



Memorandum

Township of Plainsboro Department of Planning and Zoning

To: Planning Board Members
From: Bonnie Flynn, AICP/PP, CFM, Dir. of Planning & Com. Dev.
Ron Yake, AICP/PP, Township Planner & Zoning Officer
Date: February 8, 2024
Re: **Princeton Nurseries Concept Plan - WRV Nurseries, LLC**

On January 17, 2024 the applicant/owner and future developer of the Princeton Nurseries planned mixed-use development, WRV Nurseries, LLC, gave a presentation to the Development Review Committee on their proposed Concept Plan for the project. In association with the concept plan, the DRC received a memo dated January 8, 2024 prepared by staff providing background on the project, explaining the purpose of bringing the concept plan before the DRC for discussion, and identifying areas of concern to staff that need to be addressed as the project advances from concept plan to formal development applications, including subdivision and site plan applications. In response to comments raised by the DRC, including the comments in the staff memo, the applicant was requested to annotate the memo explaining how they intend to address the various issues raised by the DRC and staff. Attached is a copy of the applicant's annotated DRC memo for your review.

The applicant has sought to address many of the comments in the memo and some of the comments remain as issues to be addressed later when the applicant submits formal development applications for staff, DRC, and Planning Board consideration. Among the issues that fall into this category are the following:

1. The detailed manner in which the single-family detached home garages, the driveways serving such homes, and the availability of on-street visitor parking will be handled.
2. The final location and distribution of the 96 required affordable housing units in the project pursuant to the General Development Plan (GDP) approval that required that the units be interspersed among the market rate units in the multiple buildings in the project.

3. Issues related to on and off-street parking, including parking/shared parking analyses, and the provision of adequate and convenient on and off-street visitor parking.
4. Details related to the various types of pedestrian pathways (e.g., street sidewalks, open space/park walkways, and pathways within garage access alleys) and bicycle pathways (e.g., on and off-road bike paths), including those related to linkages to existing and planned pedestrian and bikeway improvements in the area that surrounds the development site.
5. Street and street intersection designs, including garage access alleys, and the adequacy of such vehicle circulation elements to accommodate the anticipated levels of traffic and the various types of vehicles that will travel within this development, particularly large vehicles such as fire equipment, trash trucks, and large delivery trucks serving both the residential (moving vans) and non-residential (store/restaurant delivery vehicles).
6. Planning for and the details related to the primary and secondary vehicular, including bicycles, and pedestrian connections to South Brunswick Township per the Two Crossings set forth as the seventh Guiding Core Principle of the adopted GDP.
7. Details related to common open and recreational spaces (e.g., central civic space, neighborhood and recreational parks, passage/linear parks), landscaping and parking lot design shall be per the Design Guidelines set forth in the adopted GDP.
8. The design and details of the proposed stormwater management system shall fully comply with the Township's stormwater management regulations, as well as the stormwater requirements of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission. When such facilities are located within an open space area, they shall be designed to complement and contribute to the appearance, use, and enjoyment of such areas.
9. The architectural details, including the placement of non-residential/mixed-use and residential buildings shall substantially conform with the guidance provided in the Design Guidelines set forth in the adopted GDP.
10. The applicant shall provide transit opportunities (Princeton Junction shuttle service) and investigate the possibility of New Jersey Transit extending its service to the Princeton Nurseries, as set forth in the adopted GDP.

Staff encourages the Planning Board Members to carefully read the staff comments and the applicant's response to those comments in the attached annotated DRC memo. Again, the items listed above should be viewed within the context of the Next Steps section of the attached DRC memo, involving matters to be addressed in association with anticipated future development applications for the Princeton Nurseries project.

Applicant Annotated Memo

Plainsboro Township

Concept Plan Review

Application: P22-09

Memo Date: 1/8/2024

Meeting Date: 1/17/2024

Development Review Committee Project Review Memo

Name of Applicant: WRV Nurseries, LLC (~~contract purchaser~~)

Property Owner: ~~Trustees of Princeton University~~ WRV Nurseries, LLC

Type of Application: Pre-application Concept Plan Review

Name of Project: Concept Plan for the Princeton Nurseries

Property Location: Block 102, Lots 5 and 6
Block 106, Lot 1

Zone: PMUD-Planned Unit Development Zone
Designated "Integrated Mixed-Use Neighborhood Development" on the PMUD Use Location Map

Present Use: Substantially Undeveloped (existing roadway and stormwater management system improvements)

Adjacent Land Uses: North -- South Brunswick Twp.
(possible non-residential development)
South -- Princeton Forrestal Village and Assisted Living/Nursing Facility
East -- US Route 1
West -- Barclay Square residential development

Documents Reviewed: WRV slide deck – Exhibit A (12/6/23)
WRV slide deck – Exhibit A, Appendix 1 (12/6/23)
Narrative Summary & Overview by Phillips Preiss (12/6/23)
Traffic Evaluation by Langan (10/26/23)

Background

On September 21, 2020, the Planning Board adopted a General Development Plan (GDP) for the 109-acre area within the PMUD Zone owned by the Trustees of Princeton University and known as Princeton Nurseries. Over the course of the last sixteen months, Township staff have been meeting with representatives for the applicant and contract purchaser of the site, WRV Nurseries, LLC (WRV), in consideration of concept plans relative to the requirements of the GDP. The applicant's professional planner, Kate Keller of Phillips Preiss Grygiel Leheny Hughes LLC, who was involved with Princeton University in preparing the University's 2020 GDP document, has prepared a Narrative Summary & Overview dated 12/6/23 on behalf of WRV. This document as well as two slide decks prepared by the applicant dated 12/6/23 and a traffic evaluation by Langan dated 10/26/23 are provided for the Development Review Committee's and the Planning Board's consideration of a proposed concept plan for the site.

