

MARUCCI ENGINEERING ASSOCIATES, LLC
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POST OFFICE BOX 509
CEDAR KNOLLS, NEW JERSEY 07927

PHONE (973) 887-3066
FAX (973) 887-3066

September 19, 2024

Honorable Chairman and
Members of the Planning Board
Township of Bloomfield
One Municipal Plaza
Bloomfield, N. J. 07003

Re: 675 – 699 Bloomfield Avenue
34-40 State Street and 14 State Street
Map 11 Block 244 Lots 10, 15, 41, 42 & 46
CBD Bloomfield Urban Renewal LLC (applicant)
The Church of the Sacred Heart, Bloomfield (owner)
Zone: Redevelopment Plan for Block 244 Lots 10, 15, 41, 42 and 46

Dear Chairman and Members of the Planning Board,

This application proposes the redevelopment of lands currently occupied by the former Sacred Heart Elementary School, Nardiello Hall, and other accessory buildings and structures owned by The Church of the Sacred Heart, Bloomfield.

My office has reviewed the following plans and documentation for the preparation of this report.

- + Standard Development Application
- + Redevelopment Agreement dated April 15, 2024
- + ALTA/NSPS Land Survey prepared by Control Point Associates, Inc., dated May 13, 2021, and revised to June 22, 2021
- + Site Plans prepared by Bohler Engineering NJ LLC dated June 12, 2024
- + Architectural Plans prepared by Lessard Design dated June 12, 2024
- + Stormwater Management Report & Operations and Maintenance Manual prepared by Bohler Engineering NJ, LLC dated May 2024
- + Traffic Impact Analysis prepared by Atlantic Traffic & Design dated June 12, 2024

In addition to the plans and documentation provided by the applicant in this matter, my office also reviewed the Redevelopment Plan for Block 244 Lots 10, 15, 41, 42 and 46 prepared by Phillips Preiss Grygiel Leheny Hughes LLC, Planning & Real Estate Consultants, dated August 2023.

The application submission substantially complies with the Redevelopment Plan and is therefore appropriately before the Planning Board for Preliminary and Final Site Plan approval..

According to the project narrative, the applicant is seeking the following Class C Bulk variance relief, which can be granted by the Planning Board:

- To permit an aisle width of 22 feet where 24 feet is required pursuant to Section 315-30(O)(6) of the Specific Design Standards.
- To permit a driveway and parking setback of zero (0) feet where 5 feet is required pursuant to Section 315-30(O)(13)(d) of the Specific Design Standards.
- To permit a building overhang setback for certain balconies of 4.8 feet from Block 244 Lot 8 where 10 feet is required pursuant to Section III.B.(2)(b) of the Redevelopment Plan.
- To permit a building overhang setback for certain balconies of 14.9 feet from Block 244 Lots 19, 24 and 30 where 20 feet is required pursuant to Section III.B.(2)(f) of the Redevelopment Plan.
- To permit 73 compact parking spaces where 62 parking spaces are permitted pursuant to Section 315-30(O)(6) of the Specific Design Standards.
- To permit some lighting fixtures to not provide a shield where lighting is required to be shielded pursuant to Section IV.A.(4) of the Redevelopment Plan.
- To permit canopies to extend into the Bloomfield Avenue right-of-way by 4.5 feet where zero (0) feet is required pursuant to Section III.B.(2)(a) of the Redevelopment Plan.

The applicant seeks a de minimis exception from the provisions contained in the Residential Site Improvements Standards (RSIS) where the applicant proposes 324 parking spaces (when combined with credits for electric vehicle spaces equates to 356 parking spaces) and RSIS requires 395 parking spaces.

