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PHILLIPS PREISS GRYGIEL LEHENY HUGHES LLC
Planning & Real Estate Consultants

April 28, 2020

Robert Friedberg, Chairman
Borough of Woodcliff Lake Planning Board
Borough Hall
188 Pascack Road
Woodcliff Lake, NJ 07677

RE: Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan w/ Bulk "c" Variance
Brighton Norse Realty, LLC
500-520 Chestnut Ridge Road
Block 202, Lot 4
Woodcliff Lake, NJ

Dear Chairman Friedberg and Members of the Board:

We have reviewed the above-reference development application, including the following documents:

- Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan for Proposed Whole Foods Supermarket, prepared by R.L. Streker, P.E., of Bohler Engineering, consisting of 7 sheets, dated January 20, 2020, and revised through March 25, 2020
- Proposed Building Elevations for Retail Property, prepared by Rand K. Rosenbaum of Rosenbaum Design Group Architecture, dated February 2, 2020
- ALTA/ACSM Land Title Survey for Block 202, Lot 4 in the Borough of Woodcliff Lake and Block 202, Lot 4 in the Borough of Montvale, prepared by James C. Weed, P.L.S., of Control Point Associates, Inc., dated December 19, 2011, and revised through January 25, 2013

The applicant is seeking preliminary and final major site plan approval with bulk "c" variance relief related to a proposal to renovate and retenant an existing multi-tenant shopping center.

The subject property is located north of Tice Boulevard and is bounded by Chestnut Ridge Road to the west and the Garden State Parkway to the east. The subject property measures approximately 7.25 acres and is identified as Block 202, Lot 4 on the official tax maps of the Borough of Woodcliff Lake. The far northeast corner of the site abutting the Garden State Parkway is technically a lot located in the Borough of Montvale, which is known as Block 3301, Lot 1 and measures approximately 1,800 square feet. No development is existing or proposed on this lot.

The site is presently developed with a one-story multi-tenant shopping center that measures 70,150 square feet in area. The anchor tenant space on the northerly side of the building is currently vacant but was previously occupied by an A&P

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supermarket and more recently an Acme supermarket. There are several smaller tenant spaces that are presently occupied by a liquor store, nail salon, dry cleaner, and restaurant. The subject property is located in the Borough's B-3 Business District. Surrounding uses are generally commercial in nature, including office buildings to the north and south, which are located in the B-3 and SO-II Special Office Districts, respectively. The Tice's Corner multi-tenant retail center is located to the southwest of the site in the B-2 Business District.

Project Description

The applicant is proposing to renovate the existing shopping center in conjunction with Whole Foods Market locating within a portion of the vacant Acme tenant space. Whole Foods Market would be located in the northern-most portion of the shopping center. The exact square footage that would be occupied by Whole Foods Market has not been provided; however, the new store would be located in the northernmost portion of the building.

The existing loading area on the southwestern portion of the building would be reconfigured to include a new overhead door, for a total of 3 loading docks, as well as a new ramp to provide access to the loading docks. Portions of the existing curbing and asphalt in this area would also be reconfigured for allow trucks to access the additional loading dock.

The applicant is proposing to remove an existing landscaped area near the northerly entrance in order to provide 11 additional vehicle parking spaces and a new landscaped island. The addition of these new spaces would result in a total 406 parking spaces on the site, where 395 spaces are existing at present.

Significant changes are proposed to the building's west (front) façade. The building façade currently consists of a red brick base with tan concrete and siding above the entrance level and an asphalt mansard-style roof. The applicant is proposing an entirely new façade for the Whole Foods Market portion of the building, to be comprised of glazing along most of the façade, with primary and secondary entry towers up to 35 feet in height. While details regarding materials have not been provided, it appears that the non-glazed portion of the façade would consist of multi-colored earthtone stone cladding with a concrete base. A covered walkway with a metal awning would be provided along the length of the Whole Foods Market façade. Portions of the front façade outside of Whole Foods' tenant area would also be clad in stone, with the upper portions to be clad in what appears to be beige stucco panels. A new entry corner is proposed on the southwest corner of the building. The stone cladding would extend approximately 30 feet along the north and south elevations, where the rest of those elevations would remain as existing.

Zoning Compliance

The site is located in the B-3 Business District, where the retail sale of goods such as in a grocery store is a permitted use. The applicant requires bulk "c" variance relief for a slight increase in total (impervious) coverage on the site, where the existing coverage represents a preexisting nonconforming condition. The maximum permitted coverage in the B-3 zone is 60%, where 82.7% is existing and 83.4% is proposed due to the expansion of the parking area.

