundary line. Distances from the proposed fence line to East Mountain Road are not provided but have been measured by this office at ±27 feet where ±34 feet exists. **A variance is required. The plans should be revised to show the distance from the relocated portion of the fence to East Mountain Road right-of-way and the front tract boundary line. This office recommends that the footprint of the relocated fence west of the driveway be installed in a rectilinear configuration (rather than the proposed diagonal angle) to align with the fence on the east side of the driveway.**
- 8.4 Distance from Public Street, Split-Rail Fence:** The plan proposes a split-rail wood fence in the stormwater basin within the west side yard. Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.4(e), no fences or walls may be located within 60 feet of any public street or 25 feet from any tract boundary line. Distances from the proposed fence to East Mountain Road are not provided but have been measured on the plans by this office at ±55 feet. **A variance is required. The plans should be revised to show the distance from the fence to the west tract boundary line.**
- 8.5 Distance from Tract Boundary, 10-foot Chain-Link Fence:** The plan proposes to extend an existing 10-foot, black vinyl-coated chain-link fence around the proposed stormwater basin in the west side yard. Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.4(e), no fences or walls may be located within 60 feet of any public street or 25 feet from any tract boundary line. Distances from the proposed fence to the tract boundary line are not provided but have been measured by this office at ±14 feet, where ±21



feet exists. **A variance is required. The plans should be revised to show the distance from the fence to the west tract boundary line.**

8.6 Height, 14-Foot Anti-Climb Fence. Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.4(e), fences up to 10 feet high may be approved by the Board for good cause shown for security and safety purposes. The plan proposes a 14-foot anti-climb fence attached to the sides and rear of the adolescent unit building addition. **A variance is required.**

8.7 Composition, 14-Foot Anti-Climb Fence: The plans do not indicate the material or color of the proposed fence, but the photo detail on Sheet C-709 suggests a rectangular steel mesh with black finish. **The plans should be revised to provide additional details of the fence. This office recommends testimony to the architectural compatibility of the fence with existing and proposed buildings.**

8.8 Proposed Sign Wall, Rear: Pursuant to §16-5.3.b, no wall shall be over four feet in height in the side, rear or front yard. The plan proposes a 14.5-foot-high sign wall in the rear of the main hospital building with an exterior canopy and fences attached to the building. As the sign and wall are attached to the principal building, the wall is considered part of the principal building per the Township Ordinance, rather than as a freestanding wall. The plan complies.

8.9 4-Foot Chain-Link Fence Detail: A detail for a 4-foot chain-link fence is provided. It is unclear on the plans where this fence is proposed. **The plans should be revised and/or the detail should be removed.**

9.0 Accessory Buildings

9.1 Proposed Greenhouse: The plan proposes a 30-foot by 30-foot greenhouse located in the eastern interior of the site. The proposed footprint meets the 60-foot minimum distance requirement for an accessory building. No details are provided beyond the note: "(By Others)." **Testimony should be provided to clarify whether the greenhouse is proposed to be constructed as part of this application.**

10.0 Architecture

10.1 Building Façade Materials: Pursuant to §16-6.5.j.7(c), blank, unarticulated wall facades shall not be permitted, and the architectural design and material surface and color of the building walls on all sides of a building shall be suitably finished for aesthetic purposes. The plan proposes the use of *Hardie* board lap siding, *Hardie* board panel, stone veneer walls, metal louvre mechanical screens, and

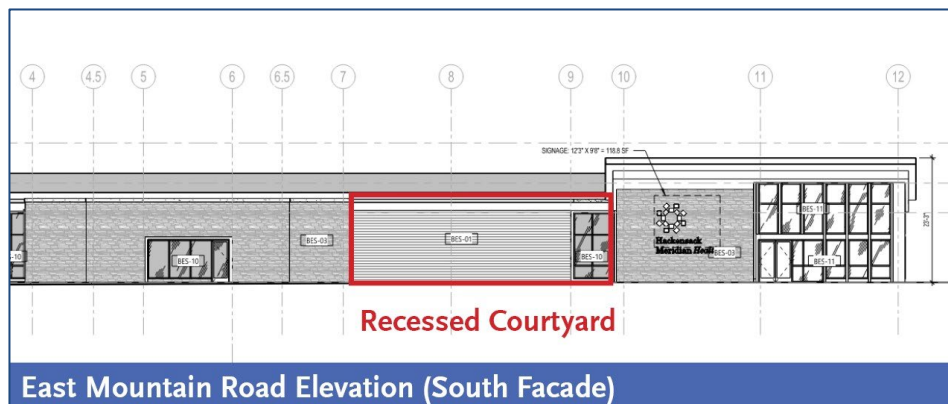


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aluminum window systems on all sides of the building additions. It is the opinion of this office that these materials are sufficient for aesthetic purposes.

