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February 24, 2023  
Via UPS Delivery

Borrus, Goldin, Foley, Vignuolo, Hymman and Stahl, PC  
2875 US Route One  
North Brunswick, NJ 08902

Attn: Peter Lanfrit

**RE: B9 Schoolhouse Owner, LLC  
Proposed Warehouses  
96 - 104 Schoolhouse Road  
Block 514, Lots 1-3 & 60  
Township of Franklin  
Somerset County, New Jersey  
DEC # 3566-99-005  
Twp. Application # PLN-22-00011**

Dear Mr. Lanfrit,

Enclosed please find the following documents for your resubmission to the Planning Board for Site Plan Approval for the above referenced project:

- One (1) USB containing the submission documents;
- Four (4) copies of the Franklin Township Water Department Will Serve Letter dated July 26, 2021;
- Four (4) signed and sealed copies of the Environmental Impact Study, prepared by our office, dated April 2022, last revised February 2023;
- Four (4) signed and sealed copies of the Stormwater Management Measures Maintenance Plan & Field Manuals, prepared by our office, dated February 15, 2023;
- Four (4) signed and sealed copies of the Stormwater Report, prepared by our office, dated April 2022, last revised February 2023;
- Four (4) signed and sealed copies of the Traffic Impact Study, prepared by Dynamic Traffic, dated April 21, 2022, last revised February 24, 2023;
- Twenty-five (25) copies of the Landscape Plans (excluding stormwater basin areas), prepared by Landscape Architect Bryan Hanes, dated November 22, 2022;

- Twenty-five (25) signed and sealed copies of the Architectural Plan drawings, prepared by NORR, dated February 21, 2023;
- Twenty-five (25) signed and sealed copies of the Preliminary and Final Site Plan drawings, prepared by our office, dated April 1, 2022, last revised February 21, 2023 (Rev 6); and
- Twenty-five (25) copies of the Landscape Plans (stormwater basin areas only), prepared by Dynamic Engineering, dated April 1, 2022, last revised February 21, 2023 (Rev 6).

The enclosed plans have been revised to satisfy the project review comments identified in the following documents:

- Franklin Township Environmental Commission Memo, prepared by Tara Kenyon, AICP, PP, Sustainability Coordinator, dated December 22, 2022;
- Franklin Township Planning and Zoning Memorandum, prepared by Mark Healey, PP/AICP, Director of Planning/Senior Zoning Officer, dated December 22, 2022; and
- CME Associates Review Letter, prepared by Robert J. Russo, PE, PP, CME, Township Engineer, dated December 21, 2022.

In order to facilitate the review of the revised drawings and reports, we have provided the following itemized response of the outstanding comments:

**Franklin Township Environmental Commission Memo, prepared by Tara Kenyon, AICP, PP, dated December 22, 2022;**

- A substantial effort has been made by the applicant to protect the vista on Mettlers Lane, as required by the Scenic Corridor Overlay (§112-201). Specifically, the EC's recommendation in its August 30, 2022, report for a vegetative berm along Mettlers Road has been included in the revised plan. This effort is much appreciated.

*The Site Plans have been revised to provide additional buffering in accordance with the scenic corridor along both frontages.*

- Five parking spaces in the northwestern corner of the passenger vehicle parking lot to the west of the larger warehouse are within the boundaries of the Scenic Corridor Overlay. These five parking spaces should be removed as to not encroach into the setbacks established by this municipal code.

*The Site Plans have been revised to remove parking spaces from the scenic corridor along both frontages.*

- Any undeveloped portions of the site should remain in a vegetative state. This will provide some stormwater runoff retention onsite, while providing important ecological services for the area. If the applicant plans to plant these portions of the site, the EC recommends the planting of native grasses, which provide critical habitat for birds and pollinator species.

***Undeveloped portions of the subject site will remain in a vegetative state. The Landscaping Plans prepared by the Landscape Architect have been revised to provide a significantly enhanced landscape buffer and berm along Mettlers Lane and Schoolhouse Road.***

- The revised plans propose a constructed wetland, and a bioretention basin, both planted with red maple trees as well as various shrubs. The EC noticed that some of the proposed plants for these areas are shown on the revised plans (i.e., “HNMB”, “TCC”, “PYCR”), but not listed in the list of plantings. The EC requests that these plant species be properly listed so they can be adequately reviewed. Additionally, some of the plants listed as “evergreen shrubs” are not evergreen shrubs.
  - Specifically, Cardinal Flowers and Marsh Marigolds are not evergreen shrubs and should be replaced with appropriate shrubbery (i.e., Buttonwood).

***The Landscape Plans prepared by Dynamic have been revised accordingly.***

- Duckweed is a floating plant that typically grows in quiet waters, not an ornamental grass, as described by the applicant. As such, Duckweed does not need to be planted.

***The duckweed is proposed within the permanent pool of the constructed wetland basin.***

- If Cardinal Flowers and Marsh Marigolds are to be planted, they should only be properly labeled as “Flowering Perennial Herbaceous Plants”. The EC recommends that these items be addressed in the next revision of plans.

***The Landscape Plans prepared by Dynamic have been revised accordingly.***

- Maintenance of the constructed wetlands and the bioretention basin are a concern. These types of green infrastructure require monitoring to ensure efficacy and maintenance. The EC recommends that the applicant provide information about proposed maintenance and repair, as well as who the responsible party will be (the owner or the lease).

***An Operation and Maintenance Manual has been provided indicating the maintenance requirements for the proposed systems.***

- As stated in the EC’s original memo for this project, a minimum 40% of the roof area on Proposed Warehouse Building A (approximately 68,550 square feet) is required to be “solar ready” (Solar Ready Warehouses Law - (NJS 52:27D-123.19). The EC further recommends that these solar panels be installed so that renewable energy generation becomes available upon completion of construction and initial occupancy.

