

# DORAN

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## ENGINEERING, PA

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840 NORTH MAIN STREET • PLEASANTVILLE, NJ 08232  
(609) 646-3111 FAX (609) 641-0592

**MEMO TO:** Northfield Planning Board/Zoning Board  
**FROM:** Matthew F. Doran, Board Engineer  
**DATE:** June 20, 2024  
**RE:** Vida Homes, LLC  
 Doran # 9735  
**LOCATION:** 207 Northfield Avenue  
 BLOCK: 106 LOT: 8  
**STATUS:** Minor Subdivision and Conditional Use Variance  
**BASIS FOR REVIEW:** Plans Prepared by Cape Land Surveying  
 Sheet 1 of 1, dated 5-14-24

Cover Letter from Manos Law Firm, dated 6-12-24  
 Application Form, undated  
 Addendum to Application, dated 6-12-24  
 Corporate Disclosure, dated 6-5-24  
 200' owners list, dated 6-5-24  
 Certificate of Paid Taxes, dated 5-31-24

**USE:** Single Family/Church

**ZONING REQUIREMENTS:** This property is located in the R-2 Residential Zone, which allows primarily for residential uses / places of worship are a conditional use. The following is a review of the bulk requirement for the proposed project:

ITEM	Required (Residential Lots)	Proposed Lot 8.02	Proposed Lot 8.03	Conformity
LOT AREA	7,500 SF	13,521 SF	14,000 SF	C
LOT WIDTH	70'	70'	70'	C
<b>SETBACKS:</b>				
FRONT	25'	25'	25'	C
FRONT	25'	-	-	-
SIDE	10'	10'	10'	-
BOTH SIDES	25'	25'	25'	C
REAR	25'	25'	25'	C
HEIGHT	2 ½ STY/30'	M/C	M/C	-
<b>MIN.GROSS FLOOR AREA:</b>				
ONE STORY	1,100 SF	-	-	-
TWO STORY	1,250 SF	-	-	-
BLDG COVERAGE	30%	M/C	M/C	C
TOTAL COVERAGE	45%	M/C	M/C	C

M/C – Must comply at time of building permit request.

**Conditional Use- Please of Worship (Section 215-145)**

ITEM	Required)	Proposed	Conformity
LOT SIZE	5 AC	1.42 AC	DNC
LOT WIDTH	200'	>200'	C
<b>SETBACKS:</b>			
FRONT (Northfield Avenue)	25'	43'	C
FRONT (Zion Road)	25'	50'	C
SIDE	50'	68.2'	C
SIDE	50'	79.1'	C
Building Coverage	15%	11.6%	C
HEIGHT	30'	27' (mid peak)	C
<b>Accessory Structure:</b>			
FRONT	50'	20.8'	ENC
SIDE	30'	>30'	C
SIDE	30'	43.1'	C

\* The 50' front yard setback is not specifically noted in Section 215-145 C.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The applicant, Vida Homes, LLC has applied to the Board for a minor subdivision, creating two (2) additional residential lots, and the remaining lot that contains the Good Shepherd United Methodist Church

The proposed lots will meet the criteria for single-family lots located in the R-2 Zone.

The church, which is a conditional use (5 AC) minimum, in the R-2 Zone. The existing lot with the church contains 89,412 SF, which will be reduced to 61,890 SF, necessitating a “d” (3) use variance, for a deviation from a specific or standard pursuant to Section C. 40:50 067 pertaining solely to a conditional use.

The property also contains an existing single dwelling that is an accessory to the church. The applicant has also requested an interpretation regarding this single-family dwelling.

If the single-family dwelling is determined not to be an accessory to the church, a “d” (1) use variance could be needed for two (2) uses on a single lot.

**Review Comments:**

1. The applicant has applied for a minor subdivision and use variance dealing with a conditional use for the Good Shepherd United Methodist Church on the corner of Zion Road and Northfield Avenue.
2. Following is a list of variances associated with the application:
  - a) Use Variance, “d” (3) for a dealing specifically with a conditional use. The ordinance requires a 5 AC lot size for a place of worship; 1.42 AC is proposed.
  - b) Possible Use Variance, “d” (1) for two (2) primary uses on one (1) lot. The uses being a church, and a single-family dwelling, which is utilized by the church only, is an accessory use at the site.

3. 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 (2) 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 the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare;
- b To secure safety from fire, flood, panic and other natural and man-made 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 the 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 environmental 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.

The Board has the power to grant a “c” (1) or “c” (2) variance if needed, provide the applicant, can demonstrate the Board’s satisfaction, that either:

C (1) (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.

C (2) where an application or appeal to a specific piece of property, the purpose of this act would be advanced by a deviation from the zoning ordinance or requirement and the benefits of the deviation would be substantially outweigh any detriment.

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.

4. The subdivision plan shows a small section of ground, 6.84’ behind proposed lot 8.02, that is remaining as part of lot 8.01 the church lot.

The applicant should discuss the reason for this piece of ground.

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5. The applicant should discuss parking for the church. No information was provided regarding the interior space with the amount of seating, office sizes, meeting rooms, etc. The applicant should discuss whether the area subdivided from the church property is utilized for parking at present, and how many vehicles can be accommodated on the remaining church site.
6. The ordinance requires concrete curbing and sidewalks along the front of the property. At present, the church property contains curbs and sidewalks along Northfield Avenue, but no curbs and sidewalks along Fuae Avenue. The proposed new residential lots currently contain curbing, sidewalks will be required at the time of the construction of the homes.
7. Approval from the City of Northfield Sewer Department and the New Jersey American Water Company is required prior to the building permit request.
8. Each lot will require two (2) shade trees, as required by the ordinance.
9. Approval from the Cape Atlantic Soil Conservation District at the time of the building permit request.
10. A road opening permit will be required from the City of Northfield for any opening proposed in the right-of-way of Northfield or Fuae Avenues.

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

Very truly yours,



Matthew F. Doran, P.E., P.P., P.L.S, C.M.E.  
Planning Board Engineer