

RESOLUTION

PLAINSBORO TOWNSHIP PLANNING BOARD
Middlesex County, New Jersey

P20-02 Astrum Solar Inc. d/b/a Centrica Business Solutions
Block 1701, Lot 4.02
101 Plainsboro Road

Princeton HealthCare System Redevelopment Area
Pediatric Medical Office District (PMO)

**~ MINOR SITE PLAN APPROVAL WITH SUBMISSION WAIVERS ~
(Solar Array Installation – Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia)**

WHEREAS, The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) is the record owner of property located in the Princeton HealthCare System Redevelopment Area and designated on the Plainsboro Township tax maps as Block 1701, Lot 4.02 (“site” or “subject property”); and

WHEREAS, the subject property is located in the Redevelopment Area’s PMO District and is improved with a one-story medical office building and related parking and other improvements; and

WHEREAS, Astrum Solar Inc. d/b/a Centrica Business Solutions (“applicant”) is a provider of solar energy that proposes to install a 409.60 kW photovoltaic system at the rear of the subject property, and to that end has applied to the Plainsboro Township Planning Board (“Board”) for minor site plan approval; and

WHEREAS, the details regarding the applicant’s proposal are set forth in the Planning Board Review Memo dated May 27, 2020, attached hereto as Schedule “C” and made a part hereof, as well as in the following materials submitted by the applicant:

- Signed application form, checklists, and submission waiver requests

- Narrative description of proposal entitled “Centrica Business Solutions Solar Array Installation, Minor Site Plan Application, Project Narrative”
- Compliance Statement for Stormwater Regulatory Review from Van Note - Harvey Associates dated March 5, 2020 (Brian R. Perry, PE, NJ Lic. No. CE45920)
- Supplemental State for Consistency with Amended Redevelopment Plan Solar Array Project from Van Note - Harvey Associates dated March 10, 2020 (Brian R. Perry, PE, NJ Lic. No. CE45920)
- Civil engineering plans entitled “Minor Site Plan of Solar Array Project for The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, Block 1701, Lot 4.02, Plainsboro Township, Middlesex County, New Jersey,” prepared by Van Note - Harvey Associates (Brian R. Perry, PE, NJ Lic. No. CE45920), dated March 5, 2020 (nine sheets total)

and

WHEREAS, the Board reviewed the application at a public hearing held on June 15, 2020, during which the applicant was represented by Christopher H. DeGrazia, Esq., of Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP in Princeton, New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, no public notice of the application was required under the Municipal Land Use Law or the Township’s land use regulations; and

WHEREAS, during the hearing, the Board reviewed the exhibits set forth in Schedule “A” attached hereto and made a part hereof; and

WHEREAS, during the hearing, the Board heard testimony from the witnesses set forth in Schedule “B” attached hereto and made a part hereof; and

WHEREAS, the Board also considered the Planning Board Review Memo dated May 27, 2020, attached hereto as Schedule “C” and made a part hereof; and

WHEREAS, members of the public and interested parties were provided with the opportunity to ask questions, cross-examine witnesses, and offer comments; and

WHEREAS, the Board based its review of the application on the plans, reports, and exhibits identified above and the testimony provided, as well as on its own knowledge of and expertise in the subject matter; and

WHEREAS, after due deliberation, the Board makes the following findings:

1. The findings set forth in the preamble to this resolution are incorporated herein as if restated at length.
2. The applicant is proposing to install a 409.60 kW ground-mounted photovoltaic (PV) system at the rear of the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) medical office building located at 101 Plainsboro Road, along the property line shared with the undeveloped Office/Residential Complex (ORC) property to the north. The area, which currently consists of lawn and planted trees, was approved in 2013 for parking in connection with the potential future phased expansion of the CHOP facility. It is CHOP's desire to retain its approval rights to install parking within this area should it decide to expand its facility in the future. If that option is pursued in the future, the proposed solar installation would be removed from the site or, subject to Planning Board approval, possibly relocated elsewhere on the property.
3. The proposed solar project will assist CHOP in offsetting carbon-based electricity generation by producing renewable clean electricity. It will be "behind the meter," meaning that generated solar electricity will feed directly to CHOP's facilities, offsetting its total electricity consumption and reducing its demand on the local grid. All of the power produced by the system will be utilized by the CHOP facility. The applicant anticipates that the project will produce approximately 98 to 99 percent of the electrical needs for the current facility at the site.
4. The ground-mounted solar energy panels will occupy approximately one acre of the property behind CHOP's facility. The installation will consist of approximately 1,024 PV panels mounted on a fixed steel racking system with a tilt angle of approximately twenty-five degrees (25°). This tilt is required to maximize their solar exposure/efficiency. The bottom of the panels will be roughly two feet from grade at their lowest point and roughly seven feet from grade at their highest point. The foundations for the racking system structures will consist of post-driven piers, which can easily be removed if CHOP were to pursue its right to construct parking at this location in the future.
5. The entire solar array installation will be enclosed by a seven-foot high decorative perimeter fence which will function as a safety barrier. The safety fence is required by electric code and will act as a safety measure to restrict access to the area to authorized

