

DORAN

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MEMO TO: City of Northfield Planning/Zoning Board

FROM: Matthew F. Doran, Board Engineer

DATE: October 4, 2025

RE: Big Land, LLC
Doran #9749

LOCATION: BLOCK: 97 LOT: 6,7, &8
Zion Road and Tilton Roads

STATUS: Minor Subdivision, Site Plan Waiver Request, and “c” & “d” variance request.

BASIS FOR REVIEW: Plans prepared by Kates Schneider Engineering, LLC

Sheet 1 of 2, dated March 10, 2025

Sheet 2 of 2, dated February 19, 2025

Cover letter from Manos Law Firm, LLC, dated September 25, 2025

Certified 200’ list, dated February 14, 2025

Application Package, undated

Application Supplement, undated

Certification of Paid Taxes for all lots, dated September 17, 2025

Architectural Renderings for the duplex, undated

Resolution and Findings of Fact and Decision of previous Jersey Cow site

Property and Land Survey, prepared by Gregory K. Schneider, dated 7/2/21(rev. 2/2

USE: Proposed Minor Subdivision, Revised Site Plan, with requested “C” and “D” Variance relief
Together with a Site Plan Waiver request

ZONING REQUIREMENTS: This property is located in the N-B Neighbor Business Zone and the R-2 Residential Zone. The R-2 Zone allows for residential uses and the N-B zone allows primarily for business uses. The following is a review of the bulk requirements for the proposed project.

N-B / R-2 Zone, Block 97, Lot 8 & Part of Lot 7

ITEM	REQUIRED	EXISTING	PROPOSED	CONFORMITY
LOT AREA	10,000/7,500 SF	12,498 SF	18,030 SF	C
LOT WIDTH	90’/70’ Min	100’ Min Zion Rd	125’ Tilton Road	C
SETBACKS:				
FRONT (Zion)	25’	20.9’	20.9	Previously Approved
FRONT (Tilton)	25’	25’	25’*	C
SIDE	10’	78’	78’	C

SIDE	15'	25'	64.9'	C
REAR	25'	N/A	-N/A	-
MIN. GROSS FLOOR AREA:				
ONE STORY	1,500 SF		1,250 SF	Previously Approved
TWO STORY	-		-	-
BLDG. COVERAGE	25%	15%	22%%	C
TOTAL COVERAGE	75%	75%	66%	C
FLOOR AREA RATIO	.25		.07	C
BUFFER	10'	7'	8'	DNC

*-Eave setback is permitted to encroach 24"

R-2,Lots 6, 6.01, &7

Lot 6.01 is being proposed for use as a two unit duplex which is not a permitted use. A use "d"(1) variance is required for a use not permitted in the R-2 zone.

ITEM	REQUIRED	PROP LOT 6	PROP LOT 6.01	PROP LOT 7	CONFOMITY
LOT AREA:	7,500 SF	7,544 SF	14,167 SF	10,534 SF	C
LOT WIDTH	70'	82.02'	115.16'	77.55'	C
SETBACKS	-				
FRONT	25'	12.8'existing	25.4'	29.5' existing	ENC/C/C
SIDE	10'	11.7'	10.5'	28.3'	C
SIDE (both)	25'	>25'	>25	>25'	C/C/C
REAR	25'	12.7' existing'	48'	75.9' existing	ENC/C/C
HEIGHT	2 1/2 story, 30'	2 Story existing	2 story	1 story existing	C/C/C
BIDG COVERAGE	30%	19%	27.9%	16%	C/C/C
TOTAL COVERAGE	45%	24%	35.9%	23%	C/C/C
ACCESSORY STRUCTURE					
SIDE	10'	N/A	N/A	10'	N/A, N/A ,C
REAR	5'	N/A	N/A	25'	N/A, N/A, C

COMPLETENESS REVIEW: The application was reviewed for completeness utilizing the Minor Subdivision Checklist. The following information should be supplied, or a waiver granted by the Board, prior to the application being deemed complete. All required items are shown on the submitted plans.

