



MIDDLETOWN
Rhode Island

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

TOWN OF MIDDLETOWN

350 East Main Road, Middletown, RI 02842
(401) 849-4027 | MiddletownRI.com

Notice of Planning Board Recommendation

To: James Miller, Chairman
Middletown Zoning Board of Review

From: Paul A. Croce, Chairman
Middletown Planning Board

Date: March 10, 2023

Re: Application of Reed Development Corp. for Development Plan Review for construction of a 4-story, 17,000 sq. ft. footprint self-storage facility, with associated parking, office space, landscaping, stormwater management, and utilities, and including requests for waivers from certain design requirements of Section 521 of the Middletown Rules and Regulations Regarding the Subdivision and Development of Land. Property located on Valley Road approximately 0.2 miles south of the intersection with East Main Rd., Assessor's Plat 107SE, Lot 403.

During its meeting of March 8, 2023, the Planning Board considered the above referenced application. At the conclusion of the public hearing, the Board voted 7-0-0 to forward a positive recommendation on the application, including the requested waivers, to the Zoning Board of Review. The plans subject to this review and recommendation include the following:

- Site plans prepared by Land Development Engineering & Consulting, LLC, dated December 30, 2022.
- Building elevations by: Cordtsen Design Architecture, dated 12/14/2022;
- Landscaping plan by Verde Design & Horticulture, dated 1/09/2023.

The positive recommendation is subject to the following recommended conditions of approval:

1. Prior to permitting, the plans shall be revised to indicate placement of a sign at the easterly entrance to the site to direct large trucks to use the westerly entrance to access the property.
2. Prior to permitting, the applicant shall address all comments contained in the review memo from Crossman Engineering dated January 23, 2023 (attached), subject to the satisfaction of the Town Engineer, with the exception of items 7, 8, and 14.
3. The Town Engineer will consult with Crossman Engineering regarding comments 7, 8, and 14 contained in the review memo from Crossman Engineering dated January 23, 2023. Prior to permitting, the applicant will address those comments as determined necessary by the Town Engineer.
4. Prior to permitting, the applicant shall revise the landscape plan as necessary to address comments contained in both the February 27, 2023 correspondence and the February 28, 2023 correspondence from the Middletown Tree Commission (attached), including the replacement of proposed arborvitae vegetative screening with another species less susceptible to deer damage.

Waivers from the commercial development design standards of Section 521 of the *Middletown Rules and Regulations Regarding the Subdivision and Development of Land* that the Planning Board recommends be granted are as follows:

1. **Section 521.1.A** - Buildings should be located so as to create a safe, pleasant walking environment and efficient pedestrian circulation pattern. Building placement, orientation and massing should be planned to promote more active pedestrian-scaled commercial design, with ample opportunities for walking and bicycling, as well as private motor vehicles and to promote the use of public transportation; and **Section 521.1.B.3** - Circulation shall be designed to provide safe and efficient access for pedestrians, automobiles, and emergency vehicles into and throughout the site, including designated pedestrian walkways and crosswalks. Pedestrian access to the site from the public way and neighboring properties shall be provided. **Pedestrian access from the public right-of-way to interior of site, including sidewalks and crosswalks, is not provided.**
2. **Section 521.2.C** – Building exteriors and roofs shall be constructed of, or resemble, traditional materials such as wooden clapboards, shingles, patterned shingles, brick, or stone. **Building exteriors include fiber cement paneling and other synthetic materials.**
3. **Section 521.3.D.3** – A landscaped buffer at least 10' wide and a minimum 5' planting strip is provided between buildings and parking lots/driveways. **Buffer at the northerly, westerly, and southerly building elevations do not meet 10' wide landscaped buffer requirement. A 5' wide buffer is provided at these locations.**

Findings made:

1. The granting of approval will not result in conditions inimical to the public health, safety and welfare;
2. The granting of such approval will not substantially or permanently injure the appropriate use of the property in the surrounding area or zoning district;
3. The plans for such project comply with all the requirements of this chapter and the Regulations, or that necessary waivers from the requirements of the Regulations have been granted;
4. The plans for such project are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan; and
5. Any conditions or restrictions that are necessary to ensure that these guidelines have been met have been incorporated into the written approval or recommendation.