This Narrative summary includes information on the land use history of the property and the Princeton Forrestal Center, of which the property is a part; a discussion on the adopted 2019 Master Plan and the 2020 Zoning Amendments intended to facilitate the development of the property for a planned mixed-use development (Integrated Mixed-Use Neighborhood Development); and a general overview of the GDP document adopted in 2020. In addition, the applicant's narrative provides an overview of the proposed concept plan within the context of the adopted GDP, including a discussion on the consistency of the proposed concept plan with the GDP. Instead of echoing much of that which is contained in the Narrative document prepared by the applicant, staff directs you to that document for such information.

Purpose of this Concept Plan Review

As envisioned by Township staff in association with the development and adoption of the Princeton Nurseries GDP in 2020, this concept plan review exercise is intended to allow the applicant the opportunity to demonstrate how their proposed concept plan for the property is in general compliance with the GDP and the various plan elements contained therein, as well as to give the Development Review Committee and the Planning Board, as well as Planning Board staff, the opportunity to offer feedback on the concept plan, especially for the purpose of identifying specific areas of concern to be addressed as the project advances to the site plan and subdivision plan application stage of the development.

Issues/Areas of Concern

A. Land Use Areas (Flex Areas):

The GDP requires three land use areas within the development site; two Residential Areas one adjacent to the eastern and one adjacent to the western boundaries of the site, one Mixed-Use Area centrally located within the site, and two Flex Areas located between the Mixed-Use Area and each Residential Area. According to the GDP, the Flex Areas are defined as areas within the site that permit all uses in Mixed-Use Area except for single-family detached units and are intended to provide a transition from Mixed-Use Area to the Residential Areas in terms of building mass, height, density, and land uses. The applicant shall explain how the requirement to include these five areas is satisfied by the proposed concept plan.

To address the question of how the requirement to include five different land use areas is satisfied in the concept plan, WRV would offer the following:

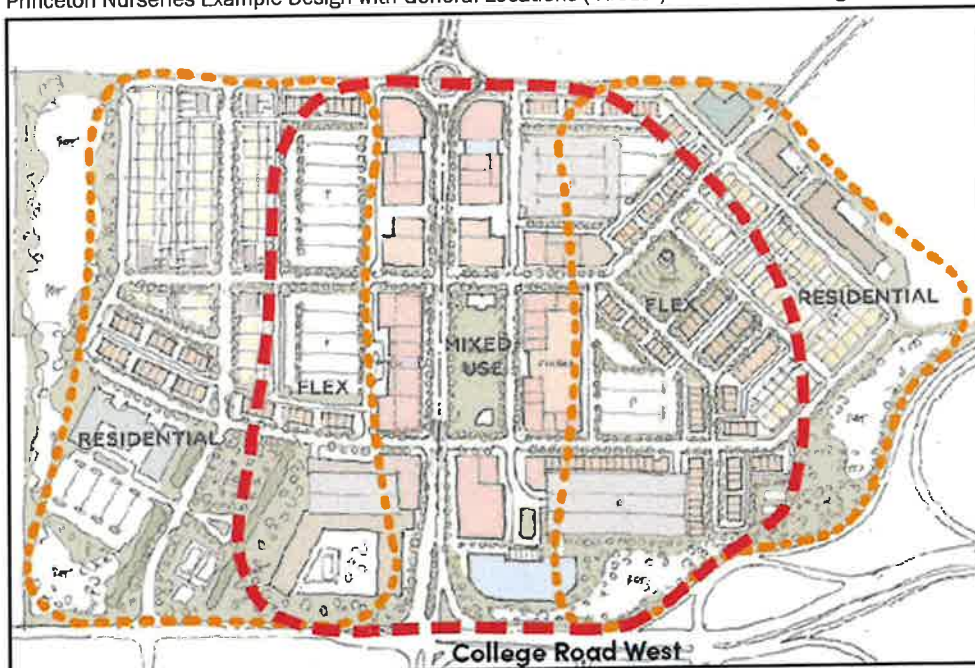
- As a reminder, the three Land Use Areas (Residential, Mixed-Use, and Flex) are described in the GDP as a framework for “sensitively and respectfully integrating the development with existing land uses and infrastructure in the vicinity of the Nurseries site” and requires each Land Use Area to be differentiated by its location, allowable uses, and physical form with the goal being to center the most intensive, high-density uses within the Mixed-Use Area along the central pedestrianized core.

- The WRV concept plan proposes organizing the Land Use Areas in a manner that is very similar to illustrative examples included in the GDP (see below); that is, a north-south linear Main Street with high-density residential uses, flanked by a Flex Area transition zone of parking and landscaping, stacked flats, and higher-density townhomes, ultimately leading to the Residential Areas at the site's periphery.



