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Open Space & Stewardship
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MEMORANDUM

To: Site Plan Subdivision Committee
From: Lauren A. Wasilauski, Open Space & Stewardship Director
Date: February 23, 2023
Re: PB-02-23 RPM Development, LLC
Block 20001 Lot 10.05 (Community Drive)
Amended Preliminary & Final Major Subdivision and Site Plan

This office has reviewed the following materials and offers the comments below:

- “Amended Preliminary & Final Major Subdivision Final Major Site Plan & Bulk Variance”, prepared by Shore Point Engineering, dated 2/21/2023 (16 sheets)
- Application package
- Architectural drawings prepared by Inglese Architecture, last revised 1/10/2023 (7 sheets)
- Environmental Impact Statement prepared by Shore Point Engineering, dated 12/23/2022

A. Application overview

1. The site is approximately 45 acres located on the north side of Orchard Road, immediately west of the Route 206 intersection. The property is located within the MCRZ (Municipal Complex Redevelopment Zone) zoning district.
2. The site formerly contained two office buildings (since demolished), parking areas, and is mostly grass areas. The new municipal complex is located east of the proposed project.
3. The applicant proposes to construct one, three-story apartment building on approximately 4.21 acres of the site (proposed block 20001 lot 10.07). The apartment building is proposed in an “L” shape and will contain 70 age-restricted and income-restricted units, plus one additional unit for the building manager. Elevators and a backup generator are also proposed.
 - a. The existing parking areas are predominantly proposed for reuse.
 - b. The applicant also proposes a community garden area and rain garden.
 - c. The project is proposed to be served by sewer and public water.

- d. The existing detention basin on site will be upgraded to a bioretention basin, and a second underground infiltration basin will be constructed to handle roof runoff, according to the EIS.

B. Sidewalks & Pedestrian Circulation

1. Sidewalks are required on all public streets per Code Section 16-5.14C:

“Except for all local, rural collector and scenic collector roads in the MR District, sidewalks shall be provided along all existing streets upon which all residential and nonresidential developments abut, unless specifically waived in certain locations by the reviewing municipal agency based upon good cause shown by the applicant, such as, but not limited to, the existence or proposal of alternate linkages for pedestrian movement and/or where other improvements are proposed to better facilitate the movement of people between the development and adjacent lands;”

2. The applicant has provided for a sidewalk along the driveway extension that will serve their development, as well as some internal sidewalks for pedestrian circulation around the parking area and front of the building.
3. Per previous comments from this office at the Site Plan/Subdivision Committee, the applicant incorporated a “loop” walking trail around the building for residents.
 - a. A water fountain (with pet fountain) and dog waste station will be provided. A designated area to walk dogs, away from cars in the parking lot, is highly desirable.
 - b. The path is proposed as 4’ wide, and made of crushed stone material.
 - i. This office recommends a paved trail, instead of cinders. It will enable use by a wider range of mobilities, and also facilitate easier maintenance.
 - c. A portion of the walking path is proposed to be located off the applicant’s property, on the County property. The applicant will need appropriate easements for access, construction, etc.
4. Benches are proposed along pathway which will be a welcome amenity for residents.
5. This path will contribute toward the overall site pedestrian circulation, and allow for connections into the new municipal complex site from the west thru a Township-owned basin on Red Fox Court (lot 7.24).

