

**Narrative of Proposal**  
**215 Durham Avenue**  
**Block 71 Lot 37.02 Parcel E**

**A. Introduction**

Metuchen I, LLC (the “Applicant”) is seeking preliminary and final major site plan approval with deviations to construct an approximately 12,870 square foot daycare center on property known as 215 Durham Avenue and also identified as Lot 37.02 in Block 71 (“Lot 37.02” or “Parcel E”). Lot 37.02 is located in the Oakite Redevelopment Plan Area, adopted on October 24, 2018 and amended on September 13, 2021 (the “Amended Redevelopment Plan”).

Lot 37.02 is currently improved with the Sportsplex, an approximately 66,074 square foot indoor sports complex, as well as surface parking. The proposed daycare center will be constructed in an area containing some of the existing surface parking to the north of the Sportsplex. No change is proposed to the existing Sportsplex. However, the Applicant is seeking confirmation of Sportsplex’s continued use of the gravel parking lot located on adjacent Lot 37.01 for additional parking stalls as discussed in Paragraph C below.

**B. Phased Redevelopment Project**

This application is part of an overall phased redevelopment project for both Lot 37.02 and adjacent Lot 37.01 in Block 71, which is owned by the Applicant’s subsidiary, Metuchen III, LLC. Lot 37.01 is also located in the Amended Redevelopment Plan Area. The two parcels, in total, contain approximately 11 acres with frontage along Durham Avenue and Middlesex Avenue. As contemplated in the Amended Redevelopment Plan, the two parcels ultimately will be developed as five (5) parcels, A through E, with a mid-block connector roadway running through the site from Middlesex Avenue to Durham Avenue. This application is for Phase I, which is the development of Lot 37.02 (also designated as Parcel E in the Amended Redevelopment Plan).

Phase II will involve a future subdivision application that will add approximately 16,694 square feet of lot area to Lot 37.02 (Parcel E), ultimately creating a 211,794 square foot lot. The additional lot area will be used for paved parking, as discussed below. Redevelopment of Parcels A, B, C and D also will be accomplished through phased applications submitted to the Board.<sup>1</sup>

### **C. Confirmation of Shared Parking**

A total of 107 parking spaces are required for the Sportsplex use and the proposed daycare use. 110 paved surface parking spaces are provided on existing Lot 37.02. An additional 185 parking spaces are provided on the existing gravel surface parking lot located on adjacent Lot 37.01, which currently are used by Sportsplex, for a total of 295 parking spaces provided for both Sportsplex's and the daycare center's use. This application seeks confirmation of Sportsplex's continued parking on the existing gravel lot until the Phase II application is filed, the subdivision is perfected, and the area is then paved for additional permanent parking.<sup>2</sup> Once paved, Parcel E will contain approximately 222 parking stalls located to the front and rear of the Sportsplex building and to the rear of the proposed daycare center. The 222 spaces more than exceeds the Amended Redevelopment Plan parking requirements, and will be used by both Sportsplex and the daycare.

### **D. Deviations**

Three (3) deviations are triggered by this application, all of which will be brought into compliance once the Phase II subdivision application is filed. The variances are as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> The development application for Parcel D, for a senior living center, is currently pending before the Metuchen Planning Board.

<sup>2</sup> If approved, the development of Parcel D will reduce the number of gravel lot spaces from 185 to 155 spaces.

1. Minimum Lot Size: 210,000 square feet required, 195,100 square feet existing and proposed until Phase II. Ultimately, Parcel E will be approximately 211,794 square feet and comply with this standard.
2. Maximum Building Coverage: 40% maximum, where 40.5% proposed. This deviation will be eliminated once Parcel E is enlarged to 211,794 square feet.
3. Minimum Parking Setback: 5' required from any parcel lines. 13.3' is provided along the western boundary; however, 0' is provided between parcel lines for Lots 37.01 and 37.02 due to the shared gravel parking area. This condition will be eliminated once subdivision is accomplished.

The Amended Redevelopment Plan permits the Applicant to seek such deviations consistent with the provisions of the Municipal Land Use Law for "c" variances, N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70(c). As noted, once the additional 16,694 square feet is added to Lot 37.02, Parcel E will comply with the Amended Redevelopment Standards. Therefore, these are temporary variances to be granted in the interim so that site development can occur in an orderly process and the daycare center can be built and may begin operations. The requested relief is *de minimis* and will permit the redevelopment of Parcel E consistent with the Amended Redevelopment Plan. As the deviations will be eliminated, and the site ultimately will be brought into compliance, there is absolutely no detriment in granting the requested relief.

#### **E. Sign Waivers**

The Applicant also is seeking waiver relief from the underlying Ordinance for the proposed wall-mounted signage. First, Ordinance Section 110-185(F) permits 1 wall-mounted sign, where 3 wall-mounted signs are proposed in connection with the daycare center use.

Second, waivers from Ordinance Section 110-186(A) are required for the sign area, height and width. Sign 1 is located on the southern façade and is approximately 48 square feet and approximately 4'- 10" in height. This requires waiver relief for maximum size and maximum height, as a maximum of 24 square feet and height of 3' is permitted by Ordinance. Sign 2 and 3 are approximately 61 square feet, 5'- 3" in height and 13'- 6" in width and located on the northern and eastern façades. Consequently, Signs 2 and 3 also require waivers for maximum size and maximum height. Signs 2 and 3 additionally require relief as to maximum permitted width. A maximum width of 12' is permitted, where Sign 2 and 3 will be 13'-6" in width.

#### **F. Proposed Operations**

Everbrook Academy is the intended daycare center operator and will be open from 6:30 A.M. to 6:30 P.M., Monday through Friday. The daycare center will provide early education and child care services for children from infancy through preschool. Staffing is to be determined based on number of classes and class size.