***Testimony will be provided.***

- EV Charging Stations are shown on the plans in the parking area for cars near the larger building. The EC recommends that EV Charging Stations also be added to the parking area for cars near the smaller building.

***EV charging spaces have been provided for both buildings.***

- The EC recommends that the site be prepared for future electrified trucks and tractor trailers by installing 200 kilowatt charging capacity. This will allow the warehouse to meet the needs of electrified trucks, thereby attracting occupants who choose to incorporate sustainable practices into their operations.

*Testimony will be provided.*

- The nearby property owners have expressed extreme concern over noise from the proposed warehouse due to the constant movement of trucks and associated equipment. The EC recommends the following actions to mitigate nuisances from noise:
  - *Implementing “White Noise” Technology (BBC-TEK Technology):* this technology uses a wide range of white noise frequencies, which allows the listener to instantly where and what direction the sound is coming from. The noise is only heard in the “danger zone” (hazard areas for trucks, tractor trailers, and associated equipment/machinery), and dissipates quickly. More information on this technology can be found at: <https://brigade-electronics.com/en-us/products/backup-and-warning-alarms/>

*Testimony will be provided.*

- *Limiting hours to 6:00am to 10:00pm* for entrance to and exit of the site by trucks, tractor-trailers, and associated equipment.

*Testimony will be provided.*

- Anti-idling signage is proposed at every seventh loading dock on the site. The EC recommends that anti-idling signage be placed at every fourth loading dock, as well as at the entrance and exit of the site, and at the main entrances of the office in the warehouse.

*Additional No Idling signage has been provided within the loading dock areas.*

- Bike storage racks have been shown on the revised plans, in accordance with the recommendation in the EC’s memo of August 30, 2022. The EC reiterates its recommendation of the installation of simple bicycle repair stations at various locations across the site. Having these amenities will encourage employees and customers to use bicycles as an alternative means of transportation.

*Testimony will be provided.*

**Franklin Township Planning and Zoning Memorandum, prepared by Mark Healey, PP/AICP, Director of Planning/Senior Zoning Officer, December 22, 2022;**

**REVIEW COMMENTS**

1. *Scenic Corridor Ordinance.* Metters Road is a Township-designated scenic corridor thus Section 112-201, Scenic Corridor District Overlay, applies. The requirements of the Scenic Corridor Ordinance apply to the entirety of the site as the entirety of the site is located within 1000-feet of the center line of Metters Road.

The Scenic Corridor Ordinance<sup>7</sup> includes a “heightened” front setback requirement and a number of design standards intended to preserve the aesthetic character of the corridor.

a) *Setbacks, Preservation and Building Location.* Here I address three related sections of the Scenic Corridor Ordinance;

- §112-201.F(2)(a) increases the front yard setback from 50 feet to 100 feet and prohibits the placement of buildings and structures within the 100-foot<sup>8</sup> setback area.

*The Site Plans have been revised to remove buildings and structures within the scenic corridor.*

- §112-201.G(1)(a), Preservation, encourages the preservation and protection of the aesthetic character of natural features including individual trees, stands of trees and hedgerows.

*The Site Plans have been revised to maintain the existing trees/shrubs along the street frontages to the great extent practicable.*

- §112-201.G(1)(b), Building location, encourages the preservation of existing vegetation to screen new buildings from view.

*The Site Plans have been revised to remove buildings and structures within the scenic corridor. Substantial plantings and berming have been provided along the scenic corridor.*

In my opinion, full compliance with these sections would result in the site plan being revised to: (1) eliminate all structures from the 100-foot setback area; and (2) make changes to proposed grading within the setback area (e.g., use of retaining walls) that would maintain larger areas of existing grade in order to increase preservation of existing trees and/or increase opportunities for additional proposed landscaping<sup>10</sup> within larger flat, plantable areas.<sup>11,12</sup>

In my initial review memorandum I recommended that the site plan be revised consistent with the paragraph above. Instead, the applicant has revised the plan to provide earthen berming along the site frontages and to increase the amount of landscaped screening along both roads. The buildings have been removed from the 100-foot setback area, however portions of car parking lots, drive aisles and drainage facilities remain within it (which requires a variance).

With respect to the above, the applicant should address the following to the satisfaction of the Board:

- As no hardship (c-1) would appear to exist the applicant would need to demonstrate that the proposal would represent a better zoning alternative (c-2) than a fully compliant one.

*Testimony will be provided.*

- Prove, through testimony and exhibits, that the proposal would be equally or more effective at screening the development (from the scenic roadway and the Canal Walk

and Summerfields developments) as a design that is fully compliant with §112-201.F(2)(a) and §112-201.G(1)(a).

***Testimony will be provided.***

- I offer the following regarding the proposed design:
  - As currently proposed, the screening effectiveness of the earthen berming along Mettlers Road would be limited. Significant portions of the frontage would contain no berming (i.e., the top of the slope would be at essentially the same elevation as the elevation of the driveway and parking lot (87) and finished floor elevation of the building (88). Where berming would extend above the elevation of the driveway, parking lot and finished floor of the building, the proposed elevation (89 and 90) would only be a foot or so higher - providing limited screening. Thus, if the applicant intends to use earthen berming for screening, I recommend that necessary changes be made to significantly increase the top elevations of the berms above the elevations of the driveway, parking lot and finished floor elevation of the warehouse.

***The Grading & Landscape Plans have been revised to provide additional berming height and plantings within the scenic corridor.***

- The applicant should address the long-term sustainability of planting proposed trees on the relatively steep slopes/ berms proposed along the site frontages.