The applicant also seeks the following design waiver relief:

- A design waiver from the requirements of Section 315-29(F)(1) of the General Design Standards as no buffering is proposed adjacent to Block 244 Lot 45.
- A design waiver from the requirements of Section 315-30(C)(1)(a) of the Specific Design Standards as no buffering is proposed adjacent to Block 244 Lot 45.
- A design waiver from Section 315-30(C)(2) of the Specific Design Standards as the applicant is not proposing to plant evergreen shrubs.
- A design waiver from Section 315-30(L)(7) of the Specific Design Standards to permit less street trees than required.
- A design waiver from Section 315-30(O)(4) of the Specific Design Standards as no buffering is being proposed adjacent to Block 244 Lot 45.
- A design waiver from Section 315-30(F)(2)(g)(8) of the Specific Design Standards to permit a footcandle illumination of 9.8 along the westerly property line where 0.1 footcandle is permitted.
- A design waiver from Section 315-30 (F)(2)(a) of the Specific Design Standards to permit certain proposed light fixtures to not provide a shield.

EXISTING CONDITION – PROPERTY SURVEY

The subject property fronts on Bloomfield Avenue and on State Street.

The site contains an area of 96,922 square feet or 2.225 acres.

Lot 10 contains the former Sacred Heart Elementary School fronting along Bloomfield Avenue.

Lot 15 contains an accessory detached garage.

Lot 46 contains the former Nardiello Hall fronting along State Street.

Lots 41 and 42 contain a residential structure fronting along State Street.

Lots 10, 15, 41, 42 and 46 are owned by The Church of the Sacred Heart, Bloomfield.

The site, in the existing condition, is essentially covered with impervious materials including buildings, structures, sidewalks, and pavements.

All existing structures and pavements will be demolished and removed for the construction of this proposed redevelopment project.

PROPOSED CONDITION – ARCHITECTURAL PLANS

SHEET A.001

The plan proposes a six (6) story (69.6 feet high) building with 200 residential apartment units on floors 2 through 6, with Commercial Event space, Lobby/Leasing & Amenity space, and Parking on the ground floor, and additional parking on the second level.

The breakdown of the apartment sizes is as follows:

26 - [Studio] (sizes ranging from 439 to 556 square feet)

124 - [One bedroom] (sizes ranging from 613 to 898 square feet)

7 - [One bedroom + den] (sizes ranging from 973 to 1,180 square feet)

40 - [Two bedroom] (sizes ranging from 917 to 1,366 square feet)

3 - [Two bedroom + den] (sizes ranging from 1,206 to 1,264 square feet)

200 – Total Units

The parking garage is accessed from Bloomfield Avenue and by State Street, with security gate control. Additional surface parking is proposed at the rear of the building with access driveways on State Street.

The total parking count for the proposed development is 324 parking spaces. However, 44 surface parking spaces are dedicated to the church. The residential parking count is 260 garage spaces and 20 surface spaces for a total of 280 parking spaces.

The 280 residential parking spaces calculate to a parking ratio of 1.4 spaces per unit for the proposed 200 residential units.

Inclusive of the 324 parking spaces, 73 spaces are compact, 6 handicapped spaces, 3 van-accessible handicapped spaces, 3 electric vehicle (EV) handicapped spaces, and 40 EV standard spaces.

The Commercial/Event space contains an area of 4,289 square feet.

The Lobby/Leasing & Amenity space has an area of 5,606 square feet.

The handicapped access (ramps) to the Event Space and Lobby/Leasing areas appear to encroach onto the public right-of-way (sidewalk) on Bloomfield Avenue.

The building is accessed by three (3) elevators, and three (3) staircases.

There are two (2) interior trash rooms, and an exterior loading area accessed from State Street.

SHEET A.102

This is the second level parking garage, indicating the three (3) elevators and three (3) staircases.

SHEET A.103

This is the first residential level (third floor) together with an enclosed amenity area of 4,500 square feet, and an open amenity deck (courtyard).

SHEET A.104

This is the second residential level (fourth floor).

SHEET A.105

This is the third residential level (fifth floor).

SHEET A.106

This is the fourth residential level (sixth floor).

SHEET A.107

This is the roof level.

A proposed roof deck is indicated.

The roof deck appears to be accessed from two (2) staircases only.

No amenities are indicated on the proposed roof deck.

SHEET A.108

These are the exterior materials proposed for the building.

The proposed building exterior finishes shall be explained and discussed by the architect.

SHEETS A.201, A.202, A.203, & A.204

These are the building elevations.

