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October 8, 2025

Harvey Rosen, Chair
Township of Teaneck Zoning Board of Adjustment
Municipal Building
818 Teaneck Road
Teaneck, New Jersey 07666

RE: Application of 560 Cedar LLC, a.k.a. Tiger Buying Group
Preliminary and Final Site Plan and Variances
560-570 Cedar Lane
Block 204, Lot 3
MX-1 Mixed-Use 1 Zoning District

Dear Chairperson Rosen and Members of the Board:

The applicant is proposing to build a second retail building on the western side of the subject property, which would be one-story and provide 4,088 square feet in floor area (the existing retail building, which would remain, is located on the east side of the property and occupies 5,277 square feet). The existing parking lot would be redesigned to provide a new driveway location and restriping that would provide 40 parking spaces to support the two retail buildings. The subject property is located within MX-1 Mixed-Use 1 Zoning District, where retail uses are permitted. However, Ord. §33-23(c) states that, "Not more than one principal building shall be located on a lot, except those buildings that comprise a planned development, as in the redevelopment districts." Non-compliance with this prohibition on the number of principal buildings is considered to be a "d(1) use variance under the Municipal Land Use Law. In addition, the application has several existing non-conformities and may require a new "c" variance for building and lot coverage in excess of permitted and for lack of a required residential buffer.

We have reviewed the above-referenced development application, including the following documents:

- Preliminary & Final Site Plan (15 sheets), prepared by L2A Land Design LLC, dated May 22, 2025 and last revised July 2, 2025 (including reference to a Survey, prepared by Colliers Engineering & Design, dated July 16, 2021);
▪ Architectural floor plan and elevations, prepared by Jose Carballo Architecture, dated October 21, 2024 and last revised May 28, 2025 (3 sheets);
▪ Environmental Impact Statement, prepared by L2A Design, dated May 22, 2025;

We have also reviewed the Township's Zoning Ordinance and Master Plan and offer the following review of the application for your consideration.