Above: Land Use Areas concept applied to WRV Concept Plan (December 2023)

Below: Princeton Nurseries Design Guidelines, Figure 4.
Princeton Nurseries Example Design with General Locations ("Areas") of Land Use Categories



- The GDP and Design Guidelines both note that the Land Use Area “boundaries” depicted on the illustrative examples contained therein can be – and were anticipated to be – adjusted during the site plan review process to allow for creative interpretation while still complying with the GDP so long as the Guiding Core Principals are also met.
- Clearly, the concept plan complies with the GDP requirements around creating three distinct Land Use Areas. The Concept Plan proposes Residential Areas located towards the easterly and westerly boundaries, and a Mixed-Use Area that forms the site’s central core, with transition areas of use and density, or Flex Areas, located in between.

The second request we believe staff is making is an explanation of how the Flex Areas, as proposed on the concept plan, provide the transition we discuss above. To that request, we would offer the following:

- First, we would note again that the Flex Areas were meant simply to be transition zones from the mixed-use area of the site to the residential areas of the site. In consultation with Princeton and Phillips Preiss who were involved in the creation of the GDP, it is clear that the definition of the Flex Areas was deliberately left very broad to avoid creating a debate later on about what specifically was meant to be included in these transition zones given that the final design of the project could never have been known at the approval of the GDP. As a result, the Flex Areas were defined more so by what they were NOT meant to be, than what they WERE meant to be, and so long as the density or uses in these areas were different and less intense than the Mixed-Use Area, they would meet the intent of the creation of the Flex Area.
- When considering the current concept plan design, it’s clear that the most active and densest uses are located within the site’s tallest buildings in the Mixed-Use Area. The higher buildings, including the proposed hotel and mixed-use retail-office buildings form the southern gateway, which transitions northward to the four-story mixed-use retail and multi-family buildings to form the heart of Main Street. These areas include the densest uses and are logically defined by the highest building heights, all of which are located in the center of the project. To the east and west of the Mixed-Use Area, each Flex Area provides a distinct, and appropriate transition from these densest areas to the lower density Residential Areas.
- Specifically, on the east side of the site, the Flex Area contains surface parking and landscaped buffers immediately adjacent to the Mixed-Use areas to create

breathing room and buffering from the Residential Areas. Moving out from these parking areas, the Flex Area contains a variety of land use and residential typologies, including both single and multi-family age-restricted options, townhouses, and commercial uses like the proposed grocery store at the southern gateway. Many of the residential uses are fronting on open space and park areas, all of which are lower in density and intensity than the Mixed-Use area, providing a further transition to the Residential Area to the east. Further east in the Residential Area, the largest single-family townhouses abut both passive and programmed open space at the site's periphery completing the transition to the lowest density uses as contemplated in the GDP.

- On the west side of the site, like on the east side of the site, the Flex Area contains surface parking and landscaped buffers immediately adjacent to the Mixed-Use areas to initiate the transition from the denser center of the project. Beyond the parking areas, mid-density carriage and terrace-style townhomes and flats are located between the larger townhomes and single-family homes on the extreme western edge of the property, which are designed to provide an appropriate transition and scale to the neighboring Barclay Square development past the site's western boundary; at the southern gateway, the hotel's courtyard opens to provide a vista of the Windrows and new complementary landscaped areas.
- In all cases, the Flex Areas provide land uses that are less intense and at lower heights from the central Mixed-Use core and provide both architectural as well as distance buffers between the higher density portions of the site to the lower density portions of the site, which at its core, was the purpose of the Flex Areas when originally conceived.

B. Single-Family Area:

1. In order to maximize the size of the rear yards of the proposed twenty (20) single-family homes, the applicant is requesting that all the homes be front loaded, with garages accessible from the streets on which they front. At this time, the applicant is proposing two types of single-family homes, those with attached garages located forward of the main elevation of the house and those with attached garages that are located behind the main elevation of the house. Staff is concerned with the architecture and street relationship of the former (houses with garages forward of main elevation) on the grounds that such units would potentially result in a view of garages dominating the visual character of the proposed street. Such a unit type is not supported by the GDP Design Guidelines for the Princeton Nurseries for this same reason.

If such units are to be allowed, staff recommends that such units be limited to not more than two units adjacent to each other, with the other units on the street having garages that are located behind the main elevation of the house, including behind a front porch if one is proposed. To provide adequate driveway depth in front of the garage, all garages shall be setback a minimum of twenty-five (25) feet from the front property line or sidewalk, whichever is closest to the garage.

WRV is amenable to garage setbacks being 25' to the front property line or sidewalk but would request that the garage setback requirement simply be that all garages be in line with, or behind, the main roofline of the front porch or main elevation of the home. We believe that this design standard will further de-emphasize the garage while preventing the footprint of the home having to grow further into the backyard to maintain the same living space, which would in turn further reduce backyard areas.

2. To maximize on-street parking along the single-family detached dwelling street, Staff recommends that driveways serving such units shall be such that the units are paired to allow the driveways serving the paired units to be located near each other.

All single-family homes currently shown on the concept plan already conform to this standard, however we would like the opportunity to discuss this further with staff, the DRC and Planning Board during the site plan application process with the benefit of street perspectives and renderings to determine whether this creates the right balance between on street parking and the pedestrian's architectural experience.

C. Townhouse Areas:

1. It is staff's understanding that the proposed townhouse units (188 east side, 228 west side) and single-family-detached units (20 units on west side) will be developed by two separate residential builders. Staff encouraged the applicant to provide illustrative elevation drawings of each of the proposed single-family and townhouse unit types, so that staff, the Development Review Committee, and the Planning Board could have a better understanding of the quality and character of the various residential units these residential builders will be proposing when subdivision and site plan applications are submitted for formal consideration by the Township. While the applicant has provided some illustrative images of the proposed

residential units, such images lack a level of detail needed to access the visual quality of the architecture of such buildings. Staff has been informed that a greater level of detail of such buildings is not available at this time.