***Testimony will be provided.***

- There should be more, and a higher percentage of, evergreen trees. Preferably, the planting scheme would be designed to form a continuous “wall” of evergreen screening with deciduous trees and/or shrubs added in front for interest.

***The Landscape Plan prepared by the Landscape Architect has been revised to provide additional plantings.***

- Provide solid fencing (as required by the buffering requirements of Schedule 6 - see comment #2 below)<sup>13</sup> at the top of the slope.

***The Site Plans have been revised accordingly.***

- Along the Schoolhouse Road frontage the proposed berming would provide better screening (with top elevations 4-6 feet above the elevations of the parking lot and finished floor of the building) than that proposed along Mettlers Road. However, this frontage contains a number of very large trees (see figure4). The Board may wish to discuss the proper balance of tree preservation vs. incorporating berming and new plantings. It would appear that relatively minor changes in the proposed grading along this frontage could preserve a number of these trees (resulting in opportunity to preserve the trees along the immediate frontage with new/supplemental screening behind).

***The Site Plans have been revised to maintain the existing trees/shrubs along the street frontages to the great extent practicable.***

- If the Board determines that use of berming along the Schoolhouse Road frontage is the preferred approach then the applicant should address why landscaping is proposed only along the front slope of the berm and not also at the top and back slope of the berm.

***The Landscaping Plans prepared by the landscape Architect have been revised to provide a significantly enhanced landscape buffer and berm along Mettlers Lane and Schoolhouse Road.***

- I recommend that the landscaping plan be prepared by a landscape architect.

***The Landscape Plans (excluding basin areas) have been prepared by a Landscape Architect.***

- b) *Signage.* Would there be a site identification sign along one or both of the site frontages? If so, the site plan needs to accommodate it with appropriate modifications to grading, landscaping, etc.. The signage would need to comply with the signage design standards of the Scenic Corridor Ordinance (§112-201.F(4)).

***The proposed signage will comply with the Franklin Signage Ordinance and the Scenic Corridor Ordinance.***

- c) *Building Plans.* The Scenic Corridor Ordinance (§112-201.G(8)) indicates that building design shall be designed “in harmony with the corridor's topography, viewsheds, architectural styles, colors, character and appearance.” The applicant should explore modifications to the site layout (e.g., screening issues discussed elsewhere) and building design (e.g., muted building colors) that could serve to address the intent of this section.

***The Site Plans have been revised to remove all buildings and structures out of the scenic corridor. Testimony will be provided.***

- d) *Curbs, Sidewalks, Bikeways and Driveway.* I offer the following:

- The Scenic Corridor Ordinance discourages curbing. The project side of Mettlers Road has no curbing and the site plan does not propose new curbing. The site’s Schoolhouse Road frontage is currently curbed.

***No response required.***

- The Scenic Corridor Ordinance discourages concrete sidewalks (it recommends bituminous sidewalks where proposed) and recommends bituminous bikeways were recommended in the Township bikeway plan. Further, where a bikeway is provided no sidewalk is required. The site plan proposes neither. A bituminous bikeway exists along the opposite side of Mettlers Road. Thus, in my opinion, consistency with the Scenic Corridor Ordinance would dictate no sidewalk or bikeway along the site’s Metter’s Road frontage. The Board may wish to discuss whether a sidewalk should be

provided along the site's Schoolhouse Road frontage in light of §112-33.6.F which would encourage provision of a sidewalk.

*No response required.*

- Section 112-201.G(2)(c) restricts driveway width to 12 feet. Although not specified, in my opinion this is clearly intended to address residential driveways as no non-residential driveway can be provided at that width. Nonetheless, in my opinion, consistency with this section dictates providing driveways at the minimum width necessary to serve its function (e.g., allowing for adequate turning movements etc.).

*The driveways have been designed accordingly.*

- e) The site plan would appear to comply with §112-201.G(6) which requires that all utilities (including electric and telephone lines) be installed underground. The applicant should confirm in testimony.

*Testimony will be provided.*

- f) Stormwater Management and Erosion Control Measures. I defer to the Township Engineer with respect to the plans compliance with the design standards related to stormwater management and erosion control in §§112-201.G(3), 112-201.G(5)(d) and 112-201.G(7).

*No response required.*

2. 50-Buffer Requirement. Schedule 6 requires a 50-foot wide buffer along both roadways. This buffer is required to consist of mass evergreen plantings and a solid 6-foot high fence. No improvements (e.g., stormwater basin, parking lots, etc) may be located in the buffer with the exception of necessary access drives and fencing/ screening. As currently proposed, the application requires a variance from this requirement as the required fencing is not proposed. Please refer to comment #1 above, which addresses similar screening requirements of the Scenic Corridor Ordinance.

*Testimony will be provided.*

3. Chapter 222- Tree Preservation. Per the calculations on the plan the tree replacement value per Chapter 222, Trees, would be 1,052 trees. A total of 232 trees of qualifying size<sup>14</sup> are proposed leaving a tree replacement deficit of 820 trees.

The applicant should re-evaluate the proposed site layout in light of §222-5.3 which indicates (in order of preference):

- applicants shall make all reasonable attempts to maximize tree preservation.

*The Site Plans have been revised to maintain the existing trees/shrubs along the street frontages to the great extent practicable.*

- to the extent that tree replacement is necessary, the applicant shall make all reasonable attempts to provide all required replacement trees on the site.



***The Landscaping Plans have been revised to provide a significantly enhanced landscape buffer and plantings within the subject site.***

- replacement at an off-site location

***Testimony will be provided.***

- contribution to the Tree Fund is available as an “alternative” if physical replacement of trees does not fully address the tree replacement requirements. The current in-lieu replacement value is \$300/ tree.

