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February 26, 2021

**VERNON TOWNSHIP LAND USE BOARD
21 CHURCH STREET
VERNON, NJ 07462**

Att: Kim Decker, Secretary

Dear Land Use Board Members:

We have revised the plans and supporting documents for the Farm 94 application for site plan and variance approvals in response to the review comments provided by Cory Stoner of Harold E. Pellow & Associates on November 9, 2020. We have also made several changes to the site design in response to requests made by the neighboring property owner. These changes include:

- a reduction in the size of the proposed addition to the farm store
- relocation of the proposed warehouse / storage building
- shifting parking spaces away from the property line
- increased screening along the property lines, with landscaping and privacy fencing.

We provide the following responses to the review comments (copy attached):

1,2: Informational comments; no responses needed.

3. Completeness:

- a. Robert Jordan, the project surveyor, has signed and sealed Sheet C1.
- b. We have added the list of property owners to Sheet C1.
- c. We have highlighted the steep slopes in the project area near Route 94. There will be minimal disturbance of steep slopes within the proposed camping area. No wetlands or watercourses will be impacted.
- d. We have added the spot grades, etc. as recommended.
- e, f. As stated in Mr. Stoner's review letter, the applicant requests a waiver for these items.
- g. We will submit for Sussex Co. Soil Conservation District approval once the plans are finalized.
- h. We have enclosed landscaping and lighting plans.
- i. Stormwater – no response needed.
- j. We will provide a CD with the final plans.
- k. We have enclosed an estimate of the proposed trips to be generated by the project.

4. Zoning: no response needed.

5. Site Plan Layout & Parking:


- a. We have added parking calculations to Sheet C2. We've also added a note that there is the potential additional parking available in the southwestern part of the property, subject to NJDOT approval.
 - b. We are requesting a variance to avoid the installation for curbs. Curbs are not needed for drainage purposes. We've added a note to Sheet 2 indicating that the millings must be capped.
 - c. We have revised the plan accordingly to show the grading at the handicap parking areas.
 - d. Parking space size – no response needed.
 - e. We feel that the proposed lane widths, a minimum of 25 feet, will provide for adequate circulation.
 - f. We will contact the NJDOT in the future regarding access permits.
 - g. We have removed the spaces previously shown withing the NJDOT right-of-way.
 - h. The owner does not expect that his operations will require large delivery trucks. In the event that a large truck is needed, there is ample space near all of the buildings for maneuvering, loading, and unloading. A variance is requested.
 - i. We have added dumpster locations and a detail.
6. Landscaping & Lighting:
- a. We have enclosed landscaping plans prepared by Karen Arent Landscape Architect.
 - b. We have also enclosed a lighting plan.
 - c. We will be prepared to discuss the proposed hours of operation with the Board.
7. Utilities:
- a. We will apply to the SC Health Department for approval of sewage disposal systems in the future.
 - b. We now show the approximate location of seven proposed tent sites on Sheet C3.
 - c. The owner has portable generators that can be brought to the site as needed.
8. Signage:
- a. We have added a sign detail to Sheet C4.
9. Architectural:
- a, b, c. We will be prepared to discuss these items with the Board.
10. Additional Comments:
- a. No tree clearing is proposed for the proposed retail space and barn modifications. The proposed camping facilities will be located so that tree clearing will be minimized.
 - b. We have enclosed a Highlands Exemption Determination Application (Exemption 4).
 - c. We have added a note to Sheet C1 stating that the property on the west side of Route 94 is not to be used for this application.
 - d. The applicant will pursue the other approvals as needed.

We have enclosed 15 copies of the following documents for your review:

- Land Use Board Application Form and Rider
- Highlands Exemption Determination Application
- Site plans (C1, C2, C3, and C4), prepared by our office, dated 2/25/21
- Landscaping Plans (L1 and L2), prepared by Karen Arent Landscape Architect, dated 2/25/21
- Architectural Plans (A-1 thru A-8), prepared by Harry Pharr Architect
- Lighting Plan, prepared by Acuity Design Services, dated 1/5/21

We are also sending hard copies and pdf files to Cory Stoner and to Jessica Caldwell.