As we have discussed with staff, while we have provided high level renderings of the direction of the architecture and early-stage design intent of the residential units, because most, if not all, of the residential units for this project will be unique to Plainsboro, the design of these areas is still in its early stages and we do not have detailed elevations to share yet.

That said, we do hope the renderings provided give the town a sense of the direction and quality of the elevations we intend for the Nurseries site. As we have tried to convey throughout our conversations with the town over the last 18 months, our intention is that the design of the residential product will be tailored to Plainsboro and not "off the shelf." Additionally, as we have committed to in previous conversations with staff, we are in the process of advancing the more detailed design of the project in anticipation of a site plan submittal later this spring, at which point we will be submitting detailed elevations, renderings, and hopefully a fly through or two, of all parts of the project to help the town understand the high level of quality we intend for all portions of the project.

2. The table below represents the townhouse unit counts according to the applicant's concept plan:

Townhouse/Attached Dwelling Units	
<i>East Side Residential</i>	<i>Unit Count</i>
<i>20' traditional townhomes</i>	18
<i>24' traditional townhomes</i>	33
<i>26' stacked townhomes</i>	52
<i>22' stacked townhomes</i>	34
<i>22' stacked townhomes (affordable)</i>	20
<i>carriage homes (age-restricted)</i>	31
	188
<i>West Side Residential</i>	
<i>24' luxury single-family attached</i>	108
<i>20' terrace houses</i>	74
<i>20' carriage houses</i>	14
<i>22' flats (stacked townhouses)</i>	
<i>(affordable)</i>	32
	228

With the exception of the units referred to as Stacked or Flats, which each contain a unit on the first floor and a separate unit on the second floor, all the townhouse units shown are in individual buildings that contain on average four to six units, located side-by-side.

On the east side the townhouse buildings range in width from ones containing three side-by-side Stacked units (total width of 66 ft.) to six side-by-side Traditional units (total width of 144 ft.). On the west side, the townhouse buildings range in width from five side-by-side Terrace units (total width of 100 ft.) to nine side-by-side Luxury units (total width of 216 ft.). Staff is concerned about the visual impact of any townhouse structures containing more than six side-by-side units or over 140 feet in width. On the east side there is only one building that is over 140 feet wide, it contains six units and is 144 feet wide. On the west side there are multiple buildings that contain more than six side-by-side units or are over 140 feet in width (see table below):

Type of Unit	# of Buildings	# of Units Within the Buildings	Building Width
Terrace House	4	7	140 ft.
Luxury Attached	6	6	144 ft.
	1	8	192 ft.
	1	9	216 ft.
Carriage House/Flats	1	14 (8 stacked)	208 ft.
	1	12 (8 stacked)	168 ft.

The applicant advises staff that the design of the proposed townhouses on both the east and west sides of the site will be such that there will be substantial architectural articulation of the front elevations, using varied building materials, colors, and dimensional jogs/step-backs to help reduce the visual impact of long rows of side-by-side attached townhouse units, as well as provide a high level of architectural diversity among all townhouse building elevations. While staff supports such treatment to the front elevations of all the proposed townhouse buildings, staff does not support the current plan that includes four townhouse buildings on the west side that are well over 144 feet in width (i.e., range from 168 to 216 ft. in width).

Please see our attached revised plans as a result of our interaction with staff and our discussion with the DRC on January 17th. We have modified the western townhome layout such that there are no buildings longer than 146',

and only 6 buildings out of the 40 in this phase are longer than 6 units (and in those cases, none are longer than 7), down from a maximum of 9 in the last version of the plan. We hope this will satisfy staff's concern in this area.

Staff has advised the applicant during this concept plan review process, that while their current plan shows a full build-out involving the maximum 950 residential units allowed under the approved GDP, when site plan and subdivision applications are submitted, it is likely that the unit count, particularly for the 416 townhouse units proposed, which building-type is very land consumptive compared to multi-story multi-family buildings, may need to be reduced in order to address a number of site plan and subdivision plan review requirements (e.g., stormwater, parking, vehicle and pedestrian circulation, open space, etc.).

We are confident that as we continue to progress the more detailed civil, traffic and landscape design of the project that we will be able to preserve the density depicted on the concept plan in some way. As we have explained during the process with the town, maintaining the density depicted on this plan is important not only to achieve the goals outlined in the GDP around walkability, scale and the overall pedestrian orientation the town envisioned when it passed the GDP, it is imperative to the economics and financial viability of the project which ultimately will drive the successful execution of the town's vision for this new community.

D. Residential Neighborhood Orientation:

The applicant has proposed a cluster of three townhouse units on the far east side of the project, within close proximity to the US Route 1 exit ramp. Such roadway serves to provide access to the Forrestal Village (including Westin Hotel), The Windrows, 100 and 150 College Road West office developments, the former St. Joseph Seminary property, the Barclay Square apartments, and the proposed Princeton Nurseries development.

Staff does not believe the location of these three units is appropriate as such roadway is likely to experience a significant increase in traffic given the development program for this project and the nearly 400 residential units planned for the Princeton Forrestal Village.

