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TO: Borough of Sayreville Planning Board

FROM: Michael P. Fowler, AICP/PP, Board Planner *MPF*

DATE: March 1, 2024

SUBJECT: South 9 Realty, LLC
Thrust Performance Parking Expansion
Preliminary and Final Site Plan
Block 439, Lots 6, 7, & 8
926 & 928 US Highway 9
Sayreville, New Jersey

We have reviewed the above referenced Preliminary and Final Site Plan prepared by Hammer Land Engineering, dated July 13, 2023, and last revised October 27, 2023, consisting of seventeen Site Plan sheets.

Based on our review of the Application and Plans, we have the following comments as provided below:

A. PROJECT

1. The subject property is located at 926 & 928 Highway 9 in the B-3 Highway Business Zone and contains an existing Auto Repair Facility and a residential dwelling. The Application for Preliminary and Final Site Plan approval is for the expansion of the parking area associated with the Auto Repair operation. Eleven off-street parking stalls currently exist, and the proposed expansion will increase that number to thirty-three. The dwelling, which is a pre-existing nonconforming use, will be demolished if this Application receives Board approval, to allow for the new parking area. The plans also depict site improvements in support of the existing Auto Repair Facility, such as parking, landscaping, lighting, and stormwater facilities.
2. A brief history of the site is detailed in the Board Engineer's March 6, 2024, review of this Application. It includes an attached 1986 Resolution of Approval for the Auto Repair Facility.

B. EXISTING CONDITIONS

1. The property fronts on Highway 9 South about 300 ft south of Bordentown Road. The subject property is .71 acres and contains an Auto Repair Facility and a Single-family Residence, on two adjacent but separate lots. The developed site contains a mix of paved and gravel surfaces, little in the way of landscape plantings and site lighting, and automobiles in various states of repair are randomly located on both lots.

As previously mentioned, the Board Engineer's Memo of March 6, 2024, contains a history of the site's prior approval.

With respect to the surroundings, the Subject Property has several abutting land uses. To the north is an office, to the south is an Automotive Service Facility/Carwash, to the west are Single-family dwellings, and to the east across Highway 9 are Gas Stations and Offices.

C. MASTER PLAN

1. The Borough's 2013 Master Plan designates the Subject Property as Highway Business, consistent with the Zoning. The Highway Business Zone is intended to allow for a full range of commercial development and redevelopment opportunities along the Route 9 corridor.

D. ZONING

1. The subject site is in the B-3 Highway Business Zone as mentioned above, in which an Automobile Repair Facility is a permitted use.
2. Regarding the Bulk Zoning Standards for the B-3 Zone, Sheet 2 of the Applicant's plan set displays the Minimum Bulk Standards in relation to existing and proposed conditions. As noted, no new bulk variances are being created by the current Application.
3. It should be noted that the existing free-standing sign is setback less than a foot from the front property line, while a minimum setback of 10 ft. is required. A waiver is required as it is likely a waiver/variance has not been granted previously.
4. The Board Engineer's Technical Review, attached to the March 6, 2024, report identifies inconsistencies between the site plan improvements and the Ordinance Design Standards to be addressed at the Hearing. Many of these inconsistencies, as described in the Review, will require waivers from the Board.

E. GENERAL COMMENTS

The Applicant should address the general operating procedures for the developed site. Such as, the days and hours of operation and the maximum number of employees onsite. In addition, testimony should be provided relative to the number of vehicles onsite at any one time, and the disposition of the vehicles, such as, short term, long term and whether any vehicles are being utilized for parts.

Traffic

1. The Applicant should explain how vehicular circulation on the site will function without conflicting movements when entering and exiting the service bays.
2. The routes that delivery trucks and tow trucks will follow to safely maneuver about the site should be presented to the Board. The Applicant should also discuss how trash and recyclable removal will occur.
3. The provision and location of EV charging stations consistent with State requirements should be addressed by the Applicant.
4. No Parking fire lane striping and labeling should be added to the plans as directed by the Borough's Bureau of Fire Prevention.