Sincerely,
Engineering & Surveying Properties, P.C.



David A. Getz, P.E.

cc: Will Brown
Ira Weiner
John McDonough
Cory Stoner, P.E., Harold E. Pellow & Associates
Jessica Caldwell & Associates

Traffic Estimates

2/25/21

We estimate a total of 115 vehicle trips to be generated during the peak hour, which will typically occur during weekends. This estimate includes the very conservative assumption that the peak traffic rate from each use will occur during the same hour.

<u>Use</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Vehicle trips</u>
Retail (shops, butcher, commons space)	2,300 sf	30
Studio space for craftsmen	1,856 sf	10
Conference / event space (105 patrons plus staff)	----	70
Camping	----	<u>5</u>
Total:		115

This traffic volume will create minimal impacts on traffic movements along Route 94 and will not create significant adverse impacts at any intersections. Data available from the NJDOT indicates average annual daily traffic volumes of approximately 6,000 vehicles per day along Route 94 in the vicinity of the site.



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November 9, 2020

MEMORANDUM TO: Vernon Township Land Use Board (*via email*)

FROM: Cory L. Stoner, P.E., C.M.E., Land Use Board Engineer

SUBJECT: ENGINEERING REVIEW
 Preliminary & Final Site Plan and Variance Application for
 Farm 94 LLC
 Block 58 Lot 2
 Located at 44 State Route 94
 Vernon Township, Sussex County
 HPA No. 20-199

Dear Land Use Board Members:

A site plan and variance application has been submitted by the above referenced Applicant for a number of improvements to the Block 58 Lot 2 property located along State Route 94. Based on a review of the application and the documents submitted in support of the application, I offer the following comments:

1. The items submitted in support of this application included the following:
 - a. Plans entitled, “Farm 94, LLC, Proposed Farm/Retail Store, Tax Map 33, Lot 2, Block 58, 442 N.J.S.H. Route 94, Vernon Township, Sussex County, New Jersey,” consisting of four (4) sheets, prepared by Lehman & Getz, P.C. Consulting Engineers and dated September 2, 2020.
 - a. Plans prepared by Harry Pharr Architect, undated and consisting of the following sheets:

Sheet	Title
1	Proposed Accessory Structure
2	A-1 Lower Level
3	A-2 Upper Level
4	A-3 North Elevation
5	A-4 West Elevation
6	A-5 South Elevation
7	A-6 East Elevation

- b. Applications and supporting documents.

2. As stated above, the Applicant is proposing a number of improvements and uses for the site. Based on a narrative submitted, these include the following:
 - a. The renovation of an existing dairy barn for a craft or studio space and retail space on the first floor and banquet event space on the second. A two-story addition is also proposed for this building.
 - b. A 30' x 50' addition to an existing farm building to provide for a new proposed farm store building. Said addition will house restrooms, storage and warehouse areas.
 - c. Various site improvements including parking lot improvements, sewage disposal areas and signage.
 - d. The construction of a 15' x 30' building for showers, restrooms and storage related to a proposed "glam camping" use.

3. **Completeness:** Based on a review of the application, it was found that a number of items listed in the Technical Checklist have not been submitted. These items include:
 - a. #1 – Sealed Survey Map of entire tract: The Survey & Existing Conditions Plan is missing the signature and seal of the surveyor. A signed and sealed copy of the survey will need to be provided.
 - b. #3 – List of property owners within a 200-foot radius on the plan, with block & lot number & street address: A list of property owners within 200 feet was not included on the plans. The plans will need to be updated to include this information. As long as proof that all proper notice has been provided, I do not object to temporary waiving this requirement.
 - c. #12 – Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) delineation and calculations in accordance with 330-83 of the Vernon Township Land Development Code. Environmentally sensitive areas have not been shown on the plan. The Applicant should be prepared to discuss locations of ESA's with the Board including steep slopes, wetlands and streams.
 - d. #18 – Proposed grading plan for roadway, buildings, access driveways and parking lots...Provide spot grades at building corners, parking lots, top and bottom of wall elevations, and at low and high points. The plans illustrate that no major grading is proposed with this application. The Applicant should be prepared to discuss any proposed grading changes before the Board. Any grading that is determined to be needed will require that supplemental grading plans be provided.