Please see our attached revised plans as a result of our interaction with staff and our discussion with the DRC on January 17th. While we thought these units would be well received by the market, we have relooked at this area and have

relocated these three townhomes into a revised layout in the eastern townhome phase. We hope this satisfies staff's concern with this area.

E. Affordable Housing:

The approved GDP, and more particularly the Developer's Agreement, specifies that the 96 required affordable units, "shall be interspersed among the market rate units among multiple buildings." The affordable units are located in the mixed-use Buildings A & B as well as within the east and west side townhouse areas. While townhouse units on the east side are generally distributed among the stacked townhouse section, the west side contains 4-unit strings of affordable townhouse structures. The applicant should explain how they feel their location of units meets the letter and intent of the GDP.

Please refer to plan A1.9 in the attached updated appendix, which we hope helps illustrate why WRV continues to feel we are meeting the intent and letter of the GDP.

While the GDP does not specifically define "interspersed," when considering the site as a whole or each individual phase on its own, WRV has certainly spread affordable units at various intervals among all of the different phases so that there is no one "affordable area," nor one affordable building on the plan. In fact, the affordable units are equally dispersed on a percentage basis amongst each major phase of the project, and then further dispersed within each major residential phase. Overall, we are interspersing the units among 18 different buildings across the project, and in the western phase, which seems to be the only point of contention on this issue, you can find them in virtually every quadrant of the project.

Specific to the western side of the project, UHAC standards drive affordable townhome units to have different floor plans from market rate units. This creates at least two constraints from a design perspective.

1. While all market rate townhomes will be three bedrooms, the affordable units will need to have a range of bedroom counts to conform with UHAC.
 - Roughly 20% will need to be one bedroom units, roughly 60% will need to be two bedroom units and roughly 20% will need to be three bedroom units. Because of this, incorporating affordable units is not as simple as changing a three bedroom market rate unit into a 1 bedroom affordable unit.

2. UHAC also requires that 50% of affordable units be adaptable to meet ADA requirements. This drives the need for all ground floor affordable units to have floor plates unique from the market rate units to ensure that they are adaptable should the request be made by a prospective home buyer. This in turn drives the need for affordable units to be single floor designs that have unique building dimensions preventing them from being stacked or combined with market rate units.

Because affordable units (i) need to be single story units, (ii) need to be specifically distributed between one, two and three bedroom units, and (iii) must be adaptable up to a ratio of 50%, they work best in a two story, stacked townhome configuration where they can be grouped with units that have similar floor plate dimensions and can be layered on top of one another.

Most of the two story stacked townhomes are located on the east side of the project, and in this configuration, affordable units can be easily interchanged with market rate units. In order to achieve the town's desire for residential product diversity, and to achieve product differentiation between the east side and the west side townhomes, on the west side of the project, a majority of the townhomes will be three stories where it is impractical to simply convert a market rate townhome into an affordable townhome given the UHAC requirements.

To creatively get around this design challenge, we have:

- i. Created a new product type that creates a uniform architectural treatment across the affordable and market rate units and allows us to mix the market rate and affordable units together in one building in a stacked configuration.
- ii. Interspersed this building type throughout the western side of the project so that they randomly appear in the architectural landscape, are mixed in with the three story product, and cannot be distinguished as an "affordable" building.
- iii. Broken up the grouping of affordable units such that there are no more than three stacks of affordable units (six total) in a building, with the exception of one building, which helped us to further intersperse the units throughout the western phase.

With these creative solutions, we have created a situation where there is no one "affordable" building and there is no one "affordable area," whether it be in the

western Residential Area or the across the project as a whole. Also, and perhaps even more importantly, from the outside, affordable units and market rate units will be indistinguishable from one another, with both types of units benefiting from the same architectural theme, materials, color and treatment regardless of affordability type. In short, no one will know whether you live in an affordable unit, whether it be by your address, location within the project, or by looking at the outside of your building, which we understand is ultimately the main goal the town is trying to achieve with their interspersed requirement.

F. Parking:

1. The Applicant's Engineer, in his 10/26/23 Traffic Evaluation, discusses shared parking but does not give a shared parking analysis. The Applicant's Engineer shall provide a shared parking analysis for the project at the time of site plan or subdivision application. Calculations of the required parking shall be performed in accordance with the applicable parking requirements for Integrated Mixed-Use Neighborhood Development found in the PMUD Zone (§101-143D).

As previously committed, we plan on submitting our shared parking analysis to the town during the site plan approval process. We have conducted a preliminary analysis, which shows that sharing parking across the site works and we look forward to providing more detail to the town as we advance through the site plan approval process.

2. The applicant's slide deck (Exhibit 1, Appendix 1) provides Parking Allocation Sheet A1.5 and same does not include parking for Block E1. An estimate of the parking for this portion of the site should be included in further iterations of the concept plan and eventual site plan.

Please see the attached updated plan which includes the parking count for E1 assuming WRV chooses to develop it consistent with the first option.

3. The applicant will be required to demonstrate that there is an adequate quantity of convenient on and off-street visitor parking serving to serve the various residential unit types in the project (e.g., single-family detached, townhouse, and multifamily units). That determination will be made in association with a detailed parking study demonstrating compliance with the applicable parking requirements referenced above.

We agree that adequate visitor parking is essential to the success of the project and would point out that generally accepted market parking requirements include the demand visitor parking generates.