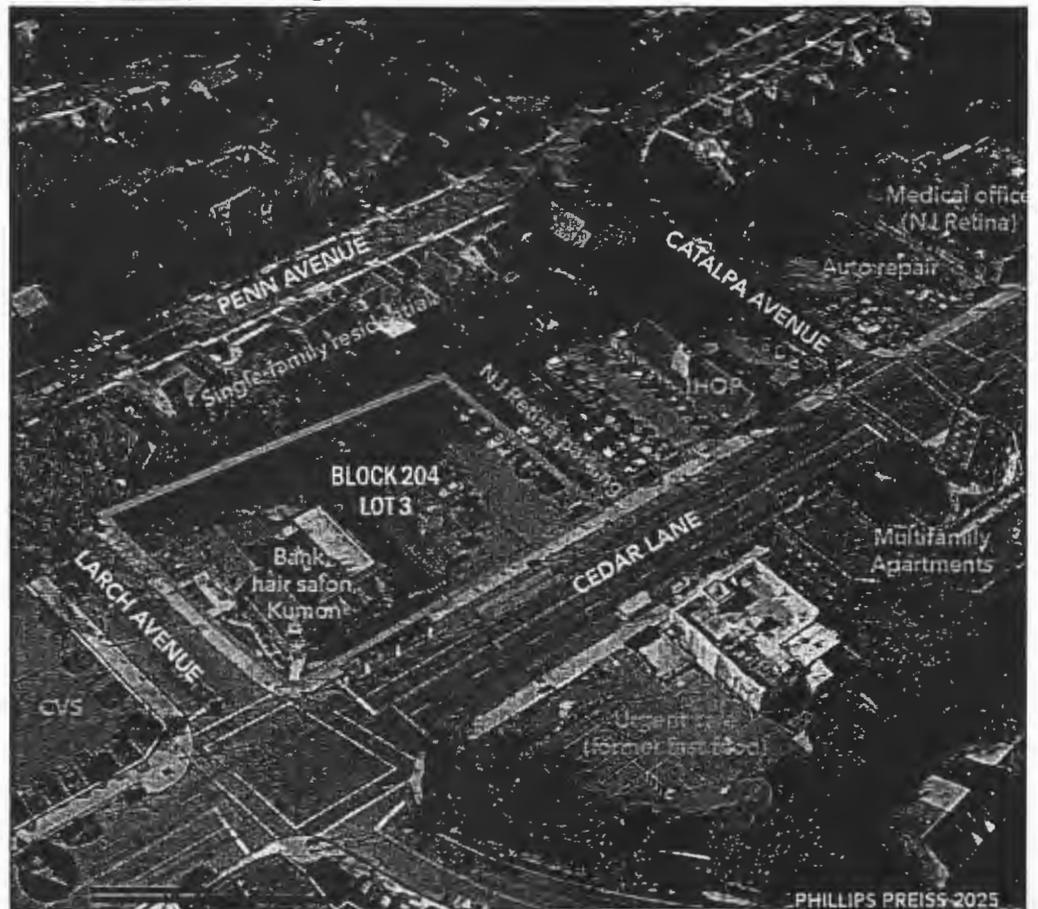
Description of the Subject Property

The subject property is designated as Block 204, Lot 3 on the tax maps of the Township of Teaneck, which is a trapezoidal corner lot measuring 29,314 square feet (0.673 acres), with ±201 feet of frontage on the southern side of Cedar Lane and ±141 feet of frontage on the west side of Larch Avenue. The lot has been subdivided by deed into four smaller individual lots. The site is improved with a 1½-story brick commercial building

that contains several commercial tenants, including Columbia Bank, Kumon, and children's hair salons. The building has an historic architectural design, though it is not listed on any historic registers.

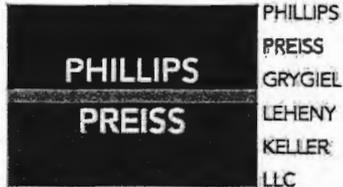
The site contains surface parking areas surrounding the building to the west and south, with a total of 53 parking spaces, including two ADA spaces. Access to the subject property is provided via an ingress-only driveway on Cedar Lane and two egress-only driveways on Cedar Lane and Larch Avenue. There is a landscaped front yard on each street frontage of the building, providing lawn and shrubs. A bench is located on the sidewalk. A six-foot-high wooden fence lies along most of the southern property line, which is leaning over and covered in vegetation. A dumpster is located in the parking lot behind the building.

**Aerial Context** (Source: Google Earth)



**Surrounding Land Uses**

The subject property is located within the “Cedar Lane West” corridor, situated between two notable commercial chains: a CVS to the east and an IHOP restaurant to the west. A new urgent care clinic is “coming soon” across Cedar Lane to the north, where the KFC fast food restaurant was formerly located. Single-family residential development exists to the south of the subject property. Additional development to the east and west along



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Cedar Lane typically consists of neighborhood commercial services, food/drink establishments, and other retail storefronts, in addition to garden apartments.

**Project Description**

The applicant is proposing to construct a second retail building on the western side of the subject property, which would be one-story and provide 4,088 square feet in floor area (the existing retail/office building, which would remain, is located on the east side of the property and occupies 5,277 square feet).

The existing parking lot would be redesigned to provide 40 parking spaces (two ADA spaces and four EV spaces) to support the two commercial buildings, along with directional pavement markings. Access to the subject property would be provided via one ingress/egress right-only driveway along Cedar Lane, while maintaining the egress-only driveway along Larch Avenue.

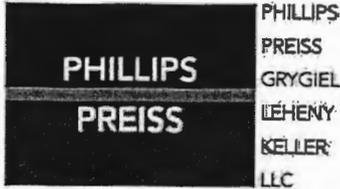
The applicant is proposing to remove the landscaping along the Cedar Lane frontage of the existing building and to add an ADA-compliant sidewalk and ramp to this north side of the building, and along the west side of the building adjacent to the parking lot. Walkways are also proposed along the east side of the proposed retail building adjacent to the parking lot.

