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October 7, 2020

Chairman Dewey Burluson
and Members of the Planning Board
Borough of Hillsdale
380 Hillsdale Avenue
Hillsdale, NJ 07642

Regarding: **Block 1407, Lots 14, Borough of Hillsdale: Application #03-20
40 Central Ave.
BCUW Madeline Housing Partners LLC: Applicant & Owner**

Dear Chairman Burluson and Members of the Board:

We are in receipt of *revised* engineering plans in connection with the above Site Plan application. The original application materials had been submitted to the Borough on or about June 30, 2020.

The revised engineering plans are prepared by Schwanewede Hals Engineering and consist of the following four sheets dated May 18, 2020 and revised to September 23, 2020:

- Sheet 1 of 4 entitled, "Site Plan."
- Sheet 2 of 4 entitled, "Grading, Landscaping & Lighting Plan."
- Sheet 3 of 4 entitled, "Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plan."
- Sheet 4 of 4 entitled, "Survey/Soil Movement."

The applicant also submitted architectural plans prepared by Virgona & Virgona that consist of two sheets (A1 & A2) dated March 6, 2020, an architectural rendering and photographs of the subject and area properties .

Also submitted is a rendering of the proposed building, and photos of the subject and adjacent properties.

The application is for Site Plan approval with Use (d1) and bulk variances. The proposed multi-family use (2nd Floor apartments) is not permitted in the zone district. The Mayor and Council Representative must recuse themselves from the application deliberations due to the Use variance being sought.

General Site Description
(No Revision from Previous Report)

Lot 4 consists of 26,400 SF (0.60 acre) and is located on the east side of Central Ave., south of the Cross Street intersection, in the R-4 Residential Zone (minimum lot size 7,500 SF). The lot is presently improved with a two-story frame dwelling. An asphalt driveway provides access to the property from Central Ave. A detached frame garage is situated behind the driveway.

The lot meets all required zoning regulations and is oversized in lot area for the zone district. It is rectangular in shape. The rear property line abuts the George White middle school property/recreation area.

The Application

The applicant proposes to remove improvements on the property and construct a two-story residential building. The building will contain a four-bedroom group home on the first floor and two, one-bedroom affordable units on the second level. A patio is proposed behind the building.

The revised plans include a seven-space parking area in front of the building. Prior plans included a nine-space parking lot. One of the parking spaces is barrier free. In addition, the parking area has been redesigned so that it is set back 16 feet from the south side property line and 24 feet from the north side property line. The applicant also has added landscape plantings around the parking area to help buffer the proposed parking lot.

The group home is considered a single-family dwelling and is permitted in the R-4 zone district. However, the proposed 2nd story apartments are not permitted in this location. Therefore, a use variance is required for the apartments. In addition, the building and associated improvements do not conform to all of the bulk regulations associated with the R-4 Zone district and a bulk variance is required (although the zone requirements did not anticipate the proposed multi-family use).

The revised design has eliminated the need for an impervious coverage variance.

Completeness Review

The application has been deemed complete and public hearings have started.

Zoning Review

The engineering plans include a bulk table. It appears that the following variances are required.

Proposed

1. **Combined Side Yard Setback:** 25.8 ft. proposed s. 30 ft. minimum required, a difference of 4.2 ft.
2. **Sec. 310-48 - Use Variance:** The proposed 2nd story multi-family use is not permitted in the zone district.

General Comments

We offer general comments on the plans as follows:

1. The revised layout of the building creates a parking lot in the front yard space which is out of character in this residential area. It still appears possible to place the parking in the rear albeit a impervious coverage variance would be require.

A recent, similar-sized group home on Cedar Lane in River Vale with only four parking spaces was configured to permit parking in the rear yard, with a dumpster, using an 18 ft. two-way wide driveway. It has the same lot frontage & width.

A new United Way group home at 370 Clinton Avenue in Wyckoff, which houses the same number of units, has four parking spaces (see below) with on-street parking.



2. The proposed building is set back about twice the distance of the existing dwelling or 60.6 ft.
3. The building contains a full basement only available to the lower floor residents. It has a walk out rear exit.
4. The building will contain three gas meters and three electric meters all exterior to the dwelling. These should be screened from view.
5. The need for seven parking spaces at this site should be provided given that the four residents on the lower floor would not have vehicles, and the two one-bedroom apartments could suffice with two or three spaces. Visitors can use available on-street parking on both sides of the street similar to other residential homes. A reduction in on-site parking would ally local concerns that the dwelling could be re-purposed in the future into a three-family private dwelling if sold.
6. Due to the proximity of the local school, the Board requested that a fence be installed along the rear portions of the lot to prevent illicit entry by school children. The limits of the proposed 6 ft. high solid PVC fence is not shown. Six ft. high fences are not permitted in the front yard space.
7. Computations for stormwater management are required based on soil test pits witnessed by our office are required. These have not been provided.

The grading plan now routes surface runoff onto the adjacent southerly driveway. This must be mitigated. The proposed parking lot is about 3 ft. above the driveway grade.

It would be preferable to slope the parking area southerly, and collect all stormwater into open grates on the seepage tanks to eliminate the trough drain. Trough drains are difficult to, and seldom maintained. And if not, runoff would course over the public sidewalk. This configuration would also reduce the height of the parking lot at the southerly side.

8. Refuse collection for the several units was a concern because there are no garages. A trash enclosure is provided for receptacles at the northwest corner of the dwelling. It must be sufficiently large to contain recycling containers.
9. Two 100-watt residential-style lamppost are provided near front of the dwelling. Electric/CCTV/phone service is being provided underground from the utility pole in front of the dwelling.
10. The sanitary sewer must be internally inspected by CCTV and witnessed by our office to ensure its re-use.

11. It appears that 11 trees are being removed. Under the Borough land use ordinance, 22 trees are required for restitution. Nineteen trees are proposed but appear to include Green Giant Arborvitae. Arborvitae are not indigenous and therefore cannot be counted towards reforestation. Therefore only four new trees are provided. The 18 additional trees can be planted in the rear yard space, or along Central Avenue per the tree restitution ordinance, or a contribution made in lieu of planting.
12. The existing depressed curb must be reconstructed to full height, joint-to-joint, and the old concrete apron removed.
13. Granite curbs should not extend into the right-of-way such to cause a tripping hazard at the public sidewalk.
14. We assume the existing well in the proposed building footprint will be removed and decommissioned.
15. The application if approved, results in two new affordable housing units in the Borough.

We trust these comments will assist the Board members in their review of the application materials.

Very truly yours,

C. P. STATILE, PA

(original signed)

Christopher P. Statile, P.E.
Planning Board Engineer

CPS/mr

cc: Antimo DelVecchio, Esq., Applicant's Counsel
Schwanewede/Hals Engineering, Site Engineer
Nylema Nabbie, Esq, Board Attorney
Tom Beherns, PP, Burgis Associates

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