As a general comment on the importance of parking to the success of this project, no one is more incentivized to ensure that the parking design works than WRV. If the parking quantity, location or allocation is not designed correctly, we will have an exceedingly difficult time leasing or selling the residential, retail and office components of the project, and given the risk associated with developing a project that will cost multiple hundreds of millions of dollars to execute, we do not have the luxury of creating further risk around a poorly designed project with inadequate parking. WRV has extensive experience across the state in various different types of communities, including in urban infill, first ring suburban and rural settings, and we hope that the town will trust both our experience and our incentive to create a successful outcome as we further discuss the parking needs of this unique site.

G. Circulation (pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular):

1. Pedestrian and Bicycle Linkages:

- a. Staff has been concerned with the lack of pedestrian accommodations throughout the east and west residential areas of the concept plan, especially within the various townhouse units garage access alleys. In the latest concept plan that the Development Review Committee members will receive, the applicant has made progress towards improving pedestrian accommodations in the aforementioned alleys, noting that all such alleys will include paver/stamped concrete pedestrian paths. On page 28 of Exhibit A of the applicant's concept plans, entitled "Potential Pedestrian/Bicycle Linkages," Staff has identified one alley in the east side townhouse area and six alleys in the west side townhouse area where additional pedestrian accommodations need to be shown (see below). The applicant should include such information in plans that go onto the Planning Board for consideration.

Thank you for pointing out these oversights. Please see the updated attached Exhibit A that includes these linkages where they were missed.



- b. In addition to the issue of pedestrian accommodations in such alleys, Staff is also concerned about the potential appearance of such alleys, which may lack landscape/hardscape, fencing, and elevated deck improvements along the rear of the townhouse units that would contribute to creating a high-quality visual environment as seen from both inside and outside such alleys. Staff believes these alleys can be both functional from a vehicular access standpoint, as well as attractive and “pedestrian-friendly.” See examples below of appropriate and inappropriate design.

The partners of WRV have experience building rear access townhomes across the state and as we have discussed with staff previously, all townhomes will have decks, architectural articulation, and appropriately modest landscaping on the rear elevations. We are also comfortable creating fenced separations between driveways in allies, and we will illustrate all of these design features at the time of site plan submittal when the elevations and architecture for the townhomes are further developed.

Appropriate Design



Inappropriate Design



- c. The proposed bicycle circulation network exclusively utilizes the proposed street system to accommodate bicycle circulation in the proposed development. In light of this, the applicant shall implement a comprehensive shared roadway street design and bicycle signage system, including the use of upright roadside and/or roadway surface signage (known as “sharrows”) in accordance with NJ DOT standards for bicycle compatible roadways and bikeways, subject to the approval of the Planning Board Engineer’s.

As previously discussed with staff, we are amenable to this and can share more detail around our execution of this signage program at the time of our site plan application.

2. Vehicular:

- a. The applicant has proposed a number of townhouse units that do not front on a street, but rather an interior open space, where the rear of the unit faces a garage access alley. For example, a number of the "Traditional Townhouses" and "Age-Restricted Carriage Homes" on the east side of the project and some of the "Luxury Attached Single-Family," "Terrace Houses" and "Carriage Houses" on the west side of the project are only accessible by the garage access alleys, some of which may be too narrow or configured in a manner such that they will not be able to accommodate fire trucks and trash trucks. While the applicant indicates such alleys will be a minimum of 20 feet wide, Staff remains concerned that the alleys behind such townhouse units may not be able to meet the turning movement requirements for such vehicles.

Given our experience with dense, mixed-use design across the state, we recognize the importance of the need to plan for appropriate large truck movements throughout the site, including those for garbage trucks and emergency vehicles. From the outset, we have tried to balance this need with the desire to create an intimate, pedestrian scaled project. Please see sheet A1.11 in the appendix illustrating turning radii for the fire company's 2010 E-One Cyclone II fire truck for the townhome portion of this development where we understand the major concern to be. As you can see, the truck can circulate through all alleys and has access to all sides of the building.

- b. The Applicant's Engineer provided a trip generation table with the Traffic Evaluation submitted with the concept submission for the future trip generation. The Applicant's Engineer concluded that the total number of generated trips for the project as currently proposed is less than the total number of trips analyzed in the traffic study supporting the approved General Development Plan. The Applicant's Engineer shall provide the proposed internal trip capture worksheets to corroborate the internal trip capture anticipated at the time of site plan/subdivision application.

Agreed. This will be provided at the time of our site plan application.

- c. The applicant proposes a roundabout at the northerly terminus of the main access road (Main Street) through the mixed-use core. The roundabout location shall be adjusted, as necessary, so that it is situated entirely within the Township.

Consistent with previous conversations with staff, the location of the roundabout was moved entirely within Plainsboro early in the fall of 2023.

- d. The applicant has delineated a second potential roadway connection into South Brunswick at the northeast corner of the site. The alignment of this roadway differs from that which was provided in the illustrative examples contained in the Princeton Nurseries Design Guidelines. Should the implementation of this connection be deemed appropriate by the Planning Board in the future, the applicant shall demonstrate the adequacy of this second connection to meet anticipated vehicular and pedestrian circulation demands between the proposed development and future development in South Brunswick.

As we have worked with the town on the details around the second vehicular connection to South Brunswick over the last 18 months, it has been important to keep in mind that the second connection is only meant to be a "possible future connection," as characterized in the Design Guidelines, and its connection should only occur if compatible uses exist on the opposite side of Harry's Brook.

