

January 3, 2025

Chairman Anthony LoPresti  
Borough of Raritan Planning Board  
22 First Street  
Raritan, New Jersey 08869

**RE: Completeness Review 1  
Naser, Joseph  
Preliminary & Final Site Plan  
57 & 59 La Grange Street  
Block 93, Lots 1 & 2  
Our Project Number 3330.109**

Dear Chairman LoPresti and Board Members:

This office is in receipt of the following items pertaining to the above-referenced application:

- A. Cover Letter entitled “Re: Joseph Naser, 59 LaGrange Street, Redevelopment and Apartment Building Project”, prepared by Christopher D. Ferrara, dated October 16, 2024
- B. Letter entitled “Project Name: 57 & 59 La Grange <sic> Street, Applicant: La Grange St, LLC C/O Joseph Naser”, prepared by Christopher D. Ferrara, dated November 18, 2024.
- C. Borough of Raritan Application for a Site Plan – Subdivision Plan – Variance, dated November 18, 2024.
- D. Certified List of Property Owners within 200 feet, dated July 12, 2024
- E. Draft Legal Notice, prepared by Christopher D. Ferrara, Esq.
- F. Borough of Raritan Checklist 5 for Determining Completeness of Application for Preliminary Site Plan.
- G. Borough of Raritan Checklist 6 for Determining Completeness of Application for Final Site Plan.
- H. Somerset County Planning Board Land Development Application Form Checklist & Review Fee Schedule and Completeness Checklist.
- I. Architectural Plans entitled “Proposed 3 New Apartment Buildings, 59 La Grange Street, Raritan, NJ”, prepared by Amrarch Design Studio, dated July 6, 2024, consisting of eleven (11) sheets
- J. Site Plans entitled “Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan, Tax Map Lots 1 & 2, Block 93, Borough of Raritan, Somerset County, New Jersey” prepared by Ameritech Engineering inc., dated August 20, 2024, consisting of five (5) sheets.

**OFFICE LOCATIONS**

[www.vancleefengineering.com](http://www.vancleefengineering.com)

Lebanon, NJ  
908-735-9500

Hamilton, NJ  
609-689-1100

Toms River, NJ  
732-573-0490

Freehold, NJ  
732-303-8700

Bethlehem, PA  
610-332-1772

Hillsborough, NJ  
908-359-8291

Mt. Arlington, NJ  
862-284-1100

Phillipsburg, NJ  
908-454-3080

Doylestown, PA  
215-345-1876

Leesport, PA  
610-670-6630

I. **Project Summary:**

A. **Project History**

In July through October, 2016, the Borough of Raritan finalized its preliminary investigation with a public hearing in accordance with the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law and formally recommended Block 93, Lots 1 and 2 as an Area in Need of Redevelopment, which was forwarded to the Borough Council, authorized by Resolution PB 2016-11.

On October 25, 2016, Ordinance 2016-10-162 was adopted, formally designating the area as a non-condemnation Area in Need of Redevelopment.

On September 10, 2019, the Borough Council directed the Planning Board to prepare a Redevelopment Plan for the Study Area by means of Resolution 2019-09-142.

My office, on behalf of the Planning Board, prepared the “LaGrange Street Redevelopment Plan, Borough of Raritan, Somerset County” dated August 15, 2022 which was adopted by the Borough of Raritan Council by Ordinance 2023-03 on April 4, 2023.

In October 2024, the Applicant informally submitted the site plans and architectural plans, and then on November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024 submitted the remaining items for the Preliminary and Final Site Plan application.

B. **Project Description**

This application is for a Preliminary and Final Site Plan of a Redevelopment Area identified as Block 93, Lots 1 and 2 in the Borough of Raritan. The lot was formerly located in the Borough’s R-4 Medium to High Density Residential Zone. Following the adoption of Ordinance No. 2023-03, the subject area is now located within the “LaGrange Street Redevelopment Zone”.

Block 93, Lot 1 is currently occupied by a 1-story 3,234 square foot masonry building. Also within the lot is an existing storage trailer in the rear yard, and an asphalt driveway. The remaining space within the tract is open green space, with a singular tree in the front yard. Block 93, Lot 2 is currently occupied by a 1-story masonry building consisting of 11,288 square feet. On the right side-yard there is an accessory masonry building, and a concrete walkway in the front. There is minimal vegetation planted along the masonry building. The remaining space within the tract is an expansive asphalt parking area.