***Testimony will be provided.***

Consistent with §222-5.3 I recommend that the applicant investigate:

- Changes to the site plan addressed in comment #1 with respect to the Scenic Corridor Ordinance to increase tree preservation along the site frontages..

***The Site Plans have been revised to maintain the existing trees/shrubs along the street frontages to the great extent practicable.***

- Explore off-site tree placement within the buffer areas of the Canal Walk and Summerfields developments opposite Mettlers and Schoolhouse Roads from the site. While §222-5.3.B indicates that off-site replacement should take place on public property or within public rights-of-way, in my opinion addressing a portion of the application’s tree replacement deficit in the perimeter buffers of those developments would address various other objectives of the ordinance.

***Testimony will be provided.***

4. Design of Business and Industry Uses (§112-33.6)

- a. With respect to §112-33.6.A (which requires that the front yard be attractively landscaped) – see other comments regarding B-I zone buffering requirements, the Scenic Corridor Ordinance and Chapter 222, Trees.

***The Landscaping Plans prepared by the landscape Architect have been revised to provide a significantly enhanced landscape buffer and berm along Mettlers Lane and Schoolhouse Road.***

- b. Section 112-33.6.C indicates that loading docks, truck parking, and other service functions should be located in a manner than minimizes their view from adjoining roadways and that where such placement is unavoidable, such areas should be screened to the maximum degree practicable through the use of landscaping, fences and/or walls. I offer the following:
  - The site plan is consistent with this section as it applies to Mettlers Road as the loading area is located behind, and thus would be blocked from view from Mettler Road by, Building A.

*No response required.*

- The site plan is not fully consistent with this section as it applies to Schoolhouse Road since the side of the loading area would face this road. The applicant will thus need to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the Board, that view of the loading area from Schoolhouse Road has been minimized to the maximum degree practicable through proposed screening.

*The Site Plans have been revised to provide a bump out portion of the buildings adjacent to the loading docks with additional berming and landscaping, to further screen the loading operations from Schoolhouse Road.*

- c. The applicant should present testimony and associated exhibit(s) demonstrating compliance with §112-33.6.D which indicates that the side(s) of the building facing and visible from adjoining roadway(s) should be designed and finished in an attractive manner and should present architecturally as the front of the building. See comment #1.c. above, with respect to the Scenic Corridor Ordinance.

*Testimony will be provided.*

- d. The applicant should present testimony and associated exhibit(s) demonstrating compliance with §112-33.6.E regarding the screening of mechanical equipment.

*Testimony will be provided.*

- e. The applicant should present testimony and associated exhibit(s) demonstrating compliance with §112-33.6.F and G which indicate, respectively, that such development applications should appropriately take into consideration nonautomotive modes of transportation and appropriate accommodate for ride hailing services, bus and/or shuttle.

*Testimony will be provided.*

5. Additional Site Plan Comments.

- a. To assist the Board in its review of the various ordinance requirements discussed above the applicant should present accurate 3-dimensional renderings of the development from both roadways. Such exhibits should accurately reflect the proposed building as well as site plan layout (including grading, planting, and lighting).

*Testimony will be provided.*

- b. Details need to be added addressing the requirements of §112-33.7.F (e.g., pavement striping and signage with respect to EV spaces).

*The Site Plans have been revised accordingly.*

- c. The site plan complies with Schedule 6 which requires 1 tree for every 2,000 square feet of paved area (119 trees required – 232 trees of trees of qualifying size proposed plus additional existing trees to remain).

*No response required.*

- d. I defer to the Township Engineer with respect to the requested variance for loading area depth.

*The Site Plans have been revised to provide the requested loading depth. No variance required.*

- e. The development would be subject to collection of an affordable housing development fee equal to 2.5% of equalized assessed value.

*Acknowledged.*

**CME Associates Review Letter, prepared by Robert J. Russo, PE, PP, CME, Township Engineer, dated December 21, 2022**

**B. GENERAL SITE IMPROVEMENTS**

1. Official street addresses shall be obtained from the Franklin Township 911 Coordinator.

*The applicant will coordinate with the Franklin Township 911 Coordinator to obtain the official street address.*

2. An Engineering Cost Estimate will be required once final plans are signed-off on by the Board. Upon approval, applicant shall provide appropriate bonds and Engineering inspection fees and attend a pre-construction meeting, prior to any site work.

*Acknowledged.*

3. Note: A preconstruction meeting will not be scheduled until the developer/ site contractor provides a Fire Safety During Construction Plan Demonstrating Compliance with Chapter 33 of the International Fire Code. Should the Board act favorably on this application a copy of the Township's, 'Steps to a Construction Project' will be provided.

*A note has been added to the Overall Site Plan.*

4. All fees shall be paid by the applicant at the time of adoption of a resolution of site plan approval for the cost of making upgrades and modifications to the Tax Maps and geographic information system (GIS) (§112-329).

*Acknowledged.*

5. At the time the final plans are submitted for signature of the municipal officials, the applicant shall submit CAD-generated data files, prepared by a New Jersey licensed land surveyor, directly translatable into an identical image of the plan per the requirements of Ordinance § 112-329.

*Acknowledged.*

6. Copies of any easements, exceptions, deviations, or liens on the property should be presented to the Board.

***Acknowledged.***

7. This office defers to the Board Planner for compliance with Ordinance §112-201; Scenic Corridor District Overlay, except as noted further in this report.

***Acknowledged.***

8. The site plan does not comply with the Minimum Front Yard Setback in the Scenic Corridor District Overlay. In accordance with Ordinance §112-201.F.(2)(a)[1] at least twice the required front yard setback for the zone district in which the property is located resulting in a 100' front yard setback. Portions of the proposed parking lots, drainage structures/piping and structural walls containing the proposed wet pond are all within the front yard setback. The site plan should either be revised or a variance should be requested.