- e. #19 – Proposed utility plan showing all storm sewer inlets and pipes, sanitary sewer mains and lateral connections, all with invert and grate/rim elevation labels and pipe slopes, water main and services connections, with pipe material and sizes, and proposed well and septic. The Applicant has requested a waiver from submitting detailed plans for the proposed septic disposal systems. Any approval of the proposed application will be conditioned on the well and septic approvals from the Sussex County Health Department and/or the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. I have no objection to granting this waiver for the purpose of hearing the application.
- f. #20 – Environmental Impact Statement: The Applicant has requested a waiver from providing this item. Since the Applicant is mostly expanding existing disturbances on the site, I have no objection to granting this waiver for the purpose of hearing the application.

Note: It should be noted that the scope of the “glam camping” has really not be specifically described. Any major disturbance related to this activity could result in the need for additional information.

- g. #22 – Soil Erosion and sediment control plan if over 5,000 s.f. of disturbance in accordance with Sussex County SCD standards: Based on the proposed improvements it appears that the overall project disturbance will be greater than 5,000 s.f. and a Sussex County Soil Conservation District approval will be needed. Any approval will be conditioned on SCSCD approvals if needed.
- h. #23 – Landscaping and lighting plan. Show all proposed landscaping with a planting schedule. Show isobars for all existing and proposed on site lighting in foot-candles. Include utilities on this plan to ensure no conflicts exist: The Applicant has not proposed lighting and landscaping as part of this application. The Applicant should be prepared to discuss any lighting and landscaping that will be proposed with this project.
- i. #29 – Stormwater management plan and report: The project as proposed does not appear to be a “Major Project” per the NJDEP Stormwater Management Rules and thus would not be required to meet stormwater requirements.
- j. #31 – Provide a compact disk of the CAD file for the site plan for Township Records. The Applicant should provide a CD of the final approved site plan.
- k. #34 – Traffic Impact Analysis: The has not provided a traffic impact analysis report for this application. The Applicant should, at a minimum, be prepared to discuss traffic information with the Board at the time of the hearing.

As stated above, there are a number of items which have not been provided or a waiver has been requested. I believe that the plans submitted show enough information for discuss before the Board and I have no objecting to waiving these items and the Board hear this application. It should be noted, however, additional information could be required based on the testimony provided and the review comments that the Board may have during the hearing of this application.

4. **Zoning:**

- a. The property in question is located in the AET, Agri-Eco Tourism Zone. The bulk requirements for the lot are as follows:

Item	Required	Existing	Proposed	Variance
Min. Lot Area	5 Acres	67.116 Acres	67.116 Acres	No
Min. Lot Width	250 ft.	686 ft.	686 ft.	No
Max. Building Coverage	10%	0.002%	0.003%	No
Max. Lot Coverage	15%	0.044%	0.045%	No
Barn Building				
Min. Front Yard Setback	75 ft.	31.6 ft. ⁽¹⁾	23.9 ft.	Yes
Min. Side Yard Setback	35 ft.	133 ft.	83 ft.	No
Min. Rear Yard Setback	100 ft.	>100 ft.	>100 ft.	No
Max. Building Height	30 ft./2 Stories	36 ft./2 Stories ⁽¹⁾	36 ft./2 Stories	Yes
Farm Store Building				
Min. Front Yard Setback	75 ft.	8.2 ft. ⁽¹⁾	8.2 ft.	Yes
Min. Side Yard Setback	35 ft.	9.6 ft. ⁽¹⁾	7.7 ft.	Yes
Min. Rear Yard Setback	100 ft.	>100 ft.	>100 ft.	No
Max. Building Height	30 ft./2 Stories	<30 ft.1 story	<30 ft.1 story	No

⁽¹⁾ Pre-Existing Non-Conforming Condition

- b. The Planning Board Planner has conducted a thorough review of the zoning items and variances pertaining to the proposed improvements. I have no additional comments regarding these items and will defer all other zoning comments to the Board Planner.