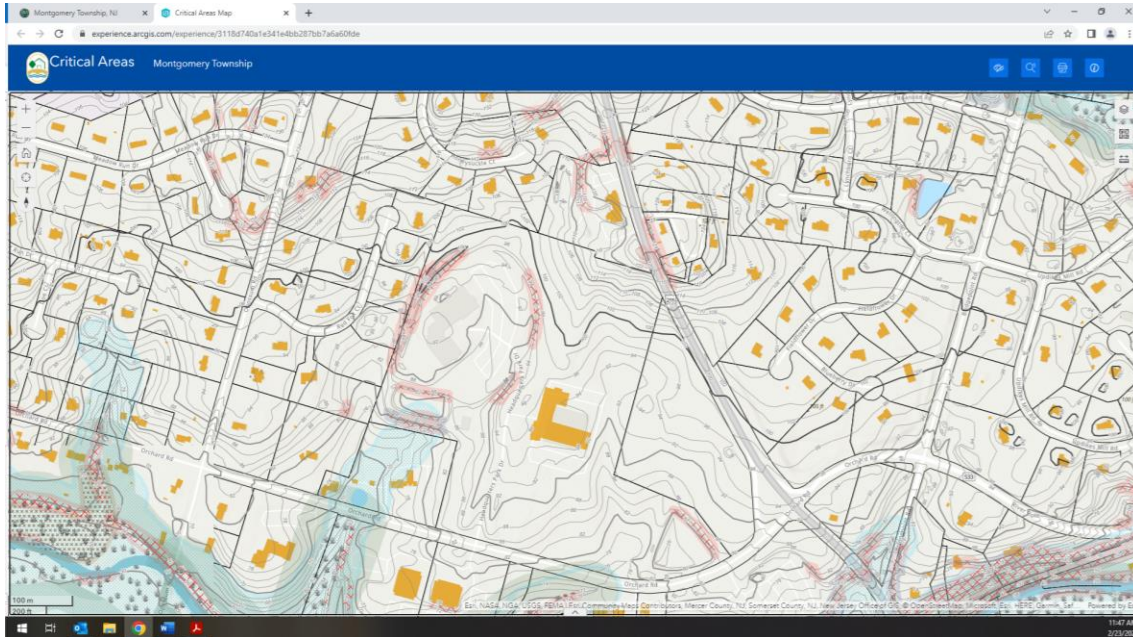
C. Tree Planting and Landscaping

1. The applicant should provide testimony about whether any trees will be removed.
2. Plans should show existing mature landscaping, so the Board can provide direction in saving these trees to the greatest extent possible.
3. Street Trees: Street trees are required at 50' intervals per Township Code Section 16-5.6.d.15. The applicant has no frontage on a public road, thus no street trees are required.
4. Shade Trees: 14 trees per acre are required for residential and non-residential development per Township Code Section 16-5.6d.3. The subject property is 4.21 acres, and thus 59 trees are required.
 - a. Sheet 9 indicates 54 deciduous shade trees, 1 deciduous coniferous shade tree, 3 evergreen coniferous trees and 9 semi-evergreen ornamental trees. This office defer to the Board Landscape Architect to determine if the proposed mixture of trees meets the ordinance requirement.
5. This office defers review of species and placement of all proposed plantings to the Board Landscape Architect.
 - a. Township Code Section 16-5.6d.5 requires native species.
6. Township Code Section 16-5.6d.10 requires a two (2) year guarantee on all plant materials. The Landscape Architectural Notes on sheet 11 satisfies this requirement.
7. A rain garden feature is planned in a prominent location in the parking area, near the proposed building. This office encourages the applicant to consider installing an interpretive sign, to educate residents and the visiting public about the function of a rain garden.
8. This office encourages the applicant to protect their plantings from deer damage as much as reasonably possible. The Open Space Committee has had success with use of wire and wooden stakes to prevent deer damaging the bark, and nibbling on low branches. Tree tubes are an alternative, but not preferred because rodents can nest at the base and eat through the trunk. The tree tubes also seem to foster a less hearty tree; the trunk doesn't become as sturdy as one that withstands the elements.

D. Critical Areas

1. Township data on topography information indicates critical slopes (slopes greater than 15%) at the westerly border of the property, and south of the proposed site (see image on following page – critical slope depicted with red crosshatching). These areas are not indicated as critical slope on the existing conditions plan. The

applicant should provide testimony as to the nature of these areas (e.g. whether they are man-made), and whether or not these areas are proposed to be disturbed.



E. Recreation & On-Site Amenities

1. The applicant is proposing to include a community garden for residents, which this office fully supports.
2. The applicant proposes picnic tables, benches and game tables adjacent to the community garden area, and benches along the walking path.
 - a. This office supports the provision of these features, and providing space for outdoor socialization.
 - b. The applicant should consider an additional bench near the main entrance; this would be a convenient location for residents and guests to sit.
3. A bike rack is provided and is a welcome addition to the plans.

F. Energy Efficiency

1. The applicant has incorporated electric vehicle charging stations (one station for two vehicles), which this office fully supports.

- a. PSE&G announced grant funding to install stations across their service area. Visit their website for more details:
<https://psepoweringprogress.com/electric-vehicles/>
2. The EIS mentions the building was designed with energy efficiency in mind, and would likely meet or exceed EnergyStar requirements. This office encourages the applicant to provide EnergyStar certified appliances, which will help to keep costs low for renters.
3. The applicant should provide testimony on whether they considered alternate energy sources such as solar or geothermal, which would also help to reduce costs for residents.