

# CHRISTOPHER P. STATILE, P.A.

PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS & PLANNERS  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS

CPSTATILE@AOL.COM

3 FIR COURT  
OAKLAND, NJ 07430  
(201) 337-7470  
FAX: (201) 337-7599

NEW YORK, NY

January 20, 2021

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

Regarding: **Block 1105, Lot 4, Borough of Hillsdale**  
**441 Hillsdale Ave.**  
**Minor Site Plan with Bulk Variances Application PZ-10-21**  
**Applicant & Owner: 441 Hillsdale Ave., LLC**

Dear Chairman Burluson and Members of the Board:

We are in receipt of *revised* engineering plans that were submitted in connection with the above Minor Site application. The engineering plans are prepared by Page Consultants and consist of ten sheets dated September 14, 2021 as follows:

- Drawing 1 of 10 entitled, "Cover Sheet," revised to January 10, 2022 (the revision date is shown on the plan as 2021, but we are assuming that 2022 is correct.)
- Drawing 2 of 10 entitled, "Existing Conditions Plan," revised to November 1, 2021.
- Drawing 3 of 10 entitled, "Proposed Site Plan," revised to December 31, 2021.
- Drawing 4 of 10 entitled, "Grading & Utility Plan," revised to November 1, 2021.
- Drawing 5 of 10 entitled, "Soil Erosion Plan & Details," revised to November 1, 2021.
- Drawings 6 & 7 of 10 entitled, "Signage Plan I," revised to December 31, 2021.
- Drawing 8 of 10 entitled, "Elevations & Signage Plan," revised to January 10, 2022.
- Drawing 9 of 10 entitled, "Lighting & Landscaping Plan," revised to December 31, 2021.
- Drawing 10 of 10 entitled, "General Details," revised to December 17, 2021.

The applicant had also previously submitted architectural plans.

This application is to appeal an August 3, 2021 denial of the Zoning Official. The applicant is seeking approval to locate a Chipotle restaurant in the location of a former restaurant. Minor Site Plan approval is required.

**General Site Description**  
(Minor Revisions from Previous Report)

The original site plan application (P-25-67) for Friendly's was approved by the Planning Board on March 19, 1968 with plan dated December 1967. Subject Lot 4 is improved with a 2,445 SF one-story brick building, associated parking, a freestanding sign, and other associated improvements. The building had previously housed a Friendly's restaurant. The lot contains 22,250 SF (0.51 acre) and is located in the Commercial/"C" Zone District (7,500 SF minimum lot size). Reconfigurations of the adjacent streets have been made by the Borough and County for widening over the past years.

The property is located at the southeastern corner of the Hillsdale Avenue/Washington Avenue intersection. Washington Ave. curves around the property so that lot has frontage on Hillsdale Ave. on the north side, and Washington Ave. on the west and southern sides. One-way access into the site is permitted from Hillsdale Ave., and both access into and out of the lot is permitted from Washington Ave. at the southern end. Lot 4 is adjacent to the commuter parking area on the eastern (right) side.

The existing building encroaches into the required Washington Ave. front yard setback area.

**The Application**

The applicant proposes to locate a Chipotle restaurant, re-purposing the existing building. The existing steps, a concrete trash pad and air conditioning units with pads that are located behind the building are proposed for removal. A new concrete access sidewalk is proposed in front of the building, between the building and the parking spaces. A walkup "pickup window" is also proposed on the east side of the building, as well as a new concrete patio. The patio shows no exterior seating or tables.

The interior of the existing building is proposed for renovation to accommodate the new "fast – casual" restaurant. It appears that customers will order from a counter and eat their food at tables in the restaurant, or take the food "to go." Table service or an exterior order/menu board are not proposed.

The applicant proposes to reconfigure the existing parking area. The proposed lot will contain 24 parking spaces, of which two spaces will be barrier-free and an additional four spaces will be assigned for mobile order pick up. The site can be accessed from either Hillsdale Ave. or Washington Ave. However, customers may only exit the site from Washington Ave. The lot will be "one-way" access from Hillsdale Ave. into the lot and past the building. Entrance into and

out of the site is permitted on the southern end of the property, with no restrictions on turning directions out of the property.

The restaurant is a permitted use in Hillsdale's Commercial Zone. Thirteen parking spaces are required per the zoning ordinance, but the applicant is providing 24 total spaces, which is an increase from the previous plans that included 18 parking spaces.