***The Site Plans have been revised to remove buildings and structures within the scenic corridor. No variance is required.***

9. In accordance with Ordinance §112-104.A, the length of the loading berth shall be at least 48 feet or shall be a length such that the horizontal distance from the front of a dock for back-in parking to the limiting boundary of the loading and unloading area shall not be less than twice the overall length of the longest vehicle expected to use the facility. The applicant's engineer indicated a Tractor Trailer WB-67, which has a length of 73.5 feet, is proposed for use at the facility; therefore, the length of the loading berth shall be 147 feet. The applicant is proposing a length of 140 feet (200 feet total distance between the dock doors); the applicant is requesting a variance. A circulation plan has been provided which demonstrates a WB-67 can maneuver the site; therefore, our office takes no exception to this variance.

***The Site Plans have been revised to provide the required overall loading beath length. No variance is required.***

10. In accordance with Ordinance §112-192.A.3, the site plan shall be no greater than 24 inches by 36 inches in size. The applicant should request a waiver from the checklist requirement and has provided a larger plan sheet size. This office finds this request acceptable.

***A waiver is requested.***

11. A variance is required for the interior driveway width for two-way traffic movements when ninety-degree angle parking is proposed in the B1 zone. In accordance with Ordinance §112-88 the interior driveway width should be 26 feet; the applicant is proposing a 24 feet wide driveway.

***The Site Plans have been revised to provide the required 26-foot-wide drive aisle adjacent to all ninety-degree parking stalls. No variance is required.***

12. In accordance with Ordinance §112-33.6.G, the applicant should provide testimony for accommodations for pick-up/ drop-off areas for ride hailing services, bus and/ or shuttle services.

***Ride hailing signage and a canopy has been provided for each building.***

13. It is this office's understanding that the applicant has submitted a separate application to the Township's Minor Subdivision Committee which proposes subdividing the property and creating a separate lot containing the residentially zone portion of the property. We recommend that perfecting the minor subdivision, if approved by the Minor Subdivision Committee, be made a condition of approval if the Board acts favorably.

*Acknowledged.*

14. This office defers to the Fire Prevention Officer as to the appropriate number of Fire Hydrants, Fire Department Connection, and their location. We defer to the Fire Prevention Officer regarding the need of 'No Parking' fire lane signage and striping.

*Acknowledged.*

15. Utility easements for the existing guy wires utilized for the existing utility poles located in the Mettlers Road right-of-way are shown on the plan. Should the Board act favorably on this application deeds and descriptions should be provided for review prior to submitting same to the County Clerk's office.

*Acknowledged.*

16. This office, along Township staff, recommend the applicant install a separate driveway for passenger vehicles parking lot for Building 2, revising the curb layout to fully separate the passenger vehicles from truck traffic. The truck driveway should be revised to include a concrete island preventing trucks from turning westbound onto Schoolhouse Road.

*Testimony will be provided.*

### **C. GRADING AND UTILITY COMMENTS**

1. A will serve letter, from the Township Water Division, was not requested for the project.

*A copy of the Township Water Division will serve letter is included within this submission.*

2. Delineate and note the size of the existing water main along Schoolhouse Road on the Utility Plan.

*The Utility Plan has been revised accordingly.*

3. DIP is required from the wet tap, through and downstream of the meter pit. The plan should be revised to note the transition from the DIP to the proposed C900 plastic water main.

*The Utility Plan has been revised accordingly.*

4. While this office defers review of the off-site gravity sewer extension and force main connection into the gravity sewer to the FTSA, the utility plan should be revised to delineate the off-site improvement limits (including full pavement repair limits). The applicant's engineer should add utility crossing information demonstrating proper clearances.

The applicant shall two-inch mill and repave the entire pavement surface from edge to edge, or curb to curb for the full length of excavation, extending 25 feet from the ends of the excavation, in accordance with the Township specifications required per Ordinance §333-8.K, including infrared repairs and striping details. The site plan should be revised delineating the milling and paving limits.

*The Utility Plan has been revised accordingly.*

5. Fire hydrants should be added to the Utility Plan. Final amount and locations shall be approved by the Fire Prevention Director.

*The Utility Plan has been revised accordingly.*

6. In accordance with §112-126.D.(1 ), the applicant shall delineate the initial location of construction trailer(s) and sign shall be shown the final grading plans submitted with the final site plans to be reviewed by the Board.

*Acknowledged.*

7. The applicant should address the following general grading comments:
  - The parallel curb ramp for the larger warehouse exceeds 1 :12 slope and should be revised to comply with ADA Standards;

*The Grading Plan has been revised accordingly.*

- Provide top and bottom of curb elevations at all curb pc's and pt's, 90 degree bends, high points and low points, for further review.

*The Grading Plan has been revised accordingly.*

The grading will be reviewed further when the above has been addressed.

8. This office recommends the applicant consider increasing the height of the berms along Mettlers Road to supplement the proposed buffering. The proposed berms are approximately, at most, 1' to 2' above the finished first floor elevation of the building. It appears the applicant could install retaining walls with buffering planting on the uphill side of the wall to increase the berm height and further screen the warehouse. The applicant should provide the Board with testimony regarding this item.

*The Grading Plan has been revised accordingly.*

#### **D. LANDSCAPING AND LIGHTING COMMENTS**

1. The applicant provided a tree replacement calculation to satisfy the requirements of Ordinance §222 - Trees. 1,052 replacement trees are required and 232 replacement trees are proposed. The site plan does not address how the applicant will address the deficient 820 trees. This office defers to the Township Planner as to the adequacy of the tree replacement plan.