PLANNING REVIEW:

1. Following is a list of Variances and Design Waivers associated with this application:

List of (d) (1) Variances:

- a) “d”(1)- for a use not permitted in the zone. Applicant is required to obtain two (2) “d” variances as follows:
 1. To allow for the construction of a duplex in the R-2 Zoning district that does not allow for that proposed use. The Duplex is proposed on new Lot 6.01.
 2. To allow for a new parking area on subdivided portion of Lot 7, that will be combined with Lot 8, the present site of Jersey Cow Ice Cream shop. The newly subdivided lot is located in the R-2 Zoning District that does not permit commercial parking.

List of “C” Variance

- a) Buffer, Lot 8, 15’ is required; 8’ is proposed.
 - b) Front Yard Setback, Lot 6, 25’ is required; 12.8’ is existing
 - c) Rear Yard Setback, Lot 6, 25’ is required, 12.7’ is existing
2. The applicant will be required to obtain two “d” (1) Use Variances for the application as outlined above.

A use variance falls under the jurisdiction of the Zoning Board as permitted in NJS 40:55D-60.a and 40:55D-70.d, the Board may “in particular cases and for special reasons grant a variance to allow departure from regulations pursuant to Article 8 of this act to permit; (1) a use or principal structure in a district restricted against such use or principal structure, (2) an expansion of a non-conforming use, (3) deviation from a specification or standard pursuant to Section C. 40:55D-67 pertaining solely to a conditional use, (4) an increase in the permitted floor area ratio as defined in Section 3.1 of P.L. 1975, C.291 (5) and increase in the permitted density as defined in Section 3.1 of P.L. 1975, C.291 (40:55D-4) excepts as applied to the required lot area for lot or lots detached one or two dwelling unit buildings, which lot or lots are either an isolated undersized lot or lots resulting from a minor subdivision or (6) a principal structure which exceeds by 10 feet or 10% the maximum height permitted in the district for a principal structure.

The applicant must also show “special reasons” for the Board to grant this variance. Special reasons have been defined as those reasons that carry out a purpose of zoning.

The applicant needs to provide additional testimony as to how the d (1) variance can be granted in accordance with the criteria outlined above and within the M.L.U.L.

The Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55d-2) enumerates the Purpose of Zoning as:

- a To encourage municipal action to guide the appropriate use or development of all lands in this State, in a manner which will promote public health, safety, morals, and general welfare.
- b To secure safety from fire, flood, panic and other natural and man-make disasters.
- c To provide adequate light, air and open space;
- d To ensure that the development of individual municipalities does not conflict with the development and general welfare of neighboring municipalities, the county and the State as a whole.
- e To promote the establishment of appropriate population densities and concentrations that will contribute to the well-being of persons, neighborhoods, communities and regions and preservation of the environment.
- f To encourage the appropriate and efficient expenditure of public funds by coordination or public development with land use policies.
- g To provide sufficient space in appropriate locations for variety of agricultural, residential, recreational, commercial and industrial uses and open space, both public and private, according to their respective environmental requirements in order to meet the needs of all New Jersey citizens.
- h To encourage the location and design of transportation routes, which will promote the free flow of traffic while discouraging location of such facilities and routes which result in congestion or blight.
- i To promote a desirable visual environment through creative development techniques and good civic design and arrangement.
- j To promote the conservation of historic sites and districts, open space, energy resources and valuable natural resources in the State and to prevent urban sprawl and degradation of the environment through improper use of land.
- k To encourage planned unit developments which incorporate the best features of design and relate the type, design and layout of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational development to the particular site;
- l To encourage senior citizen community housing construction.
- m To encourage coordination of the various public and private procedures and activities shaping land development with a view of lessening the cost of such development and to the more efficient use of land;
- n To promote utilization of renewable energy resources.
- o To promote the maximum practicable recovery and recycling of recyclable materials from solid waste through the use of planning practices designed to incorporate the State Recycling Plan goals and to complement municipal recycling programs.

