



September 14, 2022

Borough of Stratford Joint Land Use Board
307 Union Avenue
Stratford, NJ 08084

Attn: Joint Land Use Board Members

Re: Amended Use Variance and Site Plan Review
Proposed Veteran's Housing Project
Tiangang Zhuang
One Colby Avenue
Block 3, Lot 1
Bach Project No. STRATLUB-2018-1 (previously STRATLUB2018-1)

Dear Joint Land Use Board Members:

The above referenced development received Use Variance and Minor Site Plan approval at a meeting of the Joint Land Use Board on February 22, 2018 and compliance review from our office in a letter dated May 23, 2019 for the conversion of an existing vacant office building to twenty (20), one (1) bedroom affordable apartments for US Military Service Veterans as well as site plan approval for miscellaneous site improvements.

The property is a 47,000 sf property located at One Colby Avenue, southwest of White Horse Pike (State Highway Route 30) in the Borough's 'O' Office Zoning District and contains an existing 11,370 sf vacant building, bituminous parking lot and miscellaneous site improvements. As apartments are not a permitted use in the 'O' zoning district a use variance was requested and granted at the February 22, 2022 hearing to permit the proposed veteran housing.

At this time the property has been acquired by a new developer who wishes to amend the previous approvals to reduce the number of affordable housing units from 100% (20 units) to 20% (4 units). Therefore, an amended use variance will be required at this time. It is noted that the applicant has indicated that he intends to complete all previously approved proposed site improvements associated with the previous approvals and as shown on plans entitled "Minor Site Plan for Veteran's Village of Camden County, Tax Map Sheet 1, Block 3, Lot 1, 1 Colby Avenue, Borough of Stratford, Camden County, New Jersey", prepared by Adams, Rehmann & Heggan, dated March 19, 2018, revised to September 24, 2018.

It is noted that for "D" variances it is the applicant's obligation to present the "Positive" and "Negative" criteria to justify the variance. The applicant must prove to the satisfaction of the Board that there are "special reasons" for the Board to exercise its jurisdiction to grant the requested relief, demonstrating that the site is particularly suited to the proposed use and that the proposal will advance the purposes of Municipal Land Use Law and the Township's Master Plan and Zoning ordinances (POSTIVE criteria). The applicant must also show that the variance can be granted without substantial detriment to the public good and that the variance will not substantially impair the intent and purpose of the zone plan and zoning ordinance (NEGATIVE criteria).

**Amended Use Variance and Site Plan Review
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The applicant shall provide testimony regarding the following conditions of approval for the previously approved Site Plan and Use Variance application (see attached resolution):

1. **Veteran Housing** - The application was granted approval of variances and waivers to permit the use of the subject premises as residences for retired Veterans of the United States Armed Forces and spouse or partner, without children.
2. **Affordable Housing** - All 20 units were to be utilized as affordable housing for veterans. The applicant has indicated that he wishes to reduce to affordable housing to four (4) units which is 20% of the total units.
3. **Handicap Units** - The previous application provided 16 standard units and four (4) handicap access units.
4. **Site Management** - The applicant previously indicated there would be on-site management of the premises.
5. **Applicant Screening** - The applicant previously indicated that he would submit the screening protocol to the Borough to solicit any recommendations, suggestions or comments regarding potential applicants and that applicant would have to pass a criminal screening or background check.
6. **Site Amenities** - The applicant previously indicated that the facility would provide for a small interior health club, two (2) washers and dryers, a community area and outside seating for 6 to 8 residents with adequate open space and screening in the area to avoid unnecessary contact with neighbors and to provide a convenient passive recreational area for residents.
7. **American Flag Placement** - The previous application provided for the placement of an American Flag in accordance with the United State Flag Law.
8. **Fire Code Compliance** - The previous applicant agreed to comply with all fire codes relative to access and evacuation plans for the premises as well as fire suppression. Applicant further agreed to include necessary protections as noted by the Borough Fire Official and supported by all applicable codes.

Any approvals shall be conditioned upon the applicant addressing any and all concerns by the Board.

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If there are any questions or if any additional information is required please contact this office.