5. **Site Plan Layout & Parking:**

- a. **Number of Parking Spaces:** The Applicant has not provided any information regarding parking requirements for the proposed uses onsite. Per the site plan, 72 parking spaces are proposed by the Farm Store and 66 parking spaces are being proposed by the renovated Dairy Barn. The Applicant should provide a review of the parking required and illustrate whether the minimum parking requirement for each use being proposed meets the what is specified on Schedule D found in Section 330 of the Township Code.

- b. Parking Areas Surfaces: Per Section 330-75B. of the Township Code, all non-residential parking and loading spaces shall be paved with either asphalt or pavers. Also, all parking lots with more than 10 parking spaces shall have granite block curbing. The Applicant is proposing millings for the parking lot surface and no curbing. A variance will be required to permit the parking areas that are not paved surfaces with granite block curbing.

It should be noted that the only parking spaces that will be paved with be the handicap parking spaces. All other parking areas to be constructed of millings. Per NJDEP requirements, the millings will need to be capped. This capping can consist of asphalt, oil/stone, or other binding products.

- c. Handicap Parking Spaces: It is noted that the handicap parking spaces near the renovated Dairy Barn are located on a portion of the parking lot that will have grades of over 8 percent. This steep grade will not meet ADA requirements. The layout and design of the handicap parking spaces will need to be modified to be in accordance with the New Jersey Uniform Construction Code (N.J.A.C. 5:23-7) or the Americans with Disabilities Act, as applicable
- d. Parking Space Size: The parking spaces as proposed will be 10' wide x 18' deep will exceed the minimum 9' wide by 18' deep required by the Township Code. It should be noted that since the parking surface will not be striped, each parking space will have a curb stop to delineate the location of the parking space.
- e. Vehicle Circulation: I am concerned about the vehicular circulation for both parking lots as the plans show only one point of ingress and egress for both. As the Applicant is proposing a banquet hall use, there will be a large number of vehicles arriving and leaving at the same time, which will cause congestion in the parking lot with only one point of entry. The Applicant's engineer should comment on traffic circulation, into and out of the property.
- f. Access Permits: While the gravel driveways to the farm property currently exist, the uses on this property are going to be greatly changed. An access permit from the New Jersey Department of Transportation will likely be required for this development. Any approval by the Board should be conditioned on the Applicant obtaining an approval from the New Jersey Department of Transportation.
- g. Improvements within NJDOT Right-of-way: The site plan illustrates that a portion of the parking areas near the proposed Farm Store will be located within the right-of-way of NJSH Route 94. All parking areas and other site improvements should be removed from within the State's right-of-way.
- h. Loading Spaces: Loading spaces have not been shown on the plan. Both the farm store and barn would typically have designated loading spaces 12 ft. x 40 ft. as

required per Section 330-76.D of the Township Code. Loading spaces should be added to the plans. If not, variances for not providing the required loading spaces will be needed.

- i. Dumpster Enclosures: A dumpster enclosure has not been shown for the renovated dairy barn building. This use should have its own dumpster enclosure shown on the plan.

6. **Landscape & Lighting**

- a. Landscaping: A number of planting areas have been called out on the plan, however a planting plan showing the layout of individual plantings along with a planting schedule stating plant names, quantities and sizes needs to be provided.
- b. Site Lighting: Per Section 330-80 of the Township Code, a lighting plan showing minimum foot candles shall be submitted for review. The lighting plan shall meet the requirements of this section including minimum illumination levels listed in Section 330-80C(6). If these minimum illumination levels are not met, additional variances may be required.
- c. Hours of Operation: The Applicant should be prepared to discuss the hours of operation of the facility. The need for lighting on the facility is a concern.