*The Demolition Plan has been revised accordingly.*

2. In accordance with Ordinance Scenic Corridor District Overlay §112-201.G.(5)(d)[2], all plants shall be tolerant of typical floodplain and wetland conditions. The applicant's engineer should demonstrate compliance with same. It appears species selected are tolerant of these conditions; however, staff recommends additional species be utilized for greater diversity.

*The Landscape Architect has prepared supplemental Landscape Plans for all site landscaping (except for basin areas). These plans have been revised accordingly.*

3. In accordance with Ordinance Scenic Corridor District Overlay §112-201.G.(5){d}[3], basins designed as naturalized wetlands areas should be planted with a quantity of trees equal to the number necessary to cover the entire area of the interior of the basin to the emergency spillway elevation. Of this number, 10% shall be two inches to 2.5 inches caliper, 20% shall be 1.5 inches to 2 inches caliper, and 70% shall be six feet to eight feet height whips. The trees shall be planted in groves and spaced five feet to 15 feet on center. The landscaping plan should be revised to comply with this section of the ordinance.

*The Landscape Plans have been revised accordingly.*

4. In accordance with Ordinance Scenic Corridor District Overlay §112-201.G.(5Xd)[5], the planting of the perimeter of the water's edge of a stormwater retention facility shall accentuate views of the water and other vistas. Plantings shall include native, informally massed deciduous and evergreen trees and wildflowers. The landscaping plan should be revised to comply with this section of the ordinance and provide calculations for further review.

*The Landscape Plan has been revised accordingly.*

5. The Applicant should consider a greater planting palette to provide a native and informally designed basin and buffer area. Asclepias species should be added to the semi wet zone, as this is the only species the federally endangered Monarch butterfly can complete its life cycle on. This is a companion plant with Cardinal flower, along with Lobelia, Wild Iris, Swamp Rose, Joe-Pye weed, etc.

*The Landscape Plan has been revised accordingly.*

6. As indicated above, additional species of shrubs and grasses should be incorporated to comply with the Scenic Corridor District. Staff recommends large swaths of native grasses, to reduce conventional lawns and the care and chemicals they require, such as Little Bluestem, Switchgrass, Saltmeadow Cordgrass, Blue Grama Grass. Other shrubs to consider include Sweet Pepperbush, Virginia Sweetspire, Ninebark, and Winterberry.

*The Landscape Plan has been revised accordingly.*

7. Revise the planting schedule to provide alternatives for proposed CV (White Fringetree) as this species is susceptible to the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) as it is in the same family as the Ash tree. The Applicant might consider Flowering Dogwood instead.

*The Landscape Plan has been revised accordingly.*

8. The Applicant has proposed some species that are not commercially available at the size proposed, such as QF (Southern Red Oak), QM (Chestnut Oak) and PR (Red Spruce). This office recommends a greater quantity of Black Gum, Swamp White Oak, and American Holly.

*The Landscape Plan has been revised accordingly.*

9. Revise the plans to replace the PS (White Pine) as this species loses its lower limbs as it matures, which does not provide an adequate buffer. This office recommends Norway Spruce and Western Green Giant Arborvitae.

*The Landscape Plan has been revised to provide supplemental plantings in addition to the white pines. Testimony will be provided.*

10. Revise the plans to provide an alternative species for proposed MC (Southern Wax Myrtle) as this species is not readily available in this area.

*The Landscape Architect has confirmed availability of the above species.*

11. Revise the 'Landscape Schedule', to indicate if ornamental trees are to be single-stem or multi-stem, to prevent confusion during construction. Also, proposed HC (Silverbell) is a tree and CO (Buttonbush) is a shrub; however, the sizes proposed do not reflect this nor will they be available at the sizes indicated.

*The Landscape Plan has been revised accordingly.*

12. Shift proposed shrubs to be three (3) feet back from proposed curb, to prevent damage from vehicles and snow mounding.

*The Landscape Plan has been revised accordingly.*

13. Revise the plans to indicate a native no mow/low mow pollinator friendly seed mix for all open areas where a conventional lawn is not required, to reduce pollution from weekly mowing operations and chemical lawn treatments. Maintenance notes should also be included.

*The Landscape Plan has been revised accordingly.*

14. Revise the 'Planting Notes', note #16, to indicate that no mulch shall come into contact with the root flare.

*The Landscape Plan has been revised accordingly.*

15. Revise the 'Deciduous Tree Planting Detail, sheet 26 of 35, to remove the note referencing biodegradable tree wrap, as current industry standards do not endorse the use of such. Instead, indicate rigid, plastic open mesh trunk guards for all deciduous trees, to protect the trees from the irreparable damage of buck rub. A detail of same should be provided. Also, only two (2) tree stakes are required for both deciduous and evergreen trees.

*The Construction Details has been revised accordingly.*



16. Revise the plans to depict mulch bed lines on the plans, to prevent confusion during construction.

*The Landscape Plan has been revised accordingly.*

**E. TRAFFIC COMMENTS**

1. The Applicant's Engineer performed trip generation calculations based on the Institute of Transportation Engineers Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition which is the current edition. We take no exception to the trip generation calculations provided.

*No response required.*

2. The Applicant's Engineer performed manual turning movement counts at the unsignalized intersections of Schoolhouse Road and Mettlers Road and Schoolhouse Road and Dewitt Boulevard / Greg Smith Equipment Driveway during the AM and PM Peak Hours on Thursday, January 27, 2022. We take no exception to the information provided.

*No response required.*

3. The Applicant's Engineer applied a 1.75% annual background growth traffic rate and included a 90,000 sf warehouse as adjacent development to establish the 2024 no-build traffic volumes. We take no exception to the background growth rate and adjacent development applied.