We have explained extensively to staff that because we are the developers of the property in South Brunswick, we have unique knowledge of what will be built there, and what will be specifically built directly on the other side of Harry's Brook from the proposed location of the second connection. Generally, South Brunswick will only allow commercial uses on this property and as a result, in order to comply with zoning and other regulations for development, the project in South Brunswick will include a mix of data center, life science, industrial, flex industrial, and office uses, the orientation and layout for which we hope to be able to share with Plainsboro prior to, or in at the time of our site plan application submittal.

Setting aside the considerable regulatory challenges with making a vehicular connection across this corridor, including the need for both DEP and DRCC sign off which we think would be exceedingly difficult, given that the initial construction of commercial uses in this area of South

Brunswick will have a useful life of over 40 years, will not meet the compatible use criteria in the design guidelines, nor will it be a use from which we or the town will want to encourage traffic to pass through an exclusively residential portion of the Plainsboro development, it is extremely difficult to envision a scenario in which making this vehicular connection will ever meet any sort of logical planning criteria to be constructed.

While we have provided for this vehicular connection in the layout of the Plainsboro side of the project at the request of staff, and we continue to plan to make this connection via a pedestrian walking trail as part of our bike and ped trail program, our recommendation is that the design and/or financial responsibility for such vehicular connection be left to when, and if, it ever becomes a practical reality.

- e. Pages 27 and 28 of Exhibit A entitled "Potential Pedestrian/Bicycle Linkages" shall be amended to identify the potential for pedestrian/bicycle connections to South Brunswick at the Main Street roundabout and the possible second connection referenced above.

As we confirmed in the DRC meeting on January 17th, the roadway between Plainsboro and South Brunswick will have both pedestrian and bike linkages connecting ped and bike traffic between Plainsboro and South Brunswick. Please see the blue and magenta lines on pages 27 and 28 in Exhibit A which illustrate how both pedestrian and bike linkages will cross from Plainsboro into South Brunswick. It should be noted that during the course of the preliminary design of the main roadway between Plainsboro and South Brunswick north of the roundabout, it was important to us that we provided ample space for both pedestrians and bicyclists, and as such we actually widened the road from its original design to provide for both sidewalks and accommodations for cyclists. In addition to this connection, please also note the changes made to these same pages relative to the Harry's Brook connection. We have reinserted a note from previous versions of the plan to make clear that this connection will be made as a walking trail as part of the initial phase of the project in case that was not clear.

H. Landscaping:

1. The approved GDP encourages, for the purpose of an improved pedestrian experience and comfort, the use of landscaping and overhangs for shade,

utilizing non-heat absorbing materials, and providing opportunities for a variety of seating, including low walls, ledges, movable chairs, etc. Seating locations shall relate to the location of shade trees or other shade creating devices. The applicant shall demonstrate the use of street furniture, hardscaping, and overhead canopies in relation to the proposed landscaping.

We would refer staff, the DRC and the Planning Board to the renderings included in Exhibit A, all of which on pages 14-19 and 24-26 depict actual preliminary renderings, and the actual preliminary design, of the pedestrian realm for the project. These were produced by our landscape architect, Melillo and Bauer, a nationally recognized landscape architect who the WRV team uses extensively throughout the state. Melillo and Bauer will provide further detail on landscaping and the general improvements we plan to make to the pedestrian realm during the site plan application process, but we hope this gives the town an idea of our vision for these pedestrian areas and they are as excited as we are about our aspirations for the pedestrian experience at the Nurseries.

2. Parking lots:

- a. Landscaping, buffering and screening shall be provided to filter and minimize direct views of parking areas, as well as provide shade to reduce the heat island effect. Trees shall be provided to break up rows of twenty (20) or more parking stalls (e.g., the number of parking stalls along Buildings A and B exceed this number). The applicant shall review the proposed landscape layout for the parking lots C, D and E2 for conformance with this standard.

All landscaping throughout the community will conform to the requirements in the GDP.

- b. Landscape material shall be added to the parking lot islands that run parallel with proposed Buildings A, B, and E2. Currently, it appears only trees within the lawn areas are proposed.

Given that we are only at concept plan phase, we have not yet released the detailed planting/landscape design. The green areas on the concept plan are only to create a visual representation of where landscaped areas are intended to be, however all landscaped areas will be extensively designed by Melillo and Bauer as part of the site plan application process.

I. Stormwater Management:

1. As noted in the General Development Plan Application, all future stormwater management facilities will be consistent with New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Plainsboro Township, and Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission stormwater management regulations in effect at the time of application for site plan approval.

The Applicant notes that Best Management Practices (BMPs) such as green infrastructure, porous pavement, rain gardens, dry wells, sub-surface basins, and large-scale BMP's are examples of design elements that may be utilized to address groundwater recharge, water quality, and runoff attenuation.

Agreed.

2. There appears to be a significant amount of porous pavement proposed throughout the project within parking stalls. The Applicant shall discuss how the porous pavement is maintained including the schedule for maintenance and their experience with the material and application. Additionally, the Applicant shall also discuss the need for porous pavement in the proposed design and the feasibility of replacing same with additional rain gardens, grass swales, etc. in order to alternatively address water quality that would be easier to maintain.