Paul A. Croce, Chairman
Middletown Planning Board

cc. Applicant
Town Clerk
Building/Zoning Official

From: [Karen Day](#)
To: [Ronald Wolanski](#); [Paul Croce](#)
Cc: [Karen Day](#); [Bill Di Marco](#); [Bob Johnson](#); [Alan Kirby](#); [Karen Barbera](#); [BJ Northup-Owen](#); [Chuck DiTucci](#)
Subject: Review of Landscape Plans for Amended Washville Carwash (#3), Jonnycake Hill Road commercial building, Self-storage building Valley Road
Date: Monday, February 27, 2023 12:10:39 PM

Good morning gentlemen,

The Tree Commission met on February 23rd and reviewed the 3 landscape plans presented.

1. A third revised plan for the Washville Carwash was reviewed.. We had previously reviewed plans developed on 3/22/22, 11/21/22, and now 2/15/22. We have 2 concerns.

- In the 2 previous plans presented, there are 4 acer rubrums with additional understory plantings along the back property line. We supported this plan. The most recent plans presented (2/15/23) now show these trees and understory plantings removed and replaced with arborvitae. We have serious concerns about the potential for deer damage at that location and also with the creation of a monoculture which is not in line with best practice.
- After our review of the 11/21/22 plans we mentioned we would like to see a more staggered pattern of planting to create a more natural aesthetic. We received an email from the developer saying this would be done. The new staggered planting pattern is not reflected in the 2/15/23 plans.

We are seeking clarification as to why the acer rubrums and other plantings were removed and replaced with arborvitae and if the plantings will be staggered.

2. A plan for an additional building at 72 Jonnycake Hill Road was reviewed. As the existing vegetation is remaining and arborvitae plantings are to be added, we have no concerns except for the use of "Little bunny" fountain grass in a commercial setting. The landscapers on our Commission feel it is not long lived and may struggle and suggest perhaps sesleria autumnalis as a possible alternative.

3. A plan for the self-storage development on Valley Road was reviewed. Our chief concern is the use of a large number of arborvitae along the property line with the Police Station. This area is a common area for deer and these plantings are prone to deer damage. Also, the creation of a monoculture is a concern. We repeat our suggestion on the use of 'Little bunny' fountain grass in a commercial area.

Thank you for all you do.

Karen

From: [Karen Day](#)
To: [Alan Kirby](#); [Paul A Croce](#)
Cc: [Ronald Wolanski](#); [Bill Di Marco](#); [Bob Johnson](#); [Karen Barbera](#); [BJ Cisco Owen](#); [Chuck DiTucci](#)
Subject: Re: Review of Landscape Plans for Amended Washville Carwash (#3), Jonnycake Hill Road commercial building, Self-storage building Valley Road
Date: Tuesday, February 28, 2023 11:19:52 PM

Hi Paul,

What Alan said! . We are afraid of arborvitae in an area with deer and that area has a significant deer population. The 'Little bunny' fountain grass is a concern because they are short lived and difficult in a commercial area where they may not get close attention.

Sorry about the confusion! Hope this is clearer.

Karen

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

On Tuesday, February 28, 2023, 8:38 PM, Alan Kirby <kirbhort@aol.com> wrote:

An upright juniper like a chinensis or scopulorum variety would be more deer resistant than arborvitae.
The comment on the "Little Bunny" meant to replace it with Sesleria autumnalis.

Alan

On Tuesday, February 28, 2023 at 05:57:49 PM EST, Paul A Croce <fijimail@cox.net> wrote:

Thank you, Karen, for these comments on your reviews. With respect to the comments on the Valley Road self-storage facility, did you mean that the "Little Bunny" fountain grass should be considered instead of the arborvitae, or in addition to the arborvitae? Did you make suggestions to the project team on how to eliminate the monoculture?

Paul

On Feb 27, 2023, at 12:10 PM, Karen Day <ride_1189@yahoo.com> wrote:

Good morning gentlemen,

The Tree Commission met on February 23rd and reviewed the 3 landscape plans presented.

1. A third revised plan for the Washville Carwash was reviewed.. We had previously reviewed plans developed on 3/22/22, 11/21/22, and now 2/15/22.