*No response required.*

4. The Applicant's Engineer indicated that the site driveways are expected to operate at level of service B or better for all movements during the AM and PM peak hour periods. The Applicant's Engineer indicated that the nearby unsignalized intersections of Schoolhouse Road and Mettlers Road and Schoolhouse Road and Dewitt Boulevard / Greg Smith Equipment Driveway are expected to operate at levels of service C or better for all movements during the AM and PM peak hour periods. We take no exception to these conclusions.

*No response required.*

5. The Applicant's Engineer provided parking calculations on the traffic study and site plan that indicate 103 parking spaces are required for Building 1 (the West Warehouse Building with 162,806 SF of warehouse and 8,569 SF of office) and 46 parking spaces are required for Building 2 (the East Warehouse Building with 69,920 SF of warehouse and 3,680 SF of office). We take no exception to these parking space requirement calculations.

*The Traffic Impact Study has been revised per the updated Site Plans.*

7. With Building 1 containing 90 parking spaces, 5 accessible parking spaces are required. With Building 2 containing 43 parking spaces, 2 accessible parking spaces are required. The Applicant's Engineer proposes 6 accessible parking spaces for Building 1 and 2 accessible parking spaces for Building 2. We take no exception to the number of accessible parking spaces provided.

*No response required.*

8. For the 6 accessible parking spaces proposed for Building 1, at least one of the 6 is required to be van accessible. For the 2 accessible parking spaces proposed for Building 2, at least one is required to be van accessible. The plans depict four (4) accessible parking spaces as van accessible, for Building 1 and two (2) accessible parking spaces as van accessible. We take no exception to the van accessible parking spaces proposed.

*No response required.*

9. The Applicant's Engineer provided a vehicle circulation plan for the fire truck and the WB-67. We take no exception to the circulation plans provided.

*No response required.*

## **F. STORM WATER MANAGEMENT**

### **Stormwater Management System**

1. The Applicant proposes constructing two (2) Bioretention structures (Basins A & B), one (1) Underground detention basin (Basin C), one (1) Porous pavement area (Basin D), Constructed Wetlands with extended detention (Basin E), and one (1) GI MTD to address stormwater quantity management and water quality.

*Informational.*

2. The referenced project has been reviewed in accordance with the Stormwater Management Rules NJAC 7:8 as amended on March 2, 2020.

*Informational.*

3. The property in question is located within the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission Review zone and is subject to DRCC regulations. A copy of the DRCC approval, or letter of no interest, must be provided to this office.

*An application is currently pending with the DRCC. Will be provided upon receipt.*

4. Wetlands are shown on the property. A copy of the LOI and NJDEP-approved plans must be provided to this office.

*An application is currently pending with the DEP. Will be provided upon receipt.*

5. A Conservation/Preservation Area shall be created in accordance with Ordinance §112-147 of the Franklin Township Land Development regulations. The Township preservation area boundary line shall be established using the most restrictive of the Stream Preservation Corridor and Wetlands Buffer. A map shall be supplied delineating the limits of the Conservation/Preservation Area with bearings and distances and proposed Preservation Area Marker locations.

*Acknowledged.*

6. Provide a Conservation/Preservation Area Easement Deed, with a metes and bounds description, of the Township preservation area boundary line created by satisfying Comment #8. The deed shall be submitted for review and approval prior to filing with the Somerset County Clerk's Office.

*Acknowledged.*

7. Preservation Area Markers shall either be set or bonded for prior to application sign-off.

*Acknowledged.*

8. It appears the proposed development will disturb portions of the wetland transition areas; therefore, an NJDEP Freshwater Wetlands disturbance permit must be obtained for the proposed disturbance. A copy of the permit must be provided to this office.

*An application is currently pending with the NJDEP. Will be provided upon receipt.*

9. The Applicant must obtain a Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plan Certification from the Somerset-Union Soil Conservation District. A copy of the certification must be provided to this office.

*An application is currently pending with the SCD. Will be provided upon receipt.*

10. The proposed development proposes more than 1 acre of land disturbance and must obtain a General Permit for Construction Activities from the NJDEP. A copy of the permit must be provided to this office.

*Will be provided upon receipt.*

11. Provide a Stormwater Maintenance Agreement for the stormwater system to ensure future maintenance. A sample agreement is available from the Engineering Department.

*Will be provided.*

12. Bioretention basin and constructed wetland areas up to 100-year storm elevation must be treated as having impervious cover in post-developed peak flow calculations.

*The Stormwater Report has been revised to treat the area of the permanent pool elevation within the proposed constructed wetland as impervious.*

13. All bioretention structures must have an emergency overflow structure. The drainage report must be revised to include design calculations for the emergency spillways. The emergency spillway should be designed to pass the 100-yr storm event assuming the principal spillways are not working. A minimum of one (1) ft. freeboard between the maximum water elevation for the above emergency spillway and the top of the berm is required. Calculations for Basin A are missing.

*The Stormwater Report has been revised accordingly.*

14. The stormwater report has been updated to include a summary table of design parameters for stormwater wetlands such as inflow area, water quality volume, Semi-wet zone depth & volume, High marsh zone depth & volume, Low marsh zone depth & volume, Pool zone depth & volume, separation from seasonal high groundwater table, minimum detention time for WQDS and drain time and demonstrate compliance with BMP design standards in NJ BMP Manual Chapter 10.4. Table in drainage report must be updated to show compliance with percentages shown on page 9, NJ BMP Manual Chapter 10.

