

August 13, 2024

**Via E-mail (JVite@westorange.org)**

Planning Board  
Township of West Orange  
66 Main Street  
West Orange, New Jersey 07052

Attn.: Jamilet Baquerizo Vite – Board Secretary

**RE: ENGINEERING REVIEW FOR 172-174 MAIN STREET, LLC.  
WEST ORANGE PLANNING BOARD APPLICATION No. PB 24-14  
172-174 MAIN STREET (BLOCK 89, LOT 6)  
TOWNSHIP OF WEST ORANGE, ESSEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
MATRIX No. 23-1345-001**

Ms. Vite,

As requested, Matrix New World Engineering, Land Surveying and Landscape Architecture, PC (Matrix) has reviewed the Planning Board application and supporting documentation for the above-referenced site. Matrix has prepared a technical engineering review of the proposed improvements at the subject. It shall be noted that our review of the project is limited to site / civil engineering only. Matrix defers all planning matters, including but not limited to, bulk and/or use variances, conformance with the master plan and ordinances, etc.

As provided by your office, Matrix has received and reviewed the following documents for this project:

- Township of West Orange Application form for the Planning Board or Zoning Board of Adjustment, dated July 8, 2024;
- Property buffer report (200-foot owner list) for Block 89, Lot 6, prepared by the Office of the Tax Assessor, Township of West Orange, dated July 16, 2024;
- Verification of Taxes and Sewer Charges Paid, Block 89, Lot 6, 172-174 Main Street, LLC., prepared by the Office of the Tax Collector, dated July 16, 2024;
- Signed but unsealed set of architectural plans, consisting of seventeen (17) drawings, entitled "Change of Use – Add A Level, 172-174 Main Street, West Orange, NJ 07052, Block 89, Lot 6, Essex County," prepared by Jason Peist, A.I.A., LLC., dated April 10, 2024; and
- Signed but unsealed property survey drawing, entitled "172-174 Main Street, Survey of Land, situate Town of West Orange, Essex County, NJ," prepared by Kenneth R. Carlisle, P.L.S. of N.E. Breid & Company, Inc., dated March 13, 1989.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

Matrix understands that the Owner and Applicant for this application is 172-174 Main Street, LLC., mailing address: c/o Cox RE Holdings, 105 Main Street, Unit 1B, West Orange, New Jersey. As per the Township's Zoning Map (last revised 2020), the subject parcel (Block 89, Lot 6) is located in the 'B-1' (Retail Business) zone along Main Street, across the street from the Downtown Redevelopment Area. The subject property is approximately 0.35 acres and is presently developed with a two-story masonry building and a steeply-sloped asphalt parking lot, with ingress and egress onto Main Street. Matrix further understands that the Applicant intends to construct a one-floor addition atop the existing two-story office building. The existing two-story office building will be converted into a mixed use

building, with a medical office and event space on the ground floor; two 2-bedroom apartments and an efficiency apartment unit on the second floor, and two 1-bedroom apartments and two efficiency apartments on the third floor. Below is a summary of the proposed building fit-out:

The Applicant does not appear to propose any site or ground disturbance for this work.

## **1. General**

- 1.1. The survey provided on the architect's site plan represents existing conditions as of March 13, 1989. A number of existing features on the site are not depicted on the survey, including but not limited to, curblines of Main Street, driveway apron, street trees, curbing within the site, building cellar door, drainage structures and piping, roof drainage discharges, 3- to 4-foot-tall brick retaining wall and railing, existing overhead and/or underground utility services (sanitary, water, electric, gas, telecom, etc.), utility pole and wires which may or may not service other properties, etc. An updated survey should be provided and used as the base map for the site plan. Additionally, it is difficult to determine what is existing and what is proposed, as all graphics and text are black. The site plan shall be revised to depict existing conditions in gray and proposed improvements in black to clearly differentiate them.

## **2. Demolition**

- 2.1. The Applicant shall provide testimony as to the intention to remove, demolish, or otherwise modify any existing exterior site elements for the proposed development.