The Applicant is proposing to consolidate both lots, and demolish the existing asphalt parking areas, structures, and their associated utilities to clear the space for construction. The Applicant proposes to construct three apartment buildings and their associated utility connections within the tract. Buildings 1 and 2 will consist of five town home units, each containing a driveway, garage, concrete front porch, and rear yard deck. Building 3 contains 4 town home units, and 2 affordable units. The affordable units are proposed to have a shared parking space, while the 4 town home units will have separate driveways and associated garages, concrete front porches, and rear yard decks. Additionally the Applicant proposes to install a 4-foot-wide concrete sidewalk fronting La Grange Street as part of the project, along with landscaping throughout the tract. The Applicant proposes to add a right and left side yard landscaping buffer, as well as other tree plantings throughout the front yard to occupy the open green space.

## II. **Completeness Review:**

The Applicant has submitted this application for a Minor Site Plan with Variances. Based on this office's review of the provided documentation and checklists, it is our recommendation to the Board that this application be deemed **CONDITIONALLY COMPLETE** based on the following commentary:

### 1. **Preliminary Site Plan Checklist**

- a. **§207-47.B(5)(4) – Application fee, executed escrow agreement and appropriate review fee.**  
Verification Required – Applicant did not submit proof of fees or escrow payments made to this office.
- b. **§207-47.B(5)(6) – Certification from the Borough Tax Collector that all taxes and assessments on the property are paid in full.**  
Verification Required – Applicant did not submit certification from the Borough Tax Collector indicating that all taxes are paid in full for the lots associated with this application.
- c. **§207-47.B(5)(8) – Proof of filing with the Somerset County Planning Board, Somerset-Union Soil Conservation Service and any other outside agencies from which approval is necessary.**  
Verification Required – Applicant has not provided a signed application to the Somerset County Planning Board, whereas this submission is required, therefore a waiver would be required if the application was never submitted. Applicant should provide testimony to the status of this application.
- d. **§207-47.B(5)(9) – Certification that the Applicant is owner or authorized agent, or consent of owner to file application.**  
Verification Required – Applicant has not provided such documentation to this office.
- e. **§207-47.B(5)(14) – The Tax Map sheet, and existing block and lot numbers of tract to be subdivide or developed and all adjacent lots.**  
Temporary Waiver Required – Applicant has submitted a site plan containing a tax map that does not identify the block in which the project area is located; therefore, a temporary waiver is required.
- f. **§207-47.B(5)(21) – Location, use, and ground floor area of all existing and proposed buildings or structures and all accessory buildings or structures, with setbacks, sideline and rear line distances, and finished grades at all corners.**  
Temporary Waiver Required – Applicant has submitted a site plan that does not contain the ground floor area of the proposed structures; therefore, a temporary waiver is required.
- g. **§207-47.B(5)(27) – All existing and proposed signs and lighting standards, utility poles and their sizes, type of construction and location.**  
Waiver Required – Applicant has submitted a site plan that does not contain a lighting plan, or the dimensions of the utility poles that are to remain and be stabilized during construction. Therefore, a waiver is required.
- h. **§207-47.B(5)(33) – Cost estimates of all on-site improvements.**  
Waiver Requested – Applicant has requested a waiver for providing a cost estimate of all on-site improvements. It is the opinion of this office that this waiver be denied, as a cost estimate is required for the Borough Engineer to determine the performance guarantee the Applicant must post to the Borough.

- i. §207-47.B(5)(35) – Environmental impact statements, per §207-69.  
Waiver Requested – Applicant has requested a waiver for providing an environmental impact statement related to the proposed developments. Due to the nature and location of the proposed work, this office takes no issue in granting this waiver.