*The Stormwater Report has been revised accordingly.*

15. Semi-Wet zone, high marsh zone, low marsh zone, and pool zone must be identified on the grading plan.

*The Grading Plan has been revised accordingly.*

16. Wetland impoundment is more than five (5) feet in height and qualifies as a Class IV dam under NJDEP Dam Safety Standards at NJAC 7:20 and must meet the overflow requirements under these regulations. A letter from engineer of record is required that says the structure complies with all design and construction standards as prescribed under NJ DAM Safety Standards at NJAC 7:20.

*The Stormwater Report has been revised to provide a statement as requested.*

17. Wetlands impoundment has 6.5 to 11 ft high retaining walls with an access ramp on only one side. The designer should consider providing escape ladders at key locations in case someone gets trapped.

*The Site Plans have been revised accordingly.*

18. Each porous pavement area must include at least two (2) inspection ports, with a removable cap, in the storage bed with its location shown on the plan. The inspection ports must be placed at least three feet from any edge and extend down 4 - 6 inches into the subsoil, and the depth of runoff for the water quality designed storm must be marked upon each structure and its level included in the drainage report and the maintenance manual.

*The Site Plans have been revised accordingly.*

19. Details of porous pavement inspection ports must be provided on construction plans, and they must be traffic-rated.

*The Construction Details have been revised accordingly.*

20. Inspection ports should be provided at the end of each row of pipes in the underground detention system for maintenance. In addition, a construction detail of the inspection ports should be provided.

*The Site Plans have been revised accordingly.*

21. According to Web Soil Survey, Site Soils are classified as Hydrologic Soil Group (HSG) B and C. Applicant has provided soils logs for eight test pits, 5-6 ft deep, and four infiltration tests

showing infiltration rates ranging from 0.25 to 0.68 in/hr. Based on these soil investigations, the drainage report concludes that site soils are similar to HSG D soils, and there is no recharge from this property. The drainage report must be updated to document compliance of geotechnical investigations performed with the geotechnical investigation required under Chapter 12 of the BMP manual "Section 1: Methods for Identifying HSG and Soil Series" in order to reclassify site soils to HSG D. Please note, a letter from Geotechnical engineer does not fulfill the requirement. Applicant must document compliance with the requirements of section cited above.

*An analysis prepared by the Geotechnical Engineer has been provided within the Stormwater Report.*

22. In accordance with Ordinance Scenic Corridor District Overlay § 112-201.G.(5)(d)[1] all basin structures shall be designed to blend into the landscape in terms of construction materials, color, grading and planting. The screening of outfall structures and emergency spillways from public view is of particular importance in the landscape design. This may involve integration of these areas as aesthetic landscape features or naturalized wetlands areas. The design is not in compliance with this section of the ordinance and should be revised accordingly.

*The Site Plans have been revised accordingly.*

23. In accordance with Ordinance Scenic Corridor District Overlay §112-201.G.(?) (b) the visual impacts of certain erosion control measures which may be implemented in conjunction with development shall be considered in order to require the use of visually unobtrusive or natural materials, such as vegetative cover, fiber mesh matrices and natural stone to replace more visually obtrusive measures, such as rock riprap or concrete structures, wherever possible. The site plan should be revised to comply with this section of the ordinance.

*The Site Plans have been revised accordingly.*

24. Cleanouts or drainage structures should be added at all inserta-tee connections; blind connections are not permitted.

*The Site Plans have been revised accordingly.*

25. The applicant is proposing to install wing walls on the outlet control structures for Basins A and B. The applicant is also proposing to install a retaining wall around the basins. The applicant's design engineer should further review the layout of same.

*The Site Plans have been revised accordingly.*

26. The applicant should review the following structures to ensure the minimum required pipe cover is maintained:  
Storm Str. #111.

*The Site Plans have been revised accordingly.*

## **G. MISCELLANEOUS**

1. Revise/Add the following details based on Franklin Township standard details:

- a. Revise the Light Duty Asphalt Pavement Detail to increase the top course of hot mix asphalt to 2" thick and the base course to 4" thick;

*The pavement specifications recommended within the Geotechnical Report have been utilized.*

- b. Revise the Heavy Duty Asphalt Pavement Detail to increase the base course to 6" thick;

*The pavement specifications recommended within the Geotechnical Report have been utilized.*

- c. Add the Township Thrust Block detail;

*The Construction Details have been revised accordingly.*

- d. Add a Rip-Rap detail;

*The Construction Details have been revised accordingly.*

- e. Add a Retaining Wall detail;

*The Construction Details have been revised accordingly.*

- f. Revise the Permeable Pavement detail to show the impervious pavement limits;

*The Construction Details have been revised accordingly.*

- g. Add a 'No Trucks' signage detail;

*The Construction Details have been revised accordingly.*

- h. All sanitary sewer details shall be submitted directly to the Franklin Township Sewerage Authority for review and approval - Comment Only

*Acknowledged.*

The Applicant is required to obtain either approvals or letter of no interest from the following agencies:

Outside Agencies

- Delaware Raritan Canal Commission – *Pending*
- Somerset County Planning Board – *Approved 6-7-22.*
- Somerset-Union Soil Conservation District – *Pending*
- New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection – *Pending*

Township Departments

- Franklin Township Fire Department – *Pending*
- Franklin Township Police Department - *No comment, 08/25/2022.*
- Franklin Township Sewerage Authority - *Pending*
- Somerset County Health Department - *No objection, 08/10/2022.*

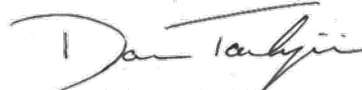
Should you have any questions, comments or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Sincerely,

**DYNAMIC ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS, PC**



Kyle C. Kavinski, PE



Daniel Tarabokija, PE

Enclosures

cc: Peter Lanfrit (w/enc. - 3 copies)