Very truly yours,
BACH ASSOCIATES, PC



Steven M. Bach, PE, RA, PP, CME
President

Cc: John D. Keenan, Jr., Acting Administrator
Robin Sarlo, Finance Officer
Stratford Sewer Department
Anthony Costa, Esq., PB Solicitor
Stuart A Platt, Esq., Borough Solicitor
Sharon McCart, JLUB Secretary
Tiangang Zhuang, LLC, Applicant
Craig A. Reilly, PE, CME

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RESOLUTION # 2018:01
JOINT LAND USE BOARD OF THE
BOROUGH OF STRATFORD

**RESOLUTION GRANTING MINOR SITE PLAN APPROVAL
AND VARIANCES TO VETERAN'S VILLAGE OF CAMDEN COUNTY, INC.**

WHEREAS, Veteran's Village of Camden County, Inc., of 2001 College Drive, Suite 11, Gloucester Township, New Jersey 08021 ("Applicant", herein) submitted an application for site plan approval to the Joint Land Use Board of the Borough of Stratford so as to allow the use of a former medical office facility located at One Colby Avenue, Stratford, New Jersey to be used as a residence for retired Veterans of the United States Armed Forces and spouse or partner, without children. The site is designated Block 3, Lot 1 in the Tax Map of the Borough of Stratford; and

WHEREAS, the proposed facility will consist of twenty (20) apartments each being approximately 450 square feet in area to be occupied by only one Veteran or a Veteran with spouse or partner of a civil union. No children would be permitted to reside therein. The units are intended to be available to Veterans as affordable housing units; and

WHEREAS, the Board considered the application on its merits at a public hearing held at the Board's regular monthly meeting on February 22, 2018 at which time applicant appeared with legal counsel, David Wollman of the Wollman Law Firm along with professionals. Theodore Wilkinson, P.E. and John Helbig, Professional Planner, both of ARH Associates along with Frank Lauletta, the developer who were sworn and gave testimony. In support of the application, the applicant submitted a completed and signed Borough of Stratford Application and Plans for the project development prepared by Theodore Wilkerson, P.E. of ARH Associates, 215 Bellvue Avenue, P.O. Box 579, Hammonton, New Jersey 08037-2019 dated January 18, 2018 and further designated project number 5052618 which evidence was made part of the record. In addition, a review letter was prepared by Wayne Roorda, P.E. of Bach Associates, the Board's Engineer. In the letter, Mr. Roorda reviewed the application, supporting documents and plans noted and made comments and recommendations to the Board; and

WHEREAS, the Board considered the documentation noted and submitted in evidence, considered further the testimony of the developer and the professionals appearing on behalf of the application; and

WHEREAS, the Board also considered the significant number of members of the public who appeared at the public hearing to inquire of the applicant and his professionals and who provided comment and testimony for and against the application; and

WHEREAS, upon the foregoing, the Board has made the following factual findings upon consideration of the application and evidence for and against same:

1. All jurisdictional requirements have been satisfied. All required notices of the application have been duly served by the applicant upon adjacent nearby property owners and parties-in-interest, in accordance with the Stratford Borough Land Use Ordinance.
2. The applicant seeks to use a piece of property with building thereon located at One Colby Avenue, Stratford, New Jersey, formerly medical offices, as a facility to provide housing to Veterans of the United States Armed Forces.
3. The proposed facility will consist of twenty (20) apartments each being approximately 450 square feet in area to be occupied by only one veteran or a veteran with spouse or partner of a civil union. The units are intended to be available to veterans as affordable housing units. No children would be permitted to reside therein.
4. The units so noted are not age restricted.
5. Of the units being created, there will be 16 standard units and 4 handicap access units. The units are furnished and the rent includes all utilities except telephone.
6. The applicant will provide on-site management of the premises.
7. The applicant will arrange for the screening of potential residents of the facility to provide for the safety of the residents and the neighbors. The applicant will submit its screening protocol to the Borough to solicit any recommendations, suggestions or comments. Applicants will have to pass a criminal screening or background check.

8. The facility will provide for a small interior health club, two (2) washers and dryers and a community area. Outside seating for approximately 6 to 8 residents will be provided with the applicant further providing for adequate open space and screening in the area to avoid unnecessary contact with neighbors and to provide a convenient passive recreational area for residents. A flag pole will be provided in the front area of the facility for placement of an American Flag in accordance with the United State Flag Law.
9. Parking is provided by 55 stalls with 3 being ADA compliant. One van-accessible ADA parking space is provided. The lot will be resurfaced, restriped and numbered to clearly designated stalls and assigned to units within the facility.
10. The applicant will comply with all fire codes relative to access and evacuation plans for the premises as well as fire suppression. Applicant agrees to include necessary protections as noted by the Borough Fire Official and supported by all applicable codes.
11. The drainage plan for the facility will include circulation systems to avoid ponding, puddling and run-off from the premises onto the adjoining properties.
12. There are no changes to be made to the footprint of the existing building. There will be changes in the façade to improve exterior visual appearance.
13. The current use of the premises as a former and now vacant medical office facility is no longer viable. The facility has been vacant for a number of years and has become unsightly and a detriment to the neighborhood.
14. The applicant has agreed to provide all items noted in pages 4 through 10 of the letter of JLUB Engineer, Wayne Roorda which has been made part of these proceedings and which is adopted as part of this Resolution. The applicant will provide satisfactory compliance with all items noted thereon as a condition of moving forward with this project.