An 8-foot by 12-foot refuse enclosure is proposed in the southwestern corner of the lot. A retaining wall with variable height is also proposed along the western property line to the south of the proposed building, atop which a six-foot-high stockade fence is also proposed. Additional fencing is proposed along the southeastern corner of the lot within the Larch Avenue front yard. Moreover, the applicant proposes electric, gas, water, sanitary sewer, and telecom utility connections for the proposed building.

Existing shrubs, lawn, and river stone are proposed to be removed along the Cedar Lane frontage (where the new ADA ramp is proposed) and adjacent to the neighboring residential property on Larch Avenue. New shrubs are proposed along the Cedar Lane frontage in front of the reconstructed parking lot. Shrubs and one deciduous tree are proposed on islands in the parking lot. Arborvitae trees are proposed along the southern side property line, separating the egress driveway on Larch Avenue from the adjacent single-family dwelling.

With respect to architectural appearance, the primary entrances of the proposed building would be oriented toward the east, facing the parking lot. The northern and western building elevations, which would be visible from Cedar Lane, are proposed to be windowless, doorless, and be devoid of variations in materials across the horizontal plane. The applicant proposes the use of panel siding, composite wood siding, EIFS, and aluminum storefront windows and doors with aluminum canopies located above. Masonry is also proposed along portions of the base of the building and aluminum coping is proposed along the roofline.

Proposed lighting for the development is to consist of three pole-mounted LED fixtures to illuminate the rear of the proposed parking lot and five wall-mounted LED fixtures along the perimeter of both the existing and proposed buildings. The applicant also proposes to retain the existing pole-mounted fixtures along Cedar Lane. Proposed landscaping is to be comprised of one deciduous tree within the parking lot and 12 evergreen trees in the



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southeastern corner of the property adjacent to a residential lot. Evergreen shrubs are also proposed along the proposed Cedar Lane driveway and within the proposed parking lot.

**Zoning Compliance**

The subject property is located within the Township's MX-1 Mixed Use Zoning District. Permitted uses in the MX-1 District are as follows:

- Retail sales of goods and services,
- Offices, including medical offices, financial institutions and business schools;
- Cabarets and restaurants, with the exception of fast-food, drive-through restaurants;
- Theaters, assembly halls, and bowling alleys;
- Apartments over commercial uses, provided said uses shall not be located on the first floor along Cedar Lane frontage; and
- Off-street parking facilities; provided, however, that said uses shall not be permitted to have frontage on Cedar Lane.

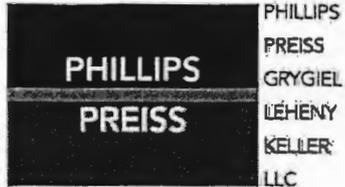
Permitted conditional uses in the MX-1 District include:

- Wireless communication towers and antennas, subject to the provisions of §33-25
- Public utility installations, subject to the provisions of §33-25
- Drive-through facilities, subject to the provisions of §33-25

It is noted that fast-food drive-through restaurants and motor vehicle service stations, public garages, automobile body repair or painting shops are prohibited within the zone district.

While the proposed retail use is a permitted use, no more than one principal structure is permitted on the same lot except within planned development areas in redevelopment districts. Therefore "d(1)" use variance relief is required.

The following table outlines the proposed development's compliance with the bulk standards of the MX-1 District.