- 10.2 **Unidentified Façade Material:** The 3D architectural renderings suggest the use of a wood or faux wood material at the main entrances to each proposed building addition. This material does not appear to be identified in the architectural elevations. **It is recommended that the plans be revised to identify the wood-like material shown in the 3D architectural rendering.**
- 10.3 **Unidentified Material, Foundation Wall (Southwest):** The south elevation of the Adolescent Unit building addition indicates three (3) feet to 4.5 feet of exposed foundation wall on East Mountain Road. **The plans should be revised to identify the finish material, if proposed.**
- 10.4 **Front Courtyard Walls:** *More information is required.* The plan proposes a 50-foot by 29-foot recessed front wall with a courtyard-like lawn area facing East Mountain Road. Due to the curvature of East Mountain Road and the difference in grade between the roadway and building foundation, the facade may be particularly visible from approaching roadway traffic. **Elevations of the east- and west-facing front courtyard walls are not shown. This office recommends that the façade carry the use of the stone veneer around the outside corner walls of the courtyard (those not shown) to suggest a structurally realistic appearance.**



11.0 Miscellaneous

- 11.1 **Soil Hauling.** *Additional information is required.* §16-5.6.c requires that *no soil shall be removed from or be imported to any site in excess of twenty (20) cubic yards per year without prior approval of the Board.* For this purpose, a plan shall be submitted showing



how the soil is to be distributed and stabilized including grading contours. If the soil is to be imported, a plan shall be submitted describing methodology and frequency of testing the soil to ensure its safe quality. The plan shall describe the size and number of vehicles that are proposed for hauling the removed or imported soil together with the hauling route. This office defers to the Board Engineer for further analysis.

- 11.2 Development Fee for Affordable Housing. Condition of Approval.** The applicant is required to comply with the development fee ordinance consistent with §15-24 as a condition of any approval.

12.0 Consideration of the “C” Variances

- 12.1** The following sections summarize the “c” variance criteria for the purposes of establishing a framework for review. The applicant bears the burden of proof, which is divided into two parts, in the justification of the “c” variances. The applicant must justify the “c” variances separately and each variance must satisfy both parts.

- 12.2 Consideration of the Positive Criteria.** To satisfy the positive criteria for a “c” variance, the applicant has two choices. First, known as “c(1)” variance relief, the applicant may demonstrate that strict application of the regulation would result in peculiar and exceptional practical difficulties to or exceptional and undue hardship due to one of the following:

- By reason of exceptional narrowness, shallowness or shape of a specific piece of property;
- By reason of exceptional topographic conditions or physical features uniquely affecting the specific piece of property; or
- By reason of an extraordinary and exceptional situation uniquely affecting a specific piece of property or the structures lawfully existing thereon.

Alternatively, and known as “c(2)” variance relief, the applicant may demonstrate the following positive criteria in support of the request for relief:

- Where in an application or appeal relating to a specific piece of property to purposes of this act would be advanced by a deviation from the zoning ordinance requirements and the benefits of the deviation would substantially outweigh any detriment.



- 12.3 **Consideration of the Negative Criteria.** Should the applicant satisfy the positive criteria, it must also be demonstrated that that the granting of the variance can be accomplished without resulting in substantial detriment to the public good and without substantial impairment of the intent and purpose of the zoning ordinance and zone plan. These factors are referred to as the negative criteria.

13.0 **Design Exceptions**

The proposal includes design exceptions. The Municipal Land Use Law at N.J.S.A. 40:55D-51.b discusses criteria for granting exceptions. While the burden of proof is lower than that of variances, the statute does provide a framework for decisions:

The planning board when acting upon applications for preliminary site plan approval shall have the power to grant such exceptions from the requirements for site plan approval as may be reasonable and within the general purpose and intent of the provisions for site plan review and approval of an ordinance adopted pursuant to this article, if the literal enforcement of one or more provisions of the ordinance is impracticable or will exact undue hardship because of peculiar conditions pertaining to the land in question.