The stormwater management plan included in Exhibit A is meant to be illustrative only. WRV intends to meet all state and local stormwater regulations, which may or may not require the use of porous pavement in areas of the site. We have only engineered the site to a level that confirms that we will be able to meet all stormwater requirements but have not yet completed detailed designs to know which BMPs will best meet the flow, storage and water quality requirement of these regulations. At the appropriate time, should porous pavement be a BMP we choose to deploy, we are happy to share details with the town about its integration as a tool in our overall stormwater design.

J. Development Timing/Phasing:

The anticipated phasing and timing schedule for development of the site over the requested vesting period is contained in Appendix F of the approved GDP. The applicant is proposing a more aggressive implementation of the project which the

applicant shall explain. Given the proposed changes to the project as it pertains to non-residential development, the applicant shall prepare a table that documents in detail how the proposed concept plan satisfies the GDP phasing requirements, including the implied land use ratios (non-residential and residential) reflected in the expected phasing schedule. Such table shall be provided by the applicant in association with their submission of the concept plan to staff for consideration by the Planning Board. The applicant should refer to paragraphs 35 and 36 under the Timing Schedule section of Planning Board Resolution P20-07 and Appendix F of the GDP. Failure to comply with the approved phasing schedule may necessitate a variation or amendment to the GDP.

Please see pages 33 and 34 of Exhibit A which detail our proposed accelerated phasing of the project and compare our phasing plan to that which is required under the GDP. As is illustrated in Exhibit A, and as was discussed with staff during the fall of 2023, WRV intends to build over 78,000 square feet more non-residential in the initial phase than is required in the GDP, and 100% of the Central Civic Square vs. the 40% that is required in the GDP.

Our main goal in accelerating the construction of this non-residential square footage is to prevent a situation where a residential environment is created with no retail, or worse, a retail environment is created with no residents. Additionally, and consistent with the requirements and bonuses available in the GDP, by accelerating the development of these non-residential uses, this will unlock our ability to construct 100% of the residential units we contemplate as part of the concept plan. While these residential units will be unlocked as part of the completion of the initial phase, this does not mean that they will all be built as part of the initial phase. Rather, we expect that the residential components of the project will be built out over a period of 4 - 6 years assuming standard market absorption rates.

At the same time, with the acceleration of the development of the non-residential square footage, WRV will have de-risked the project enough to be able to construct the full site improvements, including roads, stormwater management measures, landscaping and the like to all portions of the project, including the mixed-use areas and townhome areas. This will allow us to minimize the negative effects extensive construction over an extended period of time has on the experience of then current residents and customers of the community as well as prospective residents looking to purchase homes, helping to create the kind of positive environment a project like this needs to get off on the right foot. Accelerating the non-residential development also has the added benefit of

accelerating the construction of the mixed-use environment which will be an important selling point for future residents and an important draw for future retail customers.

Lastly, in response to some of the questions we have received around the timing of the construction of the E1 and E2 blocks, below is a summary of the proposal we made for the future development of these blocks:

- WRV is committing to build no less than 228,000 square feet of retail as part of the project, approximately 150,000 of which would be built as part of the development of the A-D blocks during the first two phases of the project.
- E1 & E2 would be developed as part of the final phase of the development consistent with the phasing plan that is part of the GDP.
- E2 would be developed as large format retail of approximately 40,000 square feet.
- E1 would be developed as one of two options:
 1. As additional large format retail of up to 35,000 square feet; or
 2. In a mixed-use configuration as additional boutique retail with age-restricted residential above.

If E2 is developed in this mixed-use configuration, the boutique retail would amount to only +/- 28,000 square feet, and because this is less than the 35,000 square feet committed to staff in the fall, we would commit to build additional retail on the north end of Building A or Building B in an amount that allows the total retail developed in the project overall to be no less than 228,000 square feet. This additional retail would be located in the grayed out areas depicted on sheet A1.8 of the appendix.

- The determination of the timing and development path of these areas would be at WRV's discretion and be driven by our analysis of the most successful development path based on market forces at the time of the final phase of development.
- Notwithstanding this 228,000 square foot threshold, WRV has left open the possibility that the market could prove to be so strong that the full

buildout of all potential retail areas could be supported. If this were the case, the total retail built could be as much as +/- 246,000 as shown on sheet A1.8 of the appendix.

- Until such time as both E1 and E2 are developed, they would be stabilized as grassy pads and could be used as open space for the community.

NEXT STEPS

As noted at the beginning of this memo, the meetings with the Development Review Committee and the Planning Board on the concept plan for the Princeton Nurseries property are intended as an opportunity for the applicant to present the proposed project to both bodies in order to receive their feedback on the project, including any issues or concerns they may have, as well as staff, prior to advancing to the development application phase of the review process.

Following the Planning Board meeting, and after addressing any issues or concerns raised by the Board and staff, the applicant may submit development applications, including major preliminary and/or preliminary/final site and subdivision plans, including detailed engineering and other plan information (e.g., architectural, landscape), technical reports (e.g., stormwater management, utilities, traffic including directional distributions, impacts and off-site improvement obligations, parking, phasing plan, fiscal impact), and ultimately, a revised Developer's Agreement.

The applicant shall be aware that in order to demonstrate compliance with the approved GDP, including the corresponding Developer's Agreement, Design Guidelines, Stormwater Management Regulations, etc., the development applications that will be considered at the Planning Board in the future must be comprehensive and include the entire site, and not be limited to portions of the site based on the contemplated phasing of the development.