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MX-1 District Bulk Standards	Required	Proposed
Min. Lot Area	None	29,314 ft.
Min. Lot Width	None	201.7 ft.
Max. Front Yard Setback	0 ft.	0 ft. (Cedar Lane) 6.96 ft. (Larche Ave)
Min. Side Yard Setback	None	0.3 ft. (west)   44.76 ft. (south)
Min. Rear Yard Setback	20 ft.	N/A (corner lot)
Max. Building Coverage	25%	<b>31.9% (v)</b> (18.0% existing)
Max. Lot Coverage	80%	<b>90.3% (v)</b> (92.4% existing)
Max. Building Height, Principal Building <sup>1</sup>	3 stories/35 feet	1 story/20.67 ft. <sup>2</sup>
Buffer	Required	Proposed
Min. Width of Residential Buffer, Side	15 ft.	<b>5.1 ft. (v)</b> (4.4 ft. existing)

(v) denotes a new variance is required. (e) denotes existing nonconformity.

**Table Notes:**

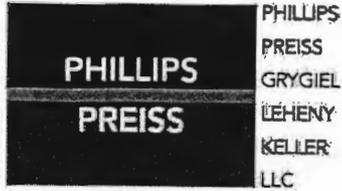
<sup>1</sup> Where a building or structure is immediately adjacent to a single-family residential dwelling unit the maximum building height shall not exceed 35 feet and three stories.

<sup>2</sup> Height is measured to the top of the roof. Note that the proposed height to the parapet surrounding the roof is 24.67 feet, and the height to the top of the proposed front 'monolith' is 28.67 feet.

In terms of off-street parking, the required amount of parking will be the summation of the individual parking requirements for each of the existing and proposed commercial uses. The table below breaks down the total amount of required parking:

Ord. §33-28(b)(3), Parking Standards & Uses		Required	Proposed
<b>Existing Building</b>		<b>20 spaces</b>	-
General Office - Kumon (1,338 sf)	1 space / 400 sf	4 spaces	
Financial Institution (2,601 sf)	1 space / 300 sf	9 spaces	
Retail/personal service (1,338 sf)	1 space / 200 sf	7 spaces	
<b>Proposed Building</b>		<b>22 spaces</b>	-
Retail (4,088 sf)	1 space / 200 sf	22 spaces	
<b>Total Parking</b>		<b>42 spaces</b>	40 spaces + 4 EVs = <b>44 spaces</b>
<b>Loading</b>			
Business, retail/office (6,764 sf)	1 sp./1st 10,000 sf	0 loading spaces	0 loading spaces
Financial institution (2,601 sf)	0 spaces		

The applicant proposes parking areas within the required residential buffer area of 15 feet, which requires bulk "c" variance relief from Ord. §33-15(s). The ordinance allows the Board to require replacement of the existing six-foot-high fence and/or landscaped screening adjacent to the residential properties to the south to mitigate potential impacts from the lack of required buffer width.

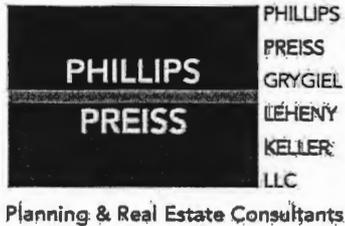


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### **Master Plan Applicability**

Teaneck's Planning Board adopted a new comprehensive Master Plan in January 2025. The Master Plan specifically addresses the Cedar Lane West commercial corridor and business districts generally, as listed below. The applicant shall provide planning testimony to address whether the proposed project advances or substantially impairs the following goals, objectives, and policy recommendations.

