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March 22, 2021

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

**RE: Applicant: New Jersey American Water Company  
Address: 1227 Valley Road, Stirling, NJ  
Block: 10411, Lot: 6.02  
P Public Use Zone  
Minor Site Plan with Variances  
Planning Review Letter**

Dear Chairperson Sandow and Members of the Board:

New Jersey American Water (the "Applicant") is proposing a new equipment storage building on the present site of its sewerage treatment facility on Block 10411, Lot 6.02 (i.e., 1227 Valley Road) in Stirling. The Applicant is seeking Minor Site Plan approval with bulk variances.

#### **Documents Reviewed**

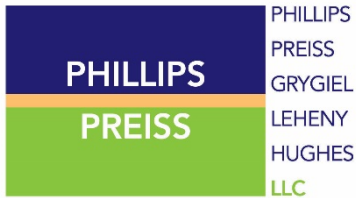
The following documents have been reviewed in preparation of this letter:

- Application and Checklist.
- Architecture Drawings entitled "New Jersey American Water Long Hill Twp. Sewer Treatment Plant Upgrades, 1223 Valley Road, Stirling, NJ 07980," prepared by Joseph F. McKernan Jr., Architects & Associates consisting of 4 sheets, dