

INTEROFFICE CORRESPONDENCE
VILLAGE OF RIDGEWOOD
Department of Public Works
Division of Engineering

TO: Village of Ridgewood Zoning Board of Adjustment

FROM: James B. McGrath, III, Village Engineer, P.E

RE: 6 South Monroe Street
Block 2404, Lots 3 and Block 2403, Lot 17.01
Application No. ZBA25-25
File No. 26978

SUB: Review of Proposed Site Plan – West Side Presbyterian Church

DATE: March 5, 2026

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The Department of Public Works, Division of Engineering has prepared a preliminary review of the recently received materials for the referenced location. The applicant proposes to renovate and expand the existing barn structure, install new landscaping and hardscaping, resurface existing parking lot and installation of a new sports court. The following materials were reviewed:

- *Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan*, prepared by Bohler, LLC, dated June 30, 2025, last revised September 19, 2025
- *Report of Geotechnical Investigation*, prepared by Whitestone Associates, Inc. for Bohler, LLC, dated July 14, 2025
- *Stormwater Management Report*, prepared by Bohler, LLC, dated July 2025
- *ALTA/NSPS Land Title Survey*, prepared by Control Point Associates, dated June 27, 2025
- Village of Ridgewood Planning Board Application for Development, prepared by Sillis, Cummins, and Gross, P.C., dated July 21, 2025

The following comments and observations are for the Board's consideration regarding this application.

Site Plan

- The project proposes to renovate and expand the existing barn structure, install new landscaping and hardscaping, resurface existing parking lot and installation of a new sports court.
- Across South Hillside Place, proposed decorative crosswalk is within Village Right of Way (ROW). Owner shall construct in accordance with Ridgewood Village Code Chapter 249 in coordination with the Division of Engineering.
- The applicant shall demonstrate how snow removal and storage will be managed onsite.
- There are no garbage containers noted on the plans. Applicant shall indicate number, size and location of dumpsters on the Site Plan.
- The existing lawn area from the barn to the existing parking lot has a consistent downhill slope averaging 17.5% with total elevation change of 20 feet. The plan proposes regrading of this area with a flatter lawn area at the top, and installing a bioretention basin at the bottom with proposed finished grade as much as 8.5 feet below existing grade. The proposed slope between the flatter lawn and the basin is 50% (17-foot elevation change over a distance of 34 feet). No proposed ground cover details have been provided for this slope. Due to the severity of the slope, erosion control matting is recommended.

- The applicant must demonstrate that the seasonal high-water table (SHWT) is anticipated to meet the minimum separation from the bottom of the bioretention system as required in the 2023 NJ Stormwater BMP Manual. The required bottom of stone elevation for a bioretention must be at least 1 foot above the SHWT. The Geotechnical Report noted that ground water was not observed, however the excavations were limited by depth and time of year. The manual allows the SHWT to be determined by the observed water level only in the months of January through April, however the test pits were dug in June. The report estimated the SHWT based on NRCS Web Soil survey, which is allowed. The estimated SHWT depth is noted as greater than 200 cm (6.56 ft). Based on existing topography, the depth of excavation to the bottom the stone of the basin as much as 11.5 feet (SHWT must be 1 foot below stone).
 - The applicant shall provide a traffic circulation plan for emergency vehicle access in accordance with state and local regulations in accordance with MUTCD, 11th Edition.
 - The applicant shall confirm that all proposed traffic circulation, parking spots, drive aisles, lane widths, etc. are designed in accordance with MUTCD, 11th edition and NJDOT and any other applicable regulatory bodies.
 - The proposed driveway leading to the barn is 15 feet wide, which is less than the minimum width of 20 feet outlined in the NJ Fire Prevention Code 2015 Section 503.1.1 and Village Code 190-90.
 - The Fire Official may designate fire lane striping and “No Parking” signs along the driveway leading to the barn. See Village Code 151 – Fire Zones.
 - The applicant shall advise if all or part of the barn roof area runoff will be piped underground. The drainage report suggests that the entire roof area will be piped underground and directed to the bioretention system. The Division of Engineering recommends capturing and directly piping runoff from the upper part of the property to reduce the surface runoff traveling through the main parking lot. Topography on the adjacent property to the west (Church of God) suggest storm water may be crossing the property line towards court and driveway and adding to the overall runoff on the site.
 - The existing inlets in the main parking lot are set above a total of ten (10) 1000-gallon seepage tanks that were installed in 2001 as part of a parking lot expansion project. The maintenance history is unknown and it is likely that these tanks have accumulated sediment through years. It is recommended that the seepage tanks are cleaned of accumulated sediment.
 - The drawings indicate that an existing landscape island will be removed as part of the parking lot reconstruction. This island is located near 46 South Monroe Street. The approved drawings from the parking lot expansion in 2001 show 18 arborvitae proposed within this island. The new drawings show 13 trees still remaining. The applicant must demonstrate that removal of this island will not reduce visual screening to 46 South Monroe Street.
 - The applicant shall advise if there are any plans for Electrical Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) or Make-Ready parking spaces, in accordance with Ridgewood Village Code Chapter 190-121.
 - The proposed sports court shall be constructed in accordance with Ridgewood Village Code Chapter 190-124.
 - The applicant shall confirm that their Landscape Plan was prepared in accordance with Ridgewood Village Code Chapter 260.
1. The applicant shall provide additional documentation related to the proposed retaining walls in addition to the *Reinforced Segmental Block Retaining all (For Illustrative Purposes Only)* detail in accordance with Ridgewood Village Code Chapter 190-97. Retaining wall heights and separation between walls must comply with Village Code 190-124. It is recommended that a section view of the proposed tiered walls be added. There are proposed fences set on top of retaining walls in multiple locations. The fences are likely needed for fall protection. This will require variance relief from Village Code 190-124.
 - A geoweb detail for a grass access lane has been provided in the construction detail sheets. The location of this improvement must be shown on the site plan or removed from the drawing.
 - It should be noted that the proposed patio renovations in front of the existing structure on Block 2404, Lot 3 was completed in November 2025 without any permits or prior approvals.
 - It should be noted that the ADA sidewalk curb ramp in front of the existing structure on Block 2404, Lot 3 exceeds the NJDOT maximum allowable running slope.
 - The Site Plan suggests the ADA ramps on each side of the midblock crosswalk will be concrete pavers with no detectable warning surfaces. The ramps must meet ADA and Village specifications. The required concrete for curbs and sidewalks along Village roadways is cast in place NJDOT Class ‘B’ Concrete. The type of detectable warning surfaces typically used on Village curb ramps is manufactured by ADA Solutions in the color brick red.

Site Utilities:

- The applicant shall indicate means of fire suppression throughout the site, and that all structures are within 400 feet of an accessible fire hydrant, in accordance with the New Jersey Administrative Code.
- The existing electric service going from South Hillside Place to the barn is overhead the entire way with three utility poles on the property along the route. The utility pole nearest the barn is proposed to be removed and underground electric to be installed for part of the route. The electric is depicted dropping to underground by an existing pole to remain with a transformer pad approximately 7 feet off of the lot line abutting a residential property. Village Code 190-124 requires a 10-foot setback from any residential property line. Cypress and Arborvitae plantings are proposed between the pad and lot line that will provide visual screening. If the proposed transformer location is to remain as is, a variance request should be added for this item.
- The Division of Engineering recommends that all newly installed subsurface utilities be installed with detectable marking tape 12-inches below grade to assist in locating them for markouts or future excavations.

Regulatory:

The following permits maybe required:

- Storm Water Control Plan Permit: Permit shall be obtained from the Division of Engineering.
- Soil Moving Permit: Soil moving quantities have not been provided. Request they be provided to determine what type of soil moving permit will be required for the project.
- Retaining Wall Permit: Permit shall be obtained from the Building Department after review by the Division of Engineering.
- Curb/Sidewalk/Apron Permit: Any proposed work within the existing curb/sidewalk will require this permit to be obtained from the Division of Engineering.
- Road Opening Permit: Any excavations within the South Monroe Street or South Hillside Place rights-of-way limit will require a permit to be obtained from the Division of Engineering.
- Sewer Connection Fee: The applicant shall coordinate with the Division of Engineering to determine the Sewer Connection Fee for this property. See Village Code Chapter 238-24 and Chapter 145-6 – Enumeration of fees. The sewer connection fee is currently set at \$7,000 for a non-residential development that creates additional gross floor area up to 6,000 square feet. The proposed increase in floor area for this project is 1,165 square feet.
- Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plan Permit: Based on the scope of work, this will be required from the Bergen County Soil Conservation District.
- Building Department Permits: Shall be required for any of the proposed work, if this application is approved by the Board.

Please note, additional items and questions may arise as the review process develops.

If there are any questions or additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me.