- **Goal 2** of the Land Use Element, *"Provide high standards of design and quality in the built environment,"* (p. 62).
- Objective L.2.1. *"Promote a welcoming and attractive environment in business districts,"* (p. 62).
- Objective L.2.3. *"Prioritize design and utilization improvements for underperforming and lackluster buildings and sites in business districts,"* (p. 62).
- Objective L.2.5. *"Retain buildings with historic or architectural value,"* (p. 63).
- Objective L.2.7. *"Improve the streetscape environment,"* (p. 63).
- **Goal 3** of the Land Use Element, *"Encourage the revitalization of Teaneck's business districts,"* (p. 63).
- Objective L.3.1. *"... promote a cohesive identity for business districts,"* where the identity of the Cedar Lane West corridor is described as having *"mix of commercial and residential"* uses. (p. 63-64),
- Objective L.3.3. *"Advance 'smart growth' planning principles in business district revitalization,"* (p. 64).
- Objective L.3.5. *"Encourage mixed-use developments along public transit corridors within business districts,"* (p. 65).
- Objective L.3.6. *"Broaden the range of commercial uses that are permitted in business districts,"* (p. 65).
- Objective L.3.9. *"Provide efficient parking in appropriate locations to accommodate demand,"* (p. 66).
- Objective L.4.5. *"Direct development pressure to business districts,"* (p. 67).
- **Recommendations** related to **Goal 1** of the Land Use Element (p. 73):
  - *"Promote active uses along street frontages in business districts."*
  - *"Relegate surface parking to the rear of business district properties to avoid expanses of parking close to street frontages, which detracts from vitality in an area."*
  - *"Reduce the number of curb cuts on main streets and in front of new developments to preserve on-street parking, loading, and circulation."*
- **Recommendations** related to **Goal 2** of the Land Use Element, which is to *Provide high standards of design and quality in new development projects,* (p. 74):
  - *"Provide reasonable limitations on the size and placement of signage."*
  - *"Encourage adequate and decorative lighting in business districts, including decorative streetlamps, gooseneck lighting for signage, wall sconces, string lighting for outdoor seating areas, etc."*

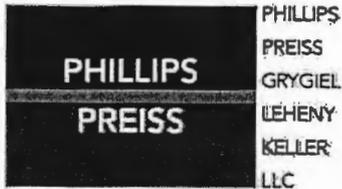


- **Recommendations** related to **Goal 3** of the Land Use Element, (p. 74):
- *“Permit mixed-use development along public transit corridors within business districts.”*
- **Community design preferences** are listed for business districts. Relevant preferences included (pp. 49):
  - *“Provide traditional architectural styles (Tudor, Colonial, etc.) that mimic the historic development patterns of the Township.”*
  - *“Avoid ‘boxy’ architectural styles or industrial styles.”*
  - *“Avoid locating parking garages in prominent locations, particularly near the front of a building.”*
  - *“Parking should be out-of-view or have diminished prominence in rear yards or side yards.”*
  - *“Incorporate a variety of materials, colors, scale, height, and patterns in storefronts/signage, provided they are compatible with the architectural vernacular.”*
  - *“Provide storefronts with varying widths along neighborhood-scale, mixed-use corridors.”*
  - *“Provide public gathering spaces, plazas, seating, landscaping, play structures, and art.”*
  - *“Provide buildings with a variety of uses across multiple floors in neighborhood-scale business districts.”*
  - *“Provide subtlety and detailing on building facades.”*
  - *“Install a variety of plantings along streetscapes (e.g., shade trees, low plantings, planters on sidewalks, etc.)”*
  - *“Provide wide sidewalks and outdoor dining.”*

### **Planning Comments**

1. The proposed development would result in the location of two principal commercial buildings within the subject property, whereas Ord. §33-23(c) permits no more than one principal building per lot except those which are part of a planned development in the redevelopment districts, which is not the case. As such, the Applicant requires **“d(1)” use variance** relief to permit a greater number of principal structures than is permitted. It is noted that the proposed retail use is permitted within the MX-1 Mixed-Use 1 Zoning District.

The Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) at N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70d(1) permits a board of adjustment to grant a variance to allow “a use or principal structure in a district restricted against such use or principal structure.” Per the MLUL, a “use variance” may be granted only “in particular cases for special reasons.” These “special reasons” for a use variance may include:



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- (1) That the use is inherently beneficial, addressing the four-part “Sica” test;
- (2) That there is a hardship precluding the site being developed for a permitted use; or
- (3) That the site is particularly suited for the use so as to promote the general welfare.