Landscaping

1. Street trees shall be required for all development applications. Trees shall be approximately fifty (50') feet apart and located between the setback line and the street right-of-way line if possible (including the side street on corner lots) and not closer than twenty-five (25') feet from any existing or proposed streetlight or street intersection.
 - a. Street trees are not indicated on the plan but should be provided along the site's Highway 9 frontage. The shade trees proposed in the buffer area could be relocated to the property's frontage.
2. The landscape design shall comply with the requirements of the Borough Ordinance at 26-96.7. The Applicant should address compliance with the Ordinance as cited in the Board Engineer's report.
3. No structure, activity, storage of materials, or parking of vehicles shall be permitted within the buffer area except where permitted by the Board. A 50 ft buffer is required along the westerly property line adjacent to the Burlew Place dwellings at the rear of the site. The current Plan depicts a 20 ft wide vegetated buffer in that area, with a trash enclosure and parking within the 50 ft buffer.
 - a. It is recommended that the plantings in the buffer area along the rear property line be reconfigured and supplemented with an additional variety of evergreen plantings. The Ordinance requires a double row of evergreens within the Buffer. The Applicant proposes a single row of Norway and Colorado Spruce.
 - b. The row of Spruce is depicted as being planted 10 ft on-center. Based on the mature size of a Spruce, the 10 ft on-center spacing may not allow adequate room for the trees to grow properly. It is recommended that the proposed row of Spruce be redesigned as a staggered row to provide a better opportunity for an established buffer.

- c. The minimum planting height of the Spruce trees should be 6 ft and not 5 to 6 ft as indicated on the Plans.
 - d. There is an 8 ft high fence along the rear of Lot 10. The Applicant should address the ownership of the fence.
4. The Applicant should address any irrigation proposed to maintain the proposed landscape/buffer plantings.
5. A trash enclosure is required to have a landscape screen on three sides. The Applicant proposes no screening for the trash enclosure.

Building and Lighting

1. All freestanding and wall mounted lighting in proximity to the residential areas should contain house-side shields. As required by Ordinance, lights shall be appropriately shielded and directed so that the lighting, to the extent possible, shall not spill over onto adjacent properties. In addition, lighting shall be reduced after operating hours by at least fifty percent (50%) throughout the site. Motion-sensor security lighting or other lighting needed for safety purposes shall be permitted to exceed this threshold.
2. All roof mounted mechanicals should be screened from view by the public.
3. Relative to sustainability and green building, the installation of roof-mounted solar panels is encouraged, but not required. The Applicant should address any plans for solar panels or any other green energy improvements both active and passive.

Miscellaneous

1. The Applicant should address whether it received approval from the Borough to utilize Lot 6 for vehicle parking and storage.
2. The Applicant should address its ownership interest, if any, in adjoining Lot 11 to the rear of the Subject Site.
3. The existing refuse area should be designed and updated in accordance with the Borough's requirements to adequately accept and store trash and recyclables. The proposed trash enclosure appears to be undersized.
4. The Applicant should address where old tires and motor oil are stored and how often they are disposed of.
5. The Applicant should commit to keeping the garage doors closed as often as possible to reduce noise from repair activities such as the use of impact wrenches.
6. The Site Plan should be reviewed and approved by the Borough's Bureau of Fire Prevention and Division of Traffic Safety.

7. As noted in the Board Engineer's review, approval of this project is subject to all applicable outside agency approvals.
8. The Applicant shall recognize that it may be subject to affordable housing fees and/or other obligations per the Borough's Affordable Housing Ordinance.
9. The Applicant should provide adequate testimony to justify any variance or waiver relief. The testimony should include any hardship created by features of the site, better planning alternatives being proposed and the benefits thereof, advancing purposes of the MLUL, any detrimental impacts on neighboring properties, and impacts on the Borough's Master Plan/Zone Plan.

We are available to answer any questions regarding this planning report.

Very Truly Yours,

Michael P. Fowler

Michael P. Fowler, AICP/PP
Board Planner