## **3. Site Plan**

- 3.1. The Applicant shall provide testimony regarding the existing site conditions, proposed improvements, and conformance with applicable ordinances and regulations.
- 3.2. The application states the entire first floor will be used for office space while the architect's plan shows that 1,388 SF will be used for event space. The Applicant shall clarify the specific use of the space and provide testimony.
- 3.3. Parking space No. 26 conflicts with the existing chain-link fence and associated sliding gate parallel to Main Street and shall be revised.
- 3.4. The Applicant shall provide testimony regarding the parking lot striping and whether such will be repainted.
- 3.5. The Applicant notes two proposed ADA-accessible parking spaces in the parking lot, and depicts a number of wheelchair-related ADA details on Drawing A-001 (Accessibility Requirements). However, no apparent means of wheelchair (or other ADA) access will be provided from either the ADA parking spaces or right-of-way. The Applicant shall provide testimony regarding the same, as well as the project's overall conformance with ADA regulations for interior and exterior site work. Given that there will be a medical office on the first floor, the Applicant should consider shifting parking down by one stall and integrating a linear ramp (parallel to the building façade) that could provide wheelchair access to the building.
- 3.6. There is inadequate maneuvering space for stalls 1 and 14 as multiple m. Additionally, the parking lot provides no dedicated space for vehicles to easily turnaround, which would cause residents and visitors entering a full lot to potentially back-out onto Main Street to find parking elsewhere. The Applicant should consider adding a new curb line five feet in front of the brick wall, with a five foot bump-out to provide room for both stalls 1 and 14, and
- 3.7. The site plan shall be revised to include an eight (8) foot wide striped area for ADA van accessibility, as well as adding MUTCD-compliant signage for the two ADA parking stalls. Details for the same shall be provided.
- 3.8. The Applicant shall confirm that the four (4) existing roof-mounted HVAC units will be raised up on top of the new third floor roof and not relocated at-grade, as well as any other similar equipment.

- 3.9. The proposed parking spaces appear to be less than five (5) feet from the Main Street right-of-way line. As per Ordinance §25-8.1 (Setbacks of Accessory Uses), *"In any district no accessory structure, building, storage area, off-street parking area or truck loading space shall be permitted within five feet of a property line."* Accordingly, the plan shall be revised to demonstrate compliance therewith, or request a variance for the same. Matrix defers to the Board Planner for further planning review.
- 3.10. Matrix has prepared the parking summary below in accordance with Ordinance §25-12.2 (Minimum Required Number of Parking Spaces):

Fl.	Exist. Use	Proposed Use	Required Parking Spaces	Provided
1 <sup>st</sup>	Office: 2,824 SF (All tenants)	Tenant 1: 1,436 SF (Medical Office) Tenant 2: 1,388 SF (Event Space) (1,436 SF) + (1,388 SF) = 2,824 SF (Total)	Medical Office: 1,436 SF (1 space per 250 SF GFA): (1,436) / (250) = 5.7 ≈ <b>6 spaces req'd</b> <sup>(1)</sup> Event Space (Catering Facility): 1,388 SF (1 space per 45 SF of patron area): (1,100 SF) / (45) = 24.4 ≈ <b>24 spaces</b>	<b>26 parking spaces provided (incl. 2 ADA)</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Office: 2,824 SF (Assumed)	(2) 2-BR Apt. Units (1) Efficiency Apt. Unit <sup>(2)</sup>	(2 units) * (2 spaces/unit) = 4.0 spcs <u>(1 unit) * (1.8 spaces/unit) = 1.8 spcs</u> (4 + 1.8) = 5.8 ≈ <b>6 spaces required</b>	
3 <sup>rd</sup>	N/A	(2) 1-BR Apt. Units (2) Efficiency Apt. Units <sup>(2)</sup>	(2 units) * (1.8 spcs/unit) = 3.6 spcs <u>(2 units) * (1.8 spcs/unit) = 3.6 spcs</u> (3.6 + 3.6) = 7.2 ≈ <b>7 spaces required</b> <b>43 TOTAL SPACES REQUIRED</b>	
1. The parking requirement for the first floor uses provided by the Applicant does not agree with the requirements in §25-12.2.				
2. Matrix has assumed that an efficiency unit is comparable to a one-bedroom apartment unit for parking demand purposes.				

The Applicant shall provide testimony as to the uses of the ground (first) floor tenant spaces as they pertain to parking calculation requirements. A bulk parking variance may be required.

- 3.11. The Applicant shall provide testimony regarding the intention or need to assign parking spaces to tenants or units, rather than compete with patrons of the first floor tenants. The Applicant shall provide testimony regarding the interaction between the residential and nonresidential uses, related to hours of operation, parking, and building access.
- 3.12. The Applicant shall provide testimony regarding the intention to install any ground signage, including but not limited to, monument signage, exterior building signage, sign boards, etc.
- 3.13. The existing cellar door (missing from the survey) conflicts with parking stall No. 1. The Applicant shall confirm their intention regarding the cellar door and how such will impact the proposed site redevelopment.
- 3.14. The asphalt pavement in the parking lot is in various states of disrepair, including but not limited to, potholes, pavement spalling, alligator cracking, vegetation sprouting through the cracks and joints, etc. The plan shall be revised to, at a minimum, mill and pave the entire lot, and provide full-depth asphalt pavement repair where needed.
- 3.15. The existing railroad tie wall is severely deteriorated and potentially unstable. The Applicant shall demolish and reconstruct the failed portion(s) of the wall. The plan shall be revised to depict the same, and to include a detail therefor.
- 3.16. The driveway apron and sidewalk along Main Street are both deteriorated and are not constructed in accordance with municipal standards. The curbing along virtually the entire frontage of the property is depressed (flush), even beyond the driveway apron. The Applicant shall reconstruct the curb, sidewalk, and driveway apron, and the same shall be depicted on a revised plan.