7. **Utilities**

- a. Sewage Disposal Systems: The site plans show two separate sewage disposal systems. One will be for the proposed farm store and the proposed banquet hall and one will be for future “glam camping” area. Any approvals granted by the Board will be subject to Sussex County Health Department and NJDEP approvals.
- b. “Glam Camping” Utilities: The plans illustrate that the electric and water utilities for the proposed 15’ x 20’ “glam camping” building for showers, restrooms and tent storage. Again, very little information has been provided for the “glam camping” area. The Applicant should be prepared to discuss this area in great detail with the Board.
- c. Need for Emergency Generators: No information regarding emergency generators have been provided. The Applicant should be prepared discuss whether emergency generators will be needed for any of the three (3) areas included in this application. If generators are to be installed, they need to be added to the site plan.

8. **Signage:**

- a. The plans illustrate that a Farm Store Ahead sign will be installed but does not include any detailed information regarding signage. Any proposed signage should be reviewed with the Board. Signs shall be in accordance with Section 330-180 of the Township Code.

9. **Architectural Drawings:**

- a. The architectural plans provide for the Farm Store and the Dairy Barn renovations illustrate that the proposed structures will be attractive in design and appearance. The Applicant should be prepared to discuss all aspects of these renovations with the Board.
- b. Farm Store: The Rider to the Application stated that the Farm Store Building was to be used for selling food and bakery items. The Applicant should be prepared to discuss the uses in this building in detail and explain whether any cooking and or baking will occur within this building.
- c. Dairy Barn: The Rider to the Application states that this building will be used for art gallery, craft space or studio space on the first floor. The second floor will be utilized for event and banquet uses. Again, the Applicant should be prepared to discuss the uses in this building in detail.

It is noted that the architectural drawings for the Dairy Barn state that the first-floor addition will include an area for butcher, kitchen and retail. The uses proposed in this portion of the Dairy Barn need to be reviewed with the Board.

10. **Additional Comments:**

- a. Clearing/Disturbance Areas for "Glam Camping": Additional details should be provided regarding the "glam camping area." This area is currently wooded and the Applicant will need to show any areas of clearing or grading on the site plan.
- b. Highlands Exemption: The entire site is located in the Highlands Preservation area. A Highlands exemption application has not been submitted for review. Based on a preliminary review, I believe that all the proposed improvements in the area of Route 94 could fall under a Highlands Exemption #4. Proposed improvements related to any tree clearing and grading in the glam camping area however, would not be covered under a Highlands Exemption.

- c. Parking Area on Block 228 Lot 8: The property located on the west side of Route 94 appears to also be owned by the Applicant. A large milling parking area is located on this property opposite of the Farm Store. It is assumed that this area was used as overflow property of the former owners of the Applicant's property. The Applicant should be prepared to discuss whether this area will be used for overflow parking. If so, that parking areas should be discussed with this application.

Note: The use of the parking area on the Block 228 Lot 8 and having customers crossing busy Route 94 is not a safe condition. The Board may wish to have this parking area removed to attempt to limit the use of this property in the future.

- d. Other Approvals that will be required include but may not be limited to:
- i. New Jersey Department of Transportation (*Road Opening permit*)
 - ii. Upper Delaware Conservation District (*formally the Sussex County Soil Conservation District*)
 - iii. Vernon Township Construction Department
 - iv. Sussex County Health Department
 - v. Vernon Township Fire Subcode Official

Very truly yours,



Cory L. Stoner, P.E., C.M.E.
HAROLD E. PELLOW & ASSOCIATES, INC.
Vernon Land Use Board Engineer

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cc: Via Email
Kim Decker, Planning & Zoning Secretary
Jessica Caldwell, P.P., A.I.C.P., Board Planner
Glenn Kienz, Esq., Board Attorney
Ira Weiner, Esq.
David Getz, P.E.