- personnel only. The inverter equipment (converting DC electricity to AC electricity) will be located at grade inside the proposed fence enclosure around the project area. The generated solar electricity will feed directly to CHOP's onsite facilities, reducing its consumption from the regional electrical grid.
6. The operational components of the solar array are monitored via an integrated monitoring system that notifies off-site technical staff of operational issues. Operational issues will generally be corrected within twenty-four hours by a technician that is dispatched to the site. No cleaning of the panels will be required due to the regional climate conditions and frequency of precipitation events. All of the solar array components are weather-resistant and designed for exterior use in the northeast region of the United States.
 7. The applicant intends to maintain the existing grass under and around the solar arrays and will reseed all areas of disturbance from the project. The use of grass as ground cover will maintain stormwater runoff quality and provide a habitat for small animals and birds.
 8. The applicant intends to maintain the existing landscape buffering and enhancement of the existing "green corridor" by installing a decorative fence and additional plantings.
 9. The area of disturbance for this project is surrounded by landscape tree plantings that were installed in association with the approved site plan for the CHOP facility. All existing trees along the northern property line will remain to provide screening from the property to the north. Approximately seven deciduous trees (one Crab Apple and six Red Maple) will be removed along the CHOP building/drive-aisle side of the proposed solar facility. In the project narrative, the applicant indicates these trees will be relocated to the Green Corridor west of the array. Plan sheet CE-4 indicates that six transplanted trees or replacement trees will be planted in this area. Because the six trees proposed to be transplanted are all deciduous trees, which will offer little to no screening of the solar installation as viewed from Punia Boulevard, the DRC and staff have recommended—and the applicant has agreed—that at least six 8' to 10' tall Norway Spruce or Green Giant Western Arborvitae trees be planted in lieu of relocating the existing deciduous trees, to help screen views of the project from Punia Boulevard.
 10. Minor underground utility improvements are proposed under this project in order to convey electricity from the solar array field directly to the existing building within the PMO district. The proposed site improvements do not require any water service, sanitary sewer service, and/or gas service.
 11. The applicant has indicated that no additional lighting, security or otherwise, will be installed in association with the project.

12. The proposed project does not add any additional floor area or expand any existing buildings, and there is no additional parking needed or proposed.
13. The project will add only a *de minimis* amount of impervious coverage (piers and transformer pad). As a result of the negligible increase in impervious coverage on the site in association with this project, there will be no impact to stormwater management on the site relative to what was approved for the full build-out of the CHOP facility. Furthermore, this site plan will not impact the stormwater management plan for the Redevelopment Area, as the quantity and method of controlling and managing stormwater for the Redevelopment Area is not changing.
14. No changes to the street design, street signs, curbing, monuments, or street lighting are proposed under the project.
15. The project proposes no changes to the existing parking or parking needs on the site. The existing on-site parking is more than adequate to support the parking needed for periodic maintenance, testing and inspections personnel. Such vehicular access will be infrequent and generally occur about once per calendar quarter.
16. The proposed improvements do not impact the circulation and/or traffic impact analysis of the Redevelopment Plan. The general types and location of transportation facilities will not change as a result of the proposed site improvements. Traffic patterns within and outside of the site will remain unchanged.
17. The project will not impact the open space plan, as the location of open space, recreation, and conservation land areas previously approved is not changing. The proposed solar array is an interim use of land area that was previously set aside and approved for parking in support of the full buildout of the PMO district (CHOP facility).
18. The project will not impact environmental inventory as the proposed site improvements have been designed to minimize the impact on vegetation, soils, topography, surface water, wetlands, or existing man-made features.
19. The project will not impact the Community Facility Plan. The application proposes no changes to the public park, pedestrian and bike paths, healing and educational gardens, and to community education areas in the Redevelopment Area.
20. The project will not impact the approved housing plan or number of housing units provided within the Redevelopment Area.
21. The project will not change the fiscal impact of the Redevelopment Area.