3. Since it is determined that "C" Variance relief is needed for the project, the applicant should supply testimony, as outlined in the following criteria, as appropriate.
 - a. By reason of exceptional narrowness, shallowness, or shape of a specific piece of property, or (b) by reason of exceptional topographic conditions or physical features uniquely affecting a specific piece of property or (c) by reason of extraordinary and exceptional situation uniquely affecting a specific piece of property or the structures lawfully existing thereon, the strict application of the zoning regulations would result in the peculiar and exceptional practical difficulties to or exceptional and undue hardship upon the development of the property. This is known as the C (1) Criteria.
 - b. Where the purposes of the Municipal Land Use Law would be advanced by a deviation from the zoning ordinance requirements and the benefits of the deviation would substantially outweigh any detriment. This is known as the C (2) Variance.

It should be noted:

No variance may be granted without showing that such variance can be granted without substantial detriment to the public good and will not substantially impair the intent and the purpose of the zone plan and zoning ordinance.

This is also known as Negative Criteria.

Engineering Review:

1. The applicant has requested a Waiver of Site Plan with the application. A general review of the proposed improvements will be completed.
2. The three new lots, lot 6, 6.01 and 7 all front on Zion Road, which is a Atlantic County Road. The applicant is proposing to install new concrete curbs and sidewalks along the entire frontage of all the lots. Additional grades should be provided for the sidewalk/driveway transition along Zion Road. Approval from the County is required for all roadway improvements proposed in the Atlantic County Right of Way.
3. Three of the lots proposed contain existing dwellings and a business. The fourth lot will require new water, sewer, gas and other utilities that might be required. The applicant should contact the Northfield Sewer Department for the sewer connection, the NJ American Water Company for the water service. These improvements and any other utilities that require excavation of Zion Road, will require a Road Opening Permit from Atlantic County.
4. The ordinance requires that street trees be planted at 30' on centers across the frontage of the properties. This should be discussed with the Board.

5. The applicant has supplied building views and floor plan for the Board to review for the newly proposed duplex. Each unit proposes three (3) bedrooms.
6. The parking requirement for the duplex is 2 spaces per unit. The plan shows that four (4) spaces per unit are proposed, 2 per unit in the garage and 2 additional spaces in front of the garage. The design complies with the ordinance.
The expansion of the parking area for the commercial proposes 8 additional spaces.
7. Buffers are required for the rear of this property. The buffer requirements for this property along the residential zoned property along Zion Road that is adjacent to the newly proposed parking area. The buffer area is proposed at a minimum of 8' in width. The applicant should discuss what buffer plantings or fencing will be installed in the area between the commercial and residential sites.
8. The plan should be submitted to the Fire Chief for review prior to Final signing of the plan.
9. The applicant should discuss if any additional landscaping is proposed as part of this application. Particular attention should be given to the adjoining residential property.
10. The applicant should discuss if any additional lighting will be installed as part of the parking lot expansion. No new lighting is proposed on the plan.
11. Parking areas shall not be located within 50' of any residential zone, 8' is proposed.
A design waiver is required..
12. The applicant should apply to the Northfield Sewer Department, in order to obtain a letter of availability of service.
13. Following is a technical review of the minor subdivision plan needed for a plan to be filed.
Following is a list of information that should be added to the plan prior to filing.
 - a. Certification of the new lot numbers as supplied by the Tax Assessor.
 - b. Reference Meridian and coordinate base for the plan, either State Plane Coordinates or assumed base. Coordinate values for at least three corners.
 - c. Additional certification language for the City Clerk regarding posting of a Performance Bond for the monuments to be set.
 - d. Municipal Engineers Certification line.
14. The applicant will be required to obtain the following approvals and other approvals as needed:
 - a) Atlantic County Division of Planning
 - b) City of Northfield
 - 1) Fire Department
 - 2) Sewer Department

c) Letters of Availability of Service- as needed.

- 1) NJ American Water
- 2) Atlantic City Electric
- 3) South Jersey Gas, if applicable.

15. The applicant will be required to post a Performance Guarantee for all offsite improvements if the County requires it Bond.

If you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Matthew F. Doran', written in a cursive style.

Matthew F. Doran, P.E., P.P., P.L.S., C.M.E.
Doran Engineering