Wall signs are proposed on the north, south and west elevations. Exit and entrance signage is proposed at the exits and entrances.

The proposed "drive-through" lane has been removed from the revised plans. It appears that there are no bulk variances required in connection with the proposal.

### Completeness Review

The applicant is requesting to be considered a Minor Site Plan (see definition Section 310-4). The applicant must show how the application comports with this definition given the existing building exceeds the 2,000 SF threshold. The application was reviewed against the requirements contained in Land Use Section 310-87 for a Minor Site Plan approval. The following items are deficient:

1. 310-87E(13): Existing drainage within 500 ft.

Since this is a well-developed area of the Borough, we believe a waiver for the above is appropriate. Based on the submitted materials, the application is complete and can be scheduled for a public hearing conditioned on receiving a *waiver request* for the above item.

### Zoning Review

The submitted plans include a bulk table. It appears that the following variance is required.

#### Existing

1. **Front Yard Setback, Washington Ave:** 4.1 ft. existing vs. 5 ft. required, a difference of 0.9 ft.
2. **Parking Offset from Street** Section 310-58: 0 ft. existing versus 10 ft. required (prior exit closed with reconfigurations of Patterson Street/Washington Avenue).
3. **Fences** Section 310-56A: 6 ft. High (Dumpster Enclosure) versus 4 ft. permitted within 25 ft. of intersection Patterson Street/Washington Avenue. Otherwise 6 ft. high is permitted on Commercial District.

4. **Accessory Structure** (280 SF dumpster enclosure) in Front Yard Space Prohibited, Section 310-55(H)4a.

### **General Comments**

1. The application materials state that the hours of operation will be 10:45 AM to 10 PM, and that the restaurant will have 30 seats and nine employees. An outdoor pick-up window & parking will be available for orders placed in advance under this business model.
2. The applicant should provide testimony on the proposed use of the outdoor patio and whether outdoor dining is anticipated.
3. The applicant should provide testimony on whether any Electric Vehicle Charging stations are proposed in the parking area.
4. We recommend that the applicant consider using 10 ft. wide “Mobile Pick Up” spaces due to their high turnover, and eliminate one space since the site has surplus parking spaces (13 required versus 24 provided).
5. The plans indicate that the square footage of the freestanding sign is “TBD.”

Section 310-61B limits freestanding sign height to 8 ft. If the existing sign is retained, and only the sign message (panels) are changed, it is considered pre-existing.

6. Testimony should be provided on the Sign Requirements Table contained on Sheet 8 of the plans. Specifically, the linear frontage shall be provided to confirm that the proposed wall signs are in conformance with the ordinance requirements Section 310-65A(1). The table lists 95% as the requirement vs. the maximum permitted. Without linear frontage info, conformance is unclear.

The applicant should provide testimony that the entrance and exit guide signs meet the requirements contained in Section 310-61D (less than 3 SF and 3 ft. high).

7. Surface runoff of the parking lot drains to a single inlet at the SE corner of the property. The new curbing and island may cut-off flow. This must be topographically verified by the site engineer as to where surface runoff is going to be collected to avoid a winter icing hazard.
8. We defer the planting selection on Drawing 9 to the Environmental Commission.

The applicant is adding two Honeylocust trees, one Japanese Maple tree, and Arborvitae plantings to the site. We assume the new islands will also contain grass.

9. All sidewalks in disrepair along the building frontage must be replaced at the time the new driveway is constructed as directed by our office.

With the addition of a curbed entranceway off Hillsdale Avenue, the existing sidewalks may require reconstruction to match using barrier-free ramps.

10. The applicant must verify that the parking lot surface is safe for public/commercial use.
11. A 24 inch wide Stop Line should be added at the Washington Avenue exit to supplement the Stop Sign.

Yellow striping should supplement the “Do Not Enter” Signs in parking area between the two islands. Another island could be produced below the four west angled spaces to narrow the drive aisle and better position the westerly “Do Not Enter” sign.

12. A full width depressed sidewalk landing should be provided versus a short barrier-free ramp due to the special limitation at the two parking spaces.
13. Turing restrictions on Hillsdale Avenue will be determined by the County Planning Board.

We trust that 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: Holly Schepisi, Applicant’s Counsel  
Page Consultants, Engineer  
1120.052/Site Plans