

Planning & Real Estate Consultants

January 22, 2021

Dennis Sandow, Chair
Long Hill Township Planning Board
915 Valley Road
Gillette, New Jersey 07933

**RE: Applicant: Elite Properties at Long Hill, LLC
Address: 621 Valley Road (C.R. 512)
Block: 10801/ Lot: 3
R-MF-4 Multi Family Residential Zone 4
Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan**

Dear Chairperson Sandow and Members of the Board:

Below are our preliminary comments on the proposed architecture for Elite Properties' proposed 62-unit multifamily residential building on Block 10801, Lot 3 in Gillette. The property has a street address of 621 Valley Road.

This review includes suggestions for changes to the architecture which could be considered by the Applicant.

Parking, Facade Transparency, and Open Space

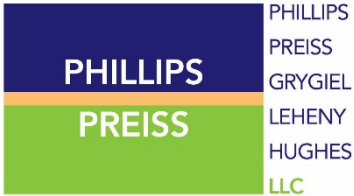
The site plan shows 19 surface spaces and 77 interior spaces, for a total of 96 spaces for 62 apartments, or 1.55 spaces per unit. The parking ratio could be lowered to 1.5 spaces/unit in accordance with the zoning. This would result in three fewer parking space. The Applicant could consider:

- Removing 3 spaces from inside the ground floor in order to make a larger lobby with more transparency in the north/front facade. The rendering shows a large expanse of blank wall to the left of the lobby. If the lobby cannot be expanded here with a large area of glazing, more windows should be added here and along the front mechanical room, aligned with windows in the upper floors; spandrel or translucent glass may be used in these windows to screen the mechanical room.
- Removing 3 spaces from inside the ground floor in order to allow for turn-around room and the northern section of the building.
- Reducing the number of outdoor surface parking spaces to create an open space amenity for residents.

Columns in North Gables of Front Elevation

The wide brick and stone-veneered "columns" on both ends of the two front/north gables contain mechanical space that is double the width of such spaces on units along other facades. The Applicant could consider:

- Making the columns less massive by making them shallower, like a pilaster, and allowing the balconies to project halfway past the (now shallower) columns (and past the roofline).



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- Cladding the now-shallower “column” bays in the same blue clapboard as adjacent facade areas of the top three floors, rather than brick.

Parking Garage Openings

The architect should confirm that the parking garage will have punched openings all around the ground floor facade (i.e. passive ventilation); that these openings will be the same size, proportions, and frequency as the residential windows above; and that they will use decorative grilles in the openings that maximize transparency into the garage.

Materials and Colors

The Applicant should consider the following:

- The first and second floors are blue clapboard, and the top “third” (actually the fourth) floor is cream-colored board and batten. As there is little architectural difference in the design of the top floor, it might look better just to continue the dark blue color on the top floor, perhaps with a different texture such as shingles. However, the cream-colored board & batten side does create a welcome variation on alternating vertical bays of levels 1 through 3.
- The stone cladding on the massive columns in the front / north gabled bays could stop at the top of the ground floor, not extend into the first residential floor. In addition, the brick cladding above the ground floor on these columns could be replaced with blue clapboard matching the adjacent facades.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Leheny, AICP, PP

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Jolanta Maziarz, Esq.