- 3.17. The existing brick wall and concrete stairs on either side of the site have sections of missing brick and concrete, along with significantly cracked and spalled pieces. The Applicant shall perform the necessary masonry repairs to the same prior to occupying the building.
- 3.18. The east, north, and west property lines appear to have some fencing beneath the overgrown vegetation. The Applicant shall confirm the nature and condition of the existing fence, and indicate whether the same is to be repaired, removed, or replaced, and conformance with the applicable fencing standards.

#### **4. Grading & Drainage**

- 4.1. No topographic survey was provided with this application. The survey that was provided depicts existing conditions as of March 13, 1989. Accordingly, Matrix visited the site to understand the topography and how it relates to the proposed development. It shall be noted that the existing slopes within the parking lot are excessive (likely greater than 10% or 10H:1V). There are no striped ADA parking stalls in the existing site. The Applicant should investigate the possibility of flattening the ADA spaces as practical.
- 4.2. The topographic survey depicts a staircase on both sides of the building, from the first floor to the second floor. The architectural plans indicate that the existing doors atop these staircases will be filled in as a window. The Applicant shall provide testimony regarding the need for any external exits, steps, or fire escapes, as well as the intention with the now unnecessary staircases.
- 4.3. As noted above, there are many areas of the pavement with vegetation growing through the cracks. This can often be indicative of the presence of continuous groundwater. Before completion of milling and paving, the Applicant should investigate the need for pavement underdrains or other similar features to preserve the subgrade and pavement above.

#### **5. Soil Erosion & Sediment Control**

- 5.1. The Applicant has provided details for a wheel cleaning blanket and filter fabric fencing, but no soil disturbances are depicted on the plans. The Applicant shall confirm that there are no soil disturbances for the proposed addition.
- 5.2. There are existing inlets both on the site and on Main Street that require inlet protection, as well as the trench drain across the driveway on-site.

#### **6. Site Lighting**

- 6.1. The Applicant shall provide testimony regarding the existing site's compliance with Township Ordinance §25-14, related to lighting levels. Considering the site is adding the residential use, the Applicant shall review the need for replacement or supplemental lighting to meet the minimum lighting level criteria in §25-14.3 while minimizing light spillover onto adjacent properties. Should lighting improvements be required, the Applicant shall provide a lighting plan to depict the characteristics of the proposed lighting, as well as a photometric analysis to demonstrate compliance with minimum illumination requirements. Additionally, the plan shall be revised to depict the four existing light poles on-site.

#### **7. Landscaping**

- 7.1. The Applicant shall provide testimony regarding existing vegetation, and any related removals, replacements, or new planting areas (as none are currently shown). Portions of the site are excessively overgrown; the Applicant shall also confirm the presence of required buffers as the property abuts two other residential zones.

#### **8. Utilities**

- 8.1. The Applicant shall confirm if new utility service lines, laterals, connections, or associated appurtenances are needed for the proposed improvements. The Applicant shall clean and televise the existing sanitary lateral and any roof drainage laterals intended to be reused prior to construction.

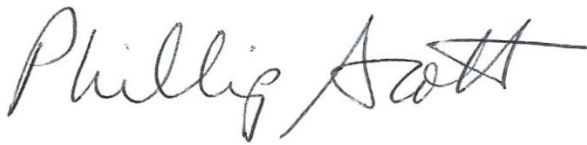
8.2. The Applicant shall provide testimony regarding the need for approval from the receiving sewerage authority or plant for the additional sanitary flow to be generated by the new addition and change of use.

8.3. The Applicant shall provide testimony regarding the need to construct any above- or below-grade improvements for utility services.

We thank you for the opportunity to be of service to the Township of West Orange Planning Board. Please feel free to contact me directly with any questions or comments regarding the scope or fees as indicated at (973) 295-3279 or via e-mail at pscott@mnwe.com.

Sincerely,

**MATRIX NEW WORLD ENGINEERING**

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Phillip Scott". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end.

Phillip Scott, P.E., C.M.E.  
Director of Urban Engineering and Development

EJ:PS  
Enclosures

Cc: Dennis Petrocelli, PG – Vice President, Matrix  
Michael Soltys, PE – Vice President, Matrix

F:\2023\23-1345 West Orange 2024 Municipal Engineering Services\001 - PB-24-14, 172-174 Main Street LLC\Correspondences\23-1345-001 - PB24-14 - 172-174 Main St. - Engineering Review.docx