15. The applicant shall meet any and all applicable affordable housing requirements such that the Borough of Stratford shall receive credits for these units in its housing plan.

16. The applicant seeks minor site plan approval along with certain variances in order to complete the development.

- a. Applicant seeks a use variance for converting a medical office building to veteran housing within the existing building footprint pursuant to 40:55D-2 and Borough Code Section 17.28.020.
- b. Applicant seeks certain bulk variances including a non-conforming rear yard setback which is an existing condition.
- c. Waivers are requested for certain site plan requirements including with regard to buffers pursuant to Section 17.64.020 of the Borough Code and for buffer screening and plantings which are existing conditions.

WHEREAS, after considerable discussion and due deliberation, the Board determined that the variances and waivers sought by the applicant were necessary and should be granted. The Board finds that the site is particularly suited to the proposed development and that the development will advance the purposes of the Municipal Land Use Law, Master Plan and Zoning Ordinances in that it allows the municipality to guide the appropriate use and development of the Borough in a manner so as to provide for the public health, safety, morals and welfare. It benefits the Borough by eliminating a vacant and obsolete premises and benefits Veterans of the United States Armed Forces, providing an efficient use of land for a suitable purpose and the affordable aspect of the units to Veterans is beneficial to the Borough of Stratford. In addition, the variance may be granted without substantial detriment to the public good and the variance will not substantially impair the intent and purpose of the Municipal Land Use Law, the Master Plan or Zoning Ordinances in that it fosters an appropriate use of the land, provides for the health, morals and good welfare, provides for a use which is more consistent with the existing residential uses and provides a reasonable transition from commercial to residential uses. Therefore the use variance is appropriate; and

WHEREAS, regarding the bulk variances, after due consideration, the Board finds they are necessary to address exceptional and undue difficulties resulting from pre-existing conditions on the property. The Board concluded that the variances and waivers could be granted without imposing any significant detriment on the public good and without causing impairment to the intent or purpose of the Stratford Borough Master Plan or Zoning Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the Board further determined that subject to compliance with conditions as noted by the JLUB Engineer, the applicants proposed minor site plan substantially complied with the Borough's Development Ordinances; and

WHEREAS, upon Motion duly made by John Keenan to approve the Use Variance and seconded by Ron Morello, the Board voted to approve the applicant's variances and waivers as follows:

Mr. St. Maur – Yes
Mr. Santora – Yes
Mr. Morello – Yes
Mr. Mancini – Yes
Mr. Goldin – Yes
Mr. McGovern – Yes
Mr. Keenan – Yes

WHEREAS, upon Motion duly made by Frank Hartman and seconded by Paul McGovern to approve the application for Minor Site Plan approval with attendant bulk variances the Board voted as follows:

Mr. St. Maur – Yes
Mr. Santora – Yes
Mr. Hartman – Yes
Mayor Keenan – Yes
Mr. Morello – Yes
Mr. Mancini – Yes
Mr. Goldin – Yes
Mr. McGovern – Yes
Mr. Keenan – Yes

WHEREAS, notwithstanding the foregoing approvals, applicant is still required to comply with the conditions noted in the letter of JLUB Engineer, Wayne Roorda. Applicant is further required to comply with all outside agency approvals; and


WHEREAS, it is to be specifically understood, this approval is solely for use of the premises as a Veteran's housing facility. Nothing contained in this Resolution shall be construed to extend any findings of this Board to any other use which may or may not be deemed related to that approval.

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Joint Land Use Board of the Borough of Stratford that the application of Veteran's Village of Camden County, Inc. with attendant variances and waivers to permit the use of the subject premises as a Veteran housing facility within the footprint of the existing premises at Block 3, Lot 1, One Colby Avenue, Stratford, New Jersey is granted as aforesaid.

The foregoing is a true copy of the Resolution adopted by the Joint Land Use Board of the Borough of Stratford at its regular monthly meeting of March 22, 2018.



SHARON MCCART, SECRETARY
JOINT LAND USE BOARD, BOROUGH OF STRATFORD



RICHARD ST. MAUR, CHAIRMAN
JOINT LAND USE BOARD, BOROUGH OF STRATFORD