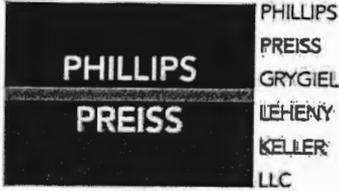
A “d(1)” variance applicant for a use that is not inherently beneficial is further required to address the “enhanced quality of proof” per Medici v. BPR Co. (1987), which is that “the grant of a use variance is not inconsistent with the intent and purpose of the master plan and zoning ordinance.”

In addition, a variance applicant must address the “negative criteria,” and affirmatively demonstrate that the variance can be granted “without substantial detriment to the public good” and “without substantial impairment to the intent and purpose of the zone plan and zoning ordinance” of the municipality. The applicant’s planner shall provide testimony as to how the above is addressed.

2. The applicant’s planner must provide testimony regarding the **“c” variances** required for building and lot coverage and for lack of a required residential buffer. Pursuant to the MLUL at N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70c, the Board may grant a “c” bulk variance for the following reasons:
  - (1) Undue hardship or practical difficulties in the strict application of a regulation by reason of exceptional narrowness, shallowness, shape, exceptional topographic conditions, or other extraordinary and exceptional situation uniquely affecting a specific piece of property; or
  - (2) The purposes of zoning (as listed in the MLUL) would be advanced by the deviation and the benefits of deviating from the ordinance requirements outweigh any detriments.

The Board must also be satisfied that the granting of the variance would not cause substantial detriment to the public good or substantially impair the intent and purpose of the zone plan and zoning ordinance.

3. The applicant should provide testimony with respect to the proposed retail use and provide additional information regarding the type of tenants. Testimony should also address the commercial operations of the proposed development: the hours of operation; the number of respective employees; the anticipated average and peak number of customers at any time; loading/delivery needs including the frequency, timing, and type of trucks expected; and refuse collection.
4. The applicant’s architect should discuss the compatibility of the proposed architectural aesthetic with the existing historic building on the property. The architect should also discuss conformance of the proposed building and streetscape design with the Township’s community design preferences, as listed in the Master Plan section of this letter. The Applicant should also provide testimony with respect to the proposed north and west elevations, which do not feature any fenestration and exhibit blank appearances which are within public view. We recommend design features that enliven the streetscape.



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Further, the Applicant should provide additional information with respect to the interior floor plans and signage.

5. The subject property does not conform with the required residential buffer width of 15 feet along the southern property line as existing and proposed. However, fencing 6 feet in height is existing and proposed, to be supplemented by evergreen plantings, as per Township requirements. The applicant should speak to the sufficiency of the existing and proposed buffer for screening the subject property from the residential lots to the south, as per the requirements of §33-15(s).
6. The applicant shall confirm the maximum height of the proposed retaining wall on the western side lot line. The applicant shall confirm if the combined wall and fence height will be in compliance with Ord. §33-29(b)(2).
7. The existing southern wooden fence is leaning and covered in vegetation. Although the a new section of stockade fence is proposed within the Larch Avenue front yard, we recommend that the applicant agree to replace the entire fence with a solid, six-foot-high privacy fence along this property line. The applicant shall further confirm if the proposed stockade fence in the Larch Avenue front yard complies with the requirements of Ord. §33-29(b)(1) and (b)(3) related to sight triangles.
8. The applicant's traffic engineer should discuss the shared parking arrangement, including the sufficiency of existing and proposed parking at different peak hours for the uses.
9. The Environmental Impact Statement is adequate for review by the Environmental Commission.

We trust that the above information is responsive to your needs.

Respectfully submitted,

Spach Trahan, AICP, P.P.

Nikhil Ramachandran, AICP, P.P.

cc: Rosiland McLean  
Mark Madaio, Esq.  
Joe Vince, P.E.  
John Corak, P.E.  
Adam Myszka, Zoning Officer  
Jason Tuvel, Esq.

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