



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 GG Properties, LLC for Development Plan Review for construction of a 15,000 sq. ft. wholesale commercial use building, with associated parking, office space, landscaping, stormwater management, utilities, and associated site work, 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 72 Johnnycake Hill Road, Assessor's Plat 114, Lot 601.

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 January 3, 2023.
- Building elevations by: Herk Works Architecture, dated 3/07/2023;
- Landscaping plan by Verde Design & Horticulture, dated 2/08/2023.

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

1. Prior to permitting, the utility plan shall be revised to show existing and proposed sewer service to the property, including a new manhole on the property to provide separate services to the two buildings, subject to the approval of the DPW director.
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 item 9.
3. The Town Engineer will consult with Crossman Engineering regarding comment 9 contained in the review memo from Crossman Engineering dated January 23, 2023. Prior to permitting, the applicant will address comments regarding the O&M plan 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).
5. The building will be constructed using exterior building and roofing materials as present to the Planning Board on building elevations dated 3/07/2023.

6. Prior to permitting the north facade building elevation plan shall be revised to provide at least 20% of the façade area made-up of windows.

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.A.2** – Street side façade does not consist of an unarticulated blank wall, does not consist of an unbroken series of garage doors, and no unbroken plane of a wall exceeds forty feet without a break of at least 48” in plane. **Proposed design of the street facing façade exceeds forty feet without a break in the plane.**
3. **Section 521.2.B.1** – Windows occupy between 20% and 60% of façade visible from the public way. **No windows are on the street-facing façade.**
4. **Section 521.2.B.2** – Where consistent with overall building design, windows are of true or simulated divided-light design (double-hung windows preferred). **Proposed design does not comply.**
5. **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 use of synthetic materials, including fiber cement board and batten siding.**
6. **Section 521.3.D.1** – Landscaped buffer at least 10’ is provided along all property lines. **Not provided for the westerly property line where there is existing parking. This is an existing situation.**
7. **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. **Landscaped buffer provided at southerly and westerly elevation does not meet 10’ wide minimum. 5’ planting strip is not fully provided at the westerly elevation.**
8. **Section 521.3.F.1** – Deciduous street trees. **Not provided. This is an existing situation. Development activity is proposed to the rear of the existing building.**
9. **Section 521.3.F.2** – Parking lot trees. **Not provided. This is an existing situation.**

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 <fjijmail@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: Commercial Site Redevelopment
Plat 114, Lot 601
72 Johnnycake Hill Road
Middletown, RI

RECORDED: Mar 13, 2023 12:58P
DOC #: 00000319
RECEIPT #: 66242
WENDY J. W. MARSHALL, TOWN Clerk
TOWN of MIDDLETOWN, RI

Upon review of the Site Plans and Stormwater Management Report for the proposed commercial redevelopment, we offer the following comments.

- 1. Redevelopment:** The site plans indicate that the existing parking lot grades will be adjusted with a pavement overlay only. We concur that the overlay of the existing pavement would not be classified as "redevelopment" and would not require stormwater improvements, according to the RI Stormwater Manual. The limits of the overlay versus full pavement installation need to be identified on the plan.
- 2. Soil Evaluations:** A seasonal highwater table (SHWT) of approx. 10 ft was used for designing the infiltration systems and appear to be based upon observed groundwater levels. The provided Soil Evaluations did not mention that A, B or C horizons, Redox or indicators of Seasonal highwater table. Also, RIDEM GIS data suggests a SHWT in the area of approx. 2 ft, therefore clarification of how the SHWT estimate was made is recommended. Also, typically the A and B horizons would need to be removed to obtain the desired infiltration.
- 3. Existing Conditions:** The existing building's rooftop appeared to be excluded from the watershed analysis. A few questions: Where is Discharge point of the existing roof drain, where does the 4-inch drain in rear of the parcel originate and where does the existing CB in rear discharge?
- 4. Depression at CB-1:** The outlet for the proposed depression used in the calculations is a 12-inch orifice discharging into a 4-inch drain. A trash rack or screen is recommended to minimize clogging of the 4-inch pipe. Also, in the calculations there is a 10-ft wide overflow at elevation 80.1. This weir should be defined on the plan.
- 5. UIC 1:** The system width shown on the Plan View Detail (sheet 9) indicates 34.75-ft, as opposed to the design width of 44.25-ft in the calculations. Also, the manifold pipe sizes should be identified.
- 6. UIC 2:** The system width shown on the Plan View Detail (sheet 9) indicates 34.75-ft, as opposed to the design width of 30-ft in the calculations. Also, the manifold pipe sizes should be identified.
- 7. Clean-outs:** Observation ports/cleanouts are recommended at ends of all UIC rows.
- 8. Point discharge:** Both UICs have overflows pipes that will discharge towards the abutter. Can the overflow outlets be positioned to drain into the parking area without increasing flow rates?
- 9. Maintenance:** The long-term O&M for the UICs and drainage system was not provided.

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