The total building height is 69 feet – 7 & ¼ inches (69.6 feet).

SHEETS A.205, A.206 & A.207

These are the building renderings – perspective views.

SHEET A.301

This is the cross-section of the proposed building.

EXISTING CONDITION – ENGINEERING SITE PLANS

SHEET C-201 [DEMOLITION PLAN]

All existing buildings, dwellings, accessory structures and pavements will be removed.

Note: The site is virtually covered with impervious materials in the existing condition.

PROPOSED CONDITION – ENGINEERING SITE PLANS

SHEET C-301 [SITE LAYOUT PLAN]

The proposed six (6) story building will front on Bloomfield Avenue, and the footprint will occupy most of the site, except for the two (2) surface parking lots accessed from State Street.

The front yard setback on Bloomfield Avenue ranges from a minimum of one (1) foot to five (5) feet.

The southerly side yard setback is ten (10) feet, and the northerly side yard setback is 19.8 feet.

The ground floor consists of a Commercial Event space, and a Lobby/Amenity space, with grade level parking.

The parking garage is accessed from Bloomfield Avenue and also from State Street.

It should be noted that handicapped access to the Event space and Lobby/Amenity space apparently encroaches onto the right-of-way (sidewalk) of Bloomfield Avenue.

There are two (2) surface parking lots with access from State Street. One lot consists of twenty (20) spaces for the residential occupants and the other parking lot (44 spaces) for church activity purposes.

A sidewalk is proposed along the southerly side of the building connecting the Bloomfield Avenue sidewalk to the State Street sidewalk.

A loading area is proposed between the rear of the building and the twenty space parking lot for delivery and moving truck purposes.

SHEET C-401 [Grading Plan]

The event space finished floor is proposed at Elevation 135.00 and the accessible ramp begins at Elevation 134.00.

The lobby/amenity space is proposed at Elevation 134.75 and the accessible ramp begins at Elevation 132.32.

SHEET C-402 [Drainage Plan]

The application proposes an underground stormwater management system consisting of infiltration basins/tanks, interconnected and directed to an outlet control structure, all within the interior of the building below the parking garage.

The overflow for the system is designed to discharge into the existing inlet/storm sewer on State Street.

The forty-four (44) space surface parking lot will have an independent stormwater conveyance system to control stormwater and direct the discharge into the State Street storm sewer system.

SHEET C-501 [Utility Plan]

This plan proposes potable water and sanitary sewer connections to the existing utilities under Bloomfield Avenue.

The potable water connection is shown tapped into the existing six (6) inch water main.

The sanitary sewer connection proposes a doghouse manhole to be constructed over the existing ten (10) inch clay sewer main under Bloomfield Avenue.

SHEET C-601 & C-602 [Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plan]

Soil erosion control measures are required to be in place prior to any demolition or soil movement. A permit will be required to be obtained from Hudson-Essex-Passaic Soil Conservation District.

SHEET C-701 [Landscape Plan]

Shade trees are proposed along the Bloomfield Avenue frontage and the State Street frontage. The Bloomfield Avenue frontage has a brick paver pattern between the curb and sidewalk. The north and south sides of the building are buffered with landscaping, as well as the perimeters of the surface parking lots.

SHEET C-703 [Lighting Plan]

Building-mounted light fixtures are proposed along the Bloomfield Avenue frontage, and the southerly side of the building to illuminate the proposed sidewalk, and along the rear portion of the sidewalk.

Four (4) individual light poles, with fixtures at twenty (20) feet mounting height are located in the twenty (20) space surface parking lot.

The forty-four (44) space surface parking lot is illuminated with a twenty-five (25) feet high, twin fixture system.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT REPORT STORMWATER MANAGEMENT FACILITY / OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE MANUAL

The project is considered a major development due to the proposed disturbance greater than one acre.

The proposed improvements decrease impervious coverage and motor vehicle surface area on the site.

The proposed development must meet NJDEP stormwater quantity reductions, water quality, and ground water recharge.

In the existing condition, the site is developed with buildings, structures, sidewalks and pavements. Drainage runoff sheet flows onto Bloomfield Avenue and onto State Street.