14.0 **Materials Reviewed**

- 14.1 *Montgomery Planning Board Application*, dated September 14, 2023, with attachments.
- 14.2 *Preliminary and Final Site Plan for Carrier Clinic – Adolescent Patient Unit*, 36 sheets, prepared by Mario Iannelli, PE, Dewberry Engineers, Inc., dated September 8, 2023 and revised through November 7, 2023.
- 14.3 *Boundary & Topographic Survey, Overall Site*, 1 sheet, prepared by Richard C. Mathews, PLS, Stires Associates, PA, dated September 1, 2022.
- 14.4 *Partial Topographic Survey*, 2 sheets, prepared by Richard C. Mathews, PLS, Stires Associates, PA, dated September 1, 2022.
- 14.5 *Hackensack Meridian Health Carrier Clinic Expansion Project*, 6 sheets, prepared by Array Architects, dated September 18, 2023.
- 14.6 *Environmental Impact Statement*, prepared by Dewberry Engineers, Inc., dated November 2023.



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- 14.7 *Stormwater Management Report*, prepared by Dewberry Engineers, inc., dated September 8, 2023.
- 14.8 *Facility Renovation and Wastewater Flows Memorandum*, prepared by Frank Tsemberlis, Regional VP Facilities, Hackensack Meridian Health, dated October 23, 2023.
- 14.9 *Traffic Impact Study*, prepared by Andrew Vischio, PE, PTOE, Dewberry Engineers, Inc., dated September 8, 2023.
- 14.10 *Wetland Delineation Summary Memorandum*, prepared by Steven Finch, Dewberry Engineers, Inc., dated September 13, 2023.
- 14.11 Delaware Raritan Canal Commission cover letter, dated September 19, 2023.
- 14.12 Somerset County Planning Board cover letter, dated September 19, 2023.
- 14.13 Somerset-Union Soil Conservation District cover letter, dated September 19, 2023.

15.0 Applicant / Owner / Professionals

- 15.1 **Owner/Applicant:** HMH Carrier Clinic, Inc, 252 County Route 601, Belle Mead, NJ 08502.
- 15.2 **Engineer:** Mario Iannelli, PE, Dewberry Engineers, Inc., 600 Parsippany Road, Suite 301, Parsippany, NJ 07054. Tel: 973.739.9400. Email: miannelli@dewberry.com.
- 15.3 **Architect:** Justin Fleckser, Array Architects. 1 West Elm Street, Suite 500, Conshocken, PA 19428. Tel: 610.755.6439. Email: jfleckser@array-architects.com.

16.0 Summary

The applicant is seeking preliminary and final major site plan approval with bulk variances and design exceptions to expand an existing Planned Behavioral Health



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Complex. The site is located within the MR Mountain Residential zone and surrounded by undeveloped, preserved land.

The following variances and design exceptions are required (additional variances and design exceptions may be identified by other Board professionals):

Variances

- §16-6.5.j.4(e) Fence Height (14-Foot Anti-Climb Fence)
- §16-6.5.j.6 Min. Distance, Principal Building to Public Street
- §16-6.5.j.6 Min. Distance, Parking Lot to Public Street
- §16-6.5.j.6 Min. Distance, Fence to Tract Boundary (10-foot Chain-Link Fence)
- §16-6.5.j.6 Min. Distance, Fence to Public Street (Split-Rail Fence)
- §16-6.5.j.6 Min. Distance, Fence to Public Street (Relocated Fence w/Columns)
- §16-6.5.j.6(d) Landscape Buffer Width (East Mountain Road)
- §16-6.5.j.6(d)(3) Driveway Within Buffer (East Mountain Road)
- §16-6.5.j.10(d) Lighting, Non-Glare (more information required)
- §16-6.5.j.10(e) Lighting, Timers (more information required)
- §16-6.5.j.13(c) Façade Signs, Quantity
- §16-6.5.j.13(c) Façade Sign Area, Front (Adolescent Unit)
- §16-6.5.j.13(c) Façade Signs Area, Side (Family Resource & Training Center)
- §16-6.5.j.13(c) Façade Sign Area, Rear (Rear Sign Wall)
- §16-6.5.j.13(d) Comprehensive Sign Plan

Design Exceptions

- §16-5.6.d.3 Trees Required, Gross Tract Area
- §16-5.6.d.3(a) Trees Required, Disturbance (more information required)
- §16-5.8.e Parking Spaces on Through Aisles
- §16-5.8.f.3 Parking Space Dimensions, Standard (Not required if determined appropriate by the Board)
- §16-5.8.f.3 Parking Space Dimensions, ADA (Not required if determined appropriate by the Board)

Please contact this office with any questions you may have.

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