

Narrative of Proposal
700 Middlesex Avenue
Block 71 Lot 37.01 Parcel C

A. Introduction

Metuchen III, LLC (the “Applicant”) is seeking preliminary and final major site plan approval with signage exceptions to construct an approximately 2,250 square foot Starbucks coffee shop, with drive-thru on property located at 700 Middlesex Avenue and also identified as Lot 37.01 in Block 71 (“Lot 37.01” or “Parcel C”). Lot 37.01 is located in the Oakite Redevelopment Plan Area, adopted on October 24, 2018 and amended on September 13, 2021 (the “Amended Redevelopment Plan”).

B. Phased Redevelopment Project

This application is part of an overall phased redevelopment project for Lot 37.01 and adjacent Lot 37.02 in Block 71, which is owned by the Applicant’s related entity, Metuchen I, LLC.¹ The two parcels, in total, contain approximately 11 acres, with frontage along Middlesex Avenue and Durham Avenue. As contemplated in the Amended Redevelopment Plan, the two parcels ultimately will be subdivided to create (5) development parcels, A through E. A mid-block connector roadway will be installed running through the site from Middlesex Avenue to Durham Avenue. This application is for the development of a portion of Lot 37.01, also designated as Parcel C in the Amended Redevelopment Plan.

C. Site Plan

Lot 37.01 is currently developed with a vacant bank building and surface parking. The proposed restaurant with drive-thru will be constructed in a grass area with frontage along Middlesex Avenue. Seventeen (17) parking spaces are required and proposed. No deviations from

¹ Lot 37.02 is also located in the Amended Redevelopment Plan Area.

the Amended Redevelopment Plan are required and the proposed bulk of the project complies as calculated as to the entirety of Lot 37.01 and as to the future Parcel C that will be created by future subdivision application.

D. Sign Exceptions

The Applicant is seeking waiver/exception relief from the underlying Ordinance for the proposed signage associated with the proposed coffee shop with drive-thru, and for landscaping.

Signage

Four (4) wall-mounted façade signs are proposed at the northeastern, northwestern, southeastern and southwestern façades. Seven (7) sign waivers are required,² as follows:

- Ordinance Section 110-86(A) – Maximum Size of Signboard as to three (3) of the four (4) proposed wall mounted signs. 24 square feet is the maximum standard and 24.14 square feet is proposed on the northeastern and southeastern façades and 31.60 square feet is proposed on the northwestern façade.
- Ordinance Section 110-86(A) – Maximum Height of Signboard as to three (3) of the four (4) proposed wall-mounted signs. The Ordinance provides for a 3-foot maximum where 5 feet is proposed as to the northeastern, northwestern and southeastern façades.
- Ordinance Section 110-86(A) – Maximum Width of Signboard as to the proposed northwestern façade sign. The maximum standard is 12 feet, where 16.26 feet is proposed.

Landscaping

Three (3) waivers also are required from the Borough’s underlying Ordinance as to landscaping, buffering and screening, as follows:

² The Site Plan for this application incorrectly references waiver relief from Ordinance Section 110-85(F) which relates to signage in the LI, Light Industrial District.

- Ordinance Section 110-180 – Shade Trees. Seven (7) trees are required along Factory Street (a public right-of-way) and no trees are provided due to site and grading constraints, and due to the presence of overhead wires.
- Ordinance Section 110-175– Buffering and Screening Around Trash Enclosure. Relief is required from two (2) sections of this section as follows: (1) a 4-foot buffer is required around all trash enclosures and no buffer is provided; and (2) the trash enclosure must also be screened with a minimum 6-foot high masonry wall. The proposed trash enclosure will not be screened on all sides since it is proposed to be built contiguous to the proposed retaining wall. Once Parcel D is developed under a separate application, additional screening can be provided.

E. Proposed Operations

The proposed coffee shop with drive-thru will operate Monday through Saturday, 5:30 AM to 10:00 PM and on Sundays from 6:00 AM to 9:00 PM. There will be three (3) shifts of employees with 5 to 6 employees on each shift.