## 2. Final Site Plan Checklist

- a. §207-47.B(6)(4) – Application fee, executed escrow agreement and appropriate review fee.  
Verification Required – Applicant did not submit proof of fees or escrow payments made to this office.
- b. §207-47.B(6)(6) – Certification from the Borough Tax Collector that all taxes and assessments on the property are paid in full.  
Verification Required – Applicant did not submit certification from the Borough Tax Collector indicating that all taxes are paid in full for the lots associated with this application.
- c. §207-47.B(6)(8) – Proof of filing with the Somerset County Planning Board, Somerset-Union Soil Conservation Service and any other outside agencies from which approval is necessary.  
Verification Required – Applicant has not provided a signed application to the Somerset County Planning Board, whereas this submission is required, therefore a waiver would be required if the application was never submitted. Applicant should provide testimony to the status of this application.
- d. §207-47.B(6)(9) – Certification that the Applicant is owner or authorized agent, or consent of owner to file application.  
Verification Required – Applicant has not provided such documentation to this office.
- e. §207-47.B(6)(14) – The Tax Map sheet, and existing block and lot numbers of tract to be subdivide or developed and all adjacent lots.  
Temporary Waiver Required – Applicant has submitted a site plan containing a tax map that does not identify the block in which the project area is located; therefore, a temporary waiver is required.
- f. §207-47.B(6)(21) – Location, use, and ground floor area of all existing and proposed buildings or structures and all accessory buildings or structures, with setbacks, sideline and rear line distances, and finished grades at all corners.  
Temporary Waiver Required – Applicant has submitted a site plan that does not contain the ground floor area of the proposed structures; therefore, a temporary waiver is required.
- g. §207-47.B(6)(27) – All existing and proposed signs and lighting standards, utility poles and their sizes, type of construction and location.  
Waiver Required – Applicant has submitted a site plan that does not contain a lighting plan, or the dimensions of the utility poles that are to remain and be stabilized during construction. Therefore, a waiver is required.
- h. §207-47.B(6)(33) – Cost estimates of all on-site improvements.  
Waiver Requested – Applicant has requested a waiver for providing a cost estimate of all on-site improvements. It is the opinion of this office that this waiver be denied, as a cost estimate is required for the Borough Engineer to determine the performance guarantee the Applicant must post to the Borough.

- i. §207-47.B(6)(35) – Environmental impact statements, per §207-69.  
Waiver Requested – Applicant has requested a waiver for providing an environmental impact statement related to the proposed developments. Due to the nature and location of the proposed work, this office takes no issue in granting this waiver.
- j. §207-47.B(6)(36) – Final contours on site and within 100 feet a two-inch intervals; final elevations at building corners, paved areas, and property corners.  
Temporary Waiver Required – Applicant has submitted a site plan that does not contain final elevations in paved areas, and property corners; therefore, a temporary waiver is required.

III. **Zoning Review:**

Upon determination that the application is complete, a zoning review will be conducted.

IV. **Technical Review:**

1. Preliminary Technical Review Comments

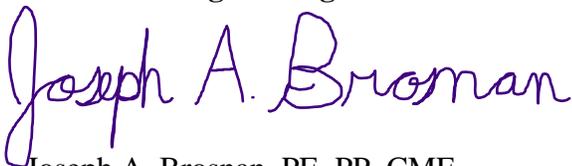
- a. Applicant should be prepared to provide testimony to the change in impervious coverage on the subject area. There is concern that there may be an increase in “Regulated Motor Vehicle Surface” which may designate the property a “Major Development” as per N.J.A.C. 7:8
- b. Applicant should be prepared to discuss stormwater management in the rear of the property, including the ultimate terminus of any drainage structures or ditches.

We reserve the right to further comment based on Applicant’s testimony and future submittals.

If you require additional information or have any questions, please feel free to contact me at my office.

Very truly yours,

**Van Cleef Engineering Associates**



Joseph A. Brosnan, PE, PP, CME  
Borough/Planning Board Engineer

cc: All Board Members, via Board Secretary  
Joseph Naser, Applicant (via U.S. Mail: 549 Lincoln Blvd, Middlesex, NJ 08869)  
Christopher D. Ferrara, Applicants Attorney (via email: [christopherfm@aol.com](mailto:christopherfm@aol.com))  
Ashraf M. Ragab, Applicant’s Architect (via email: [amrarchdesignstudio1@gmail.com](mailto:amrarchdesignstudio1@gmail.com))  
Sharif H. Aly, Applicant’s Engineer (via email: [main@ameritechengineering.com](mailto:main@ameritechengineering.com))

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