

October 9, 2020

City of Linden Planning Board
City Hall
301 North Wood Avenue
Linden, NJ 07036

Attn: Dorothy Kotowski, Planning Board Secretary

Re: Linden Development, LLC – SP#1132-20
Medical Office Building
Site Plan and Bulk Variances
Block 469, Lot 38.05 – PCD Zone
1016 West Edgar Road

Dear Chairman and Board Members:

We are in receipt of the above-referenced application, which seeks final site plan approval together with bulk variance relief to construct a medical office building within an existing commercial property that is currently developing with a Wal-Mart store, a hotel, retail shops, restaurants and a health club. In connection with the above-referenced application, we have reviewed the plans and supporting documentation filed by Linden Development, LLC. The site plan was prepared by Maser Consulting and are dated 7/20/20. The plans consist of the following sheets:

- Cover Sheet
- Zoning Notes
- Dimension Plan
- Grading Plan
- Utility Plan
- Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plan
- Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Details
- Landscape Plan
- Lighting Plan
- Landscape and Lighting Details
- Construction Details

Architectural drawings were prepared by MMA Architects and are dated 9/18/20. The drawings consist of the following sheets:

- Architectural Floor Plan & Site Plan
- Exterior Elevations
- Perspective Rendering
- Building Signage Calculation
- Trash Enclosure

1. Description of the Development and Compliance with City Development Regulations

Based upon our review of the applicant's plans and supporting documentation, an evaluation of the site and adjacent area, and analysis of the City's Land Development and Zoning ordinance, we offer the following for the Board's consideration. It appears that the application is compliant with the City's Zoning Ordinances with the exception of having a building setback to the Runway Protection Overlay Zone (RPZ).

2. Planning Considerations

a. General/Variance.

1. The City's code in Section 31-4.2 does not allow more than one principal use on a nonresidential lot except where specifically permitted by the zone regulations or associated with a commercial or industrial center. The proposed medical office utilizing common customer parking and managed as a unit complies with these requirements. The intent is for commercial uses to be designed with unifying elements, while still allowing for individual branding.
2. Section 31-11.4.a.3.(c). requires that all buildings be setback 25-feet from zone boundaries. It should be noted that the RPZ overlay district was created after the PCD zone was created as required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). The RPZ district is an overlay zone that provides additional standards to the PCD and other adjoining districts. I note that the City never intended for there to be a required setback to the RPZ district in this context within the PCD district. Rather, this became an unintended consequence of adding the RPZ ordinance as mandated by the FAA. As such, it is our opinion that any needed variance can be granted without negatively impacting the intent and purpose of the zone plan.

b. Off-street parking and circulation.

1. Sheet 2 provides a table identifying compliance with the City's off-street parking requirements. We note that 29 spaces are required, and 43 spaces are provided (including 4 handicapped spaces).
2. The proposed drive-aisles conform to ordinance requirements.
3. The applicant should discuss the proposed changes to the building and circulation layout since the preliminary approval was granted.
4. While it appears that all landscaping has been designed in a manner that will not restrict sight lines to internal driveways, testimony shall be provided demonstrating that landscape plan was designed as such.
5. The applicant shall clarify truck movements throughout the site and how deliveries will occur. What is the size of the largest delivery truck? Turning templates shall be provided. Are any site restrictions proposed as to the size of trucks that will be servicing the building?

c. Landscape/Lighting/Retaining Walls.

1. Landscape. The applicant proposes a landscape plan that includes a mix of trees, shrubs and grasses. The landscape plan is acceptable from a planning perspective.
2. Lighting. We take no exception to the lighting plan. A consistent light pole design should be incorporated into all the pad-style sites. Testimony should be provided in this regard.

d. Architecture/Floor Plans/Signs

1. Building design. The applicant proposes to clad the building with a combination of brick EIFS, synthetic wood and a cast stone basecourse. Testimony shall be provided as to the design elements that adhere to Section 31-11.3., which requires that architecture should provide a coherent design theme throughout the development, using rooflines, building materials, entrance locations and massing of buildings to provide a compatible visual relationship between the various buildings and uses.
2. Building mounted signs. The applicant proposes two 101 sq. ft. building signs where up to 102.2 sq. ft. is permitted. The dimension (height) of the proposed signs is also in conformance with the PCD district.

e. Garbage/Refuse.

1. The applicant proposes a trash enclosure to be mimic the primary building materials (brick and stone veneer with a stone cap). The design is the nicest we have seen to date in Linden. The applicant should consider a non-yellow bollard considering the effort made to design such an attractive trash enclosure.

Should you have any questions, please contact us.

Very truly yours,



Paul N. Ricci, AICP, PP
Planning Consultant

CC: Tony Rinaldo, Esq., Planning Board Attorney (via e-mail)
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