CROSSMAN ENGINEERING

Consulting Engineers & Surveyors

Civil • Transportation • Environmental • Site Planning • Surveying • Permitting

REVIEW MEMORANDUM

To: Ronald M. Wolanski, AICP and Warren Hall, PE, PLS
Director of Planning & Town Engineer
Economic Development

From: Steven Cabral
Crossman Engineering

Date: January 23, 2023

Re: Valley Road -Self Storage
Plat 107SE, Lot 403
Middletown, RI

Upon review of the Site Plans and Stormwater Management Report for the proposed Self Storage Facility, we offer the following comments.

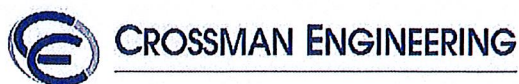
1. Access:

- a. The proximity of the access drive to the intersection of O'Neil Road and Valley Road creates traffic concerns. For example, if a vehicle turns into O'Neil from Valley Road and stops to turn into the site, traffic would be prevented from entering O'Neil.
- b. It would also be difficult for larger vehicles to exit this drive and take a right onto Valley without encroaching into an opposing lane.
- c. The design guidelines mention that the width of curb cuts should be minimized, therefore the need for a 36-ft wide driveway should be addressed.

- 2. Drainage-Existing Conditions:** The drainage analysis concludes that there is no increase in flow onto abutting property. The basis for the "existing conditions" analysis is grass but as recently as Spring 2022, the land was thickly vegetated. If the undeveloped land condition was used, the CN for a thick brush would reduce the CN used of 74 to 65 and the time of concentration would increase. The end result would be a reduction in allowable flow.



Spring 2022



January 23, 2023
Self-Storage Facility
Middletown, RI
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RECORDED: Mar 13, 2023 12:59P
DOC #: 00000320
RECEIPT #: 66242
WENDY J. W. MARSHALL, TOWN Clerk
TOWN of MIDDLETOWN, RI

3. **Soil Evaluations:** A seasonal high-water table (SHWT) of approx. 8 ft was used for designing the infiltration systems and appear to be based upon observed groundwater levels during the summer of 2022. The provided Soil Evaluations did not mention the A, B or C horizons, Redox or other indicators of Seasonal highwater table. Also, RIDEM GIS data suggests a SHWT of less than 2 ft, therefore clarification of how the SHWT estimate was made is recommended. Also, typically the A and B horizons need to be removed in order to obtain the desired infiltration.
4. **Infiltration Basin 1:** The freeboard of the basin appears to be less than 1-inch for the 100-year storm and the width of the basin berm was not evident. A 1-ft freeboard is recommended. Also, an impervious core is recommended to prevent seepage through the earth embankment and a solid barrier within the stone overflow weir is recommended to prevent seepage through the stone prior to water levels reaching the design weir elevation.
5. **Future Discharge:** Currently, runoff sheet flows towards abutting land. In the future, a point discharge will be evident. Also, the 2 swales on the north and south side of the lot can create noticeable direct discharge onto the abutter. Typically, the existing sheet flow pattern is recommended to avoid impacting the abutter.
6. **Drainage Plan:** For drainage structures with multiple pipes exiting, we recommend that the pipe sizes be labeled on the Plan.
7. **Infiltration System:**
 - a. Clean-outs to grade are recommended for each row.
 - b. The system detail on Sheet 9 indicates that the fill material below the infiltration system shall be in-situ material mixed with sand. The existing soils with silt should not be used.
 - c. The 15 inch outlet pipe in the model is a 13-ft, 15-inch pipe with invert in of 44.25. This should be clearly identified on the Plan.
8. **DMH-4 & DMH-8:** These MHs provide the flow distribution into the infiltration system. It appears that the design models 8, 12-inch pipes as the primary outflow but there are 9 rows of chambers. The 2-12-inch outlets divide flow into 4 rows and 5 rows.
9. **Retaining Wall:** Due to the proximity of the infiltration system to the proposed wall, the wall will need to be designed with no weep holes and designed to accommodate hydrostatic pressure.
10. **Grassed Swales:** Jute mesh or other fabric is recommended to prevent erosion in the grass channels prior to grass growth.
11. **Snow Storage:** Areas for snow storage should be noted.
12. **Paved Area on west side:** Will the west side of the site in the expanded paved area be used for outside storage? If so, what types of materials?
13. **Unloading:** 24-ft drive aisles are provided in the front and rear of the building. As a self-storage facility, it was not evident if loading would occur in those aisles. The concern would be blocking a fire lane which is typically 20 ft min.
14. **Maintenance:** The long-term O&M of the drainage system was not provided.