

KALA

Karen Arent Landscape Architect

To: Chairman Donald Serotta and the Town of Chester Planning Board

From: Karen Arent, Landscape Architect

Date: April 15, 2015

Subject: Primo Sports

Consultant: Fellenzer Engineering

COMMENTS:

The site plan provides beautiful open space views from local roads and fields. The building is tucked back next to adjacent industrial uses. Parking is mostly hidden from views. Comments are listed below to help screen views of the building from local residences and soften views of the lights and fencing from local roads.

Fencing

1. The fence/netting was moved away from the Route 94 and now follows contour lines across the front of the site which minimizes the height of the fence, keeps the fence line level, and moves it further away from Route 94. This helps mitigate visual impacts of the fence/netting. The landscape architectural consultant for the project, Steve Esposito, agreed to move the fence further away from the Route 94 near the intersection of Route 94 and Glenmere Ave so the fence is behind existing vegetation to remain and along the northwestern section of the front of the site. The fence is also supposed to end at the storm water management basin on the northeast side of the site because it is not necessary in this location. The fence/netting may also need to move a little further from Route 94 in certain locations to provide landscaping as listed below.
2. The fence around the existing pond is supposed to move further away from the intersection of Green Drive and Glenmere Road. Moving the fence will also lower it, further reducing visual impacts of the fence from the intersection and Glenmere Road, keeping most of the view of the pond open and helping to minimize potential damage to the fence from snow plowing.
3. Site plans must show the same location for the fence as the landscape plan.
4. Fence details must be shown on the drawings. Fence and netting posts, fabric and rails must be black in color to minimize visual impacts.

Site Plan

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5. A retaining wall is shown on the western side of the pond on plans submitted to the town. The landscape architect showed me a plan with the retaining wall in this location removed and hopefully future submissions will not include this wall. The wall creates more of a commercial look to the existing pond taking away from the natural beauty that currently exists. The wall will also need a fence, putting another manmade element into the scene. There is plenty of space for a landscaped slope to the pond which creates a more naturalistic view while cleansing storm water if a certain mixture of grass is selected and left to grow a little longer. The maximum slope is 2' vertical to 1' horizontal. The less steep the slope the slower the storm water travels thru taller grasses. The slower the water travels thru the grasses, the cleaner it gets. Hopefully the landscape architect can select grasses that can be left to grow longer and cleanse stormwater and stabilize the slope. Ideally areas of these grasses should be delineated on the landscape plan and a seed mixture specified on the plan.

Landscaping

Only some of the landscaping recommended on the previous memorandum dated February 12 was shown. The objective of landscaping is to screen the building and parking from adjacent residences, and soften the view of the tall light poles from adjacent roads and residences by providing foreground vertical elements. It is desirable to keep open space views, the fields, visible from local roads. Foreground deciduous trees will help the light poles blend into the landscape during the day and will help soften the effect of the lights at night while keeping views of the fields from roads open. Fast growing species that mature in large sizes are desired so that over time, the lights will be better screened. Trees can be pruned to avoid the netting and fencing and the landscape architect specified pruning as necessary on the landscape plan. Trees must be located far enough away from power lines along Route 94 so there are no future problems. Most of the comments listed below are in accordance with these objectives.

6. No landscaping is shown around the storm water management area at the entrance to the site. Landscaping is requested in this area in accordance with DEC regulations. Larger growing trees are requested on the south slopes of this area to help mitigate visual impacts of lights from Route 94.
7. Landscaping to cleanse nutrients from fertilizers and possibly pesticides from storm water before it enters the existing pond should be shown as outlined in comment number 5 above.
8. A few large growing shade trees are requested between the fence and the property line between the storm water management area and the landscaping around the existing building along Route 94. The fence may have to move a little further from Route 94 in this location to allow enough space between the fence and the utility poles to grow large shade trees or the trees could move inside the fence, or trees that grow tall and thin could be selected (however, the quantity of tall thin trees must be increased to provide more coverage).

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9. Landscaping is shown around the building to remain (along Route 94) to create aesthetically pleasing views from Route 94. Evergreen trees are requested behind the fence and landscaping in key locations to provide winter screening of the Primo building from the residence across the street and to further enhance views from Route 94.
10. Large trees are requested between landscaping near the existing building along Route 94 and the grouping of Spruces. The fence may have to move a little further from Route 94 in this location to allow enough space between the fence and the utility poles or tall trees must be specified as described previously.
11. A group of Spruces are shown on a flat high spot to the west of the building to remain. Three more Spruces are requested in this area to create more of an impact.
12. The landscape plan will be revised to show all existing trees on the corner of Glenmere and Route 94 to remain. Spruce trees will be shown to be planted among the existing trees to further increase screening and develop an aesthetically pleasing view at the intersection.
13. Evergreen trees are shown spaced 15' apart between the fence and Glenmere Road. Groupings of evergreen trees are shown by the each light pole. Evergreen trees shown near the light pole could be increased from a quantity of 3 to 5 and should be a fast growing species such as Green Giant Arborvitae. Spacing of the evergreen trees could be decreased to 12' so a wall of evergreens is created more quickly, provided the property owner across the street desires complete screening rather than views into the site.
14. Norway Spruces are requested instead of White Spruces so they grow faster and wider. A couple of White Pines could be mixed in to create more diversity. Please note that deer eat white Pines more readily than Norway Spruces.
15. More deciduous trees are requested on the north and southwest sides of the existing pond on the up hill area or along the slope to provide screening of the lights from Glenmere Road and Glen Drive. Evergreen trees should be specified where necessary to screen the view of the Primo building from residences along Glen Drive and Glenmere Road.
16. Evergreen trees along Glen Drive at the bottom of the slope are requested to be planted at the top of the slope so that they will provide more instant screening. Planting them on top of the slope also keeps them away from road salts.
17. Deciduous trees could be shown along Glen Drive to help provide screening and minimize views of the site while traveling along the drive.
18. Sizes of deciduous trees could be reduced to 2-2.5" in caliper to help reduce costs so additional trees could be added. Smaller trees outperform larger trees over time because less root mass is required to grow back before the canopy starts to grow.

Lighting

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1. Galvanized steel poles are proposed for the lights. Sometimes galvanized steel has a shiny finish and other times a dull finish. This makes a difference in the visual appearance of the lights during the day. Can the poles be painted a stealth color such as the mono poles used for telecommunications so they blend better with the environment? Light poles must be dull in finish and as stealth as possible.
2. The consultant should submit paperwork that specifies fixtures are dark sky compliant.
3. The lights should also only be used when sports fields are in use. Perhaps the lights could be not used on Saturday and Sunday evenings to further mitigate impacts to adjacent residential properties