The proposed stormwater conveyance system will collect runoff from the proposed building into an underground infiltration basin.

The proposed improvements decrease impervious coverage by 0.429 acres and decrease motor vehicle surface area by 1.044 acres.

According to the report, drain time is for the 100- year future adjusted storm. Permeability tests have been completed in the area of the basin and an infiltration rate of 4.3 inches per hour has been observed. The maximum design volume to be infiltrated is the Water Quality Storm Design Volume, with larger storms being discharged via outlet control structures. Roof runoff does not need to be pretreated.

The proposed development of the site will result in a net decrease of 1.044 acres of new motor vehicle surfaces, and therefore water quality controls do not apply.

The design provides groundwater recharge which exceeds NJDEP requirements.

Regularly scheduled maintenance inspections of the stormwater facilities should be performed at least four (4) times per year. Maintenance of the facilities shall be both functional and aesthetic. (Preventive and Corrective)

TRAFFIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

The analysis concludes that the proposed development would not significantly impact traffic conditions in the vicinity of the site.

The report indicates that discussions were held with Essex County, and that the provision of left turns at the proposed Bloomfield Avenue driveway will require a supporting Gap Analysis.

The project meets the parking requirements based on the Redevelopment Plan, the bicycle parking requirements, and the ADA-compliant sidewalk connectivity between Bloomfield Avenue and State Street.

COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

- Testimony shall be provided in support of the requested variance relief and design waiver relief.
- Testimony shall be provided as to the need for ADA accessibility (handicapped ramps) to be proposed within the Essex County right-of-way (sidewalk) of Bloomfield Avenue for both the Commercial Event space and the Lobby/Amenity space areas.
- Testimony shall be provided as to the specific amenities proposed for the ground floor, the first residential level, the amenity deck on the first residential level, and the proposed roof deck.
- Testimony shall be provided with respect to the exterior building finish materials.
- The architectural plans show balconies on both the northerly and southerly sides of the proposed building.
The engineering site plans only show the balconies on the northerly side of the proposed building. The balconies on the south side are located above the proposed sidewalk leading from Bloomfield Avenue to State Street.
- Discussion/testimony shall be provided as to the potential for left turns into the site from the Bloomfield Avenue access.
- There are various types of existing fences along the sides of the subject property. New uniform fencing should be proposed, either PVC or Board-on-Board wood fence, to buffer all side yards and rear yards of the adjoining/abutting properties.
- All existing water and sanitary sewer connections servicing the existing buildings shall be capped and abandoned prior to any building or structure demolition.
- The engineering site plans state that permeability tests shall be performed for the infiltration basin design (Sheet C-102), while the Stormwater Management Report states that the permeability tests have been completed. Testimony shall be provided as to where the tests were performed since the existing buildings have not been removed.
A note shall be added to indicate that all building roof drains will be connected internally into the infiltration basin system.

- Sheet C-501 shows the sanitary sewer connection proposed over the 10 inch diameter clay sewer pipe. This section of sanitary sewer main from the upstream manhole to the downstream manhole shall be inspected by CCTV to determine its structural integrity. If found to be structurally defective, the section of main from manhole to manhole shall either be lined or replaced.
- Lots 10, 15, 41, 42 and 46 shall be consolidated into one metes and bounds description, and a lot consolidation deed shall be filed, with a new lot number be designated by the Tax Assessor.
- Approval shall be subject to performance and maintenance guarantees, and engineering inspection fees pursuant to Article VII of the current zoning ordinance.
- Planning Board approval shall be conditioned upon outside agency reviews and approvals:

- + Hudson-Essex-Passaic Soil Conservation District Permit
- + Essex County Planning Board
- + New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP):
 - Treatment Works Approval (TWA)
 - Flood Hazard Verification
 - Flood Hazard Individual Permit
- + Passaic Valley Sewer Commission
- + Bloomfield water and sanitary sewer connections

My office has no further comments or engineering issues at this time.

However, my office reserves the opportunity for further comments pending testimony received during the hearing process.

Respectfully submitted,



Anthony Marucci, PE-LS-PP
Planning Board Engineer