22. The applicant's proposal is consistent with the Redevelopment Phasing Plan.
23. The project will not impact any of the land uses described in Sections 3.0, 3.1 and 3.5 of the Redevelopment Plan. There is no change proposed to the floor area of the existing building, a negligible increase in impervious coverage, and no impact to the area, yard and building requirements.
24. As previously noted, the proposed solar array is located within the footprint of future parking under the full build-out phase, in the event the applicant proceeds with the full build-out in the future, the solar panels could be removed or, subject to the Board's approval, possibly relocated elsewhere on the property.
25. Conformance to Amended Redevelopment Plan requirements; deviations needed. The proposed solar array field is in conformance relative to the permitted uses in the PMO district where the subject property is located, and it conforms to all applicable property setbacks, is properly fenced and is adequately screened by landscape features and the existing building. The proposed improvements comply with the Redevelopment Plan.
26. Submission waivers. The applicant seeks a number of waivers from the site plan submission requirements identified in the Township's checklists, as well as several of the submission requirements set forth in the Redevelopment Plan. Based on the recommendation of staff and the DRC, as well as for the reasons identified by the applicant in its submissions, the Board finds that all of the requested submission waivers can appropriately be granted.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Plainsboro Township Planning Board on this 15th day of June, 2020, that the application by Astrum Solar Inc. d/b/a Centrica Business Solutions for minor site plan approval with submission waivers to install a solar array behind the medical office building operated by The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia be and is hereby granted, subject to the following conditions (to which the applicant has agreed):

1. A minimum of six 8' to 10' tall Norway Spruce or Green Giant Western Arborvitae trees shall be planted in lieu of the relocation of the existing deciduous trees to help screen views of the project from Punia Boulevard. The applicant shall add a note to the plans requiring that the trees be field located in an effort to fill in open gaps in the buffer. Upon completion of the project, Planning Board staff shall assess the effect of such screening and, if deemed necessary to achieve the desired effect, direct representatives for CHOP to arrange the planting of additional trees as specified by Planning Board staff.

2. The applicant shall revise its plans to provide general landscape notes and planting and staking details, for further review.
3. Details shall be added to sheet CE-4 of the plans regarding the location of the inverter equipment. Unless infeasible, such equipment shall be painted a color to blend with the color of the racking system that supports the solar array panels.
4. General notes 7 and 8 shall be revised to read:

Prior to the commencement of construction, a detailed sequence of construction and contractor's staging plan shall be provided to separate and manage construction traffic from other traffic. This will further establish the contractor's work and staging areas for each phase of construction, and shall include but not be limited to items related to the placement of construction office and/or storage trailers; outdoor equipment and materials storage; safety and security fencing; vehicular and pedestrian circulation; installation of underground utilities; parking area construction and construction related signage.

Prior to the commencement of any site work, including initial site clearance and grading, a hauling plan shall be submitted to the Township for review and approval for the movement of any construction materials or demolition debris on roadways leading from the Township borders and vice versa.

5. The construction detail for the proposed fence gate shall be amended to provide for the width indicated on the site plan.
6. Unless expressly modified herein, the applicant will comply with all unfulfilled conditions and requirements, if any, set forth in the Planning Board Review Memo attached hereto as Schedule C, even if omitted from this resolution.
7. The applicant shall comply with all representations made and conditions agreed to on the record, even if omitted from this resolution.
8. The applicant will obtain the approval of and/or waivers, exemptions, or letters of no interest from the following outside agencies as applicable:
 - a. Middlesex County Planning Board
 - b. Freehold Soil Conservation District
 - c. Delaware & Raritan Canal Commission
 - d. All other agencies having jurisdiction over the applicant's proposal

9. The applicant shall submit revised plans as called for in the foregoing conditions.
10. The applicant shall pay all outstanding real estate taxes, if any, within thirty days of the date of this approval.
11. The applicant shall post such engineering inspection fees, performance guarantees, temporary certificate of occupancy guarantees, maintenance guarantees, and other guarantees as may be required, consistent with the provisions of S-3233 (P.L. 2017, c. 312), and shall provide cost estimates to the Planning Board Engineer from which to calculate all such guarantees and inspections fees.
12. Unless otherwise specifically set forth herein, all conditions of approval must be satisfied prior to the signing of the final plans and issuance of any construction or other permits.

[REMAINDER OF PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK]

ROLL CALL ON THE APPLICATION AND RESOLUTION, June 15, 2020

Yes: No: Absent: Abstain/Not Voting:

P. Cantu		G. Kiernan	
E. Yates		L. Kumar	
A. Lehrhaupt		S. Agarwal	
R. Keevey		P. Kumar	
J. Greer		J. Doshi (Alt. 1)	
		D. Westbrook (Alt. 2)	

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Plainsboro Township Planning Board on the 15th day of June, 2020.

Deborah Dudek, Planning Board Secretary

SCHEDULE A

APPLICANT'S EXHIBITS

<u>A-1</u>	
<u>A-2</u>	
<u>A-3</u>	
<u>A-4</u>	
<u>A-5</u>	
<u>A-6</u>	

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SCHEDULE B

WITNESSES

Applicant's Witnesses:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Planning Board Staff and Consultants:

- Lester Varga, AICP/PP, Director of Planning and Zoning
- Ronald Yake, AICP/PP, Township Planner and Zoning Officer
- Lou Ploskonka, PE, CME Associates (Board Engineer)
- Trishka Waterbury Cecil, Esq., Mason, Griffin & Pierson (Board Attorney)

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SCHEDULE C

[attach Project Review Memo]

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