Planning Comments

1. Testimony should be provided as to general operations of the proposed Whole Foods Market, including the size of the leased area, number of employees, and hours of operation.

2. The applicant is proposing to provide 406 parking spaces where 395 presently exist. Per Section 292-26A, retail stores measuring over 2,000 square feet shall provide 1 parking space per 175 square feet of floor area, which results in 401 required parking spaces for the 70,150-square foot shopping center. The applicant complies with this requirement. However, testimony should be provided as to whether the 8 existing/proposed ADA-compliant parking spaces will be sufficient for the proposed new store, as the entrance is being shifted to the north of where the Acme entrance was previously located. We defer to the Planning Board Engineer as to the recommended number and location of ADA-compliant parking spaces.

3. One bulk "c" variance is required to permit excess lot coverage. We note that the applicant is proposing to increase the lot coverage by approximately 0.7% (±2,200 square feet) as a means of eliminating the existing nonconformity related to deficient parking spaces. Nonetheless, the applicant should provide testimony addressing the impacts of the increase in coverage on stormwater management, site drainage and associated runoff onto adjacent properties and/or in the reduction of open space on the site.

4. At the time of a recent site visit, several landscaping areas within the parking area and around the site perimeter were in poor condition, as shown in Figure 1 below. Further, the applicant has indicated that at least one new landscaping area is proposed on the site, specifically in the vicinity of the new parking spaces. However, no landscaping details have been provided. Testimony should be provided describing existing and proposed site landscaping, including whether any existing landscaping in poor condition would be supplemented or replaced. We recommend that the applicant remediate existing plantings on the site that have not been maintained. The applicant should further indicate whether new landscaped areas will comply with §292-29, Landscaping and Buffer Areas, of the Borough Ordinance.

Figure 1: Existing Site Landscaping Conditions - April 16, 2020

5. Testimony should be provided as to how deliveries, loading, and trash collection are proposed to function on the site. While a grocery store was previously located on the site for many years, the applicant is proposing certain changes to the existing loading area. The applicant should indicate whether the loading and trash collection areas will be appropriately screened from public view.

6. We further note that at the time of a recent site visit, several broken guardrails and loose bollards were located the vicinity of the loading area and around the building perimeter, as shown in Figure 2 below. We recommend the replacement of these as part of the proposed site improvements. We defer to the Planning Board Engineer regarding further comments on circulation and loading.

Figure 2: Broken Guardrails and Bollards on Site - April 16, 2020

7. The applicant is proposing to substantially renovate the front building façade, which would be partially extended along the north and south facades. The applicant should provide details as to existing and proposed building materials, including colors and samples if possible. The applicant should address how the proposed new façade design and entry corners will relate to the existing design that is proposed to remain on the secondary facades, particularly as visible from adjacent local roadways.

8. The applicant has provided a Lighting Plan indicating that freestanding lights are proposed to be "retrofitted" with new LED area lights. We note that existing lighting fixtures on the site are in poor condition (see Figure 3), including their concrete bases; the application should specify what parts of the fixtures are proposed to be retrofitted. Testimony should also be provided indicating compliance of the proposed lighting plan with §292-28, Lighting, of the Borough Ordinance.

Figure 3: Existing Site Lighting & Pavement Conditions - April 16, 2020

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9. Figure 3 above also depicts existing cracked and failing pavement within the parking area. The applicant does not appear to be proposing to upgrade the asphalt surfaces on the site, except for the previously indicated parking and loading changes. We recommend that all asphalt areas on the site should be milled and repaved as part of the proposed improvements. If this is not feasible, all deteriorated or broken pavement areas should be repaired.

10. The applicant should confirm if any signage is proposed in association with the proposed Whole Foods Market and, if so, the applicant should provide the Board with a plan for such sign(s), detailing size, location, color(s) and lighting in accordance with Chapter 287, Signs, of the Borough Code.

11. As "c" bulk variance(s) are required in connection with the application, the Board must find that there is either undue hardship or practical difficulty associated with the strict application of the requirements of the zoning ordinance in connection with this specific piece of property; or that one or more purposes of zoning would be advanced by the deviation and the benefits of granting the variance(s) for this specific piece of property would substantially outweigh any detriment. In addition, the Board must be satisfied that the granting of the variance(s) would not cause substantial detriment to the public good or substantially impair the intent and purpose of the zone plan and zoning ordinance.

We trust that the above information is responsive to your needs.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Preiss, P.P.

cc: Meg Smith, Board Secretary
Evan Jacobs, P.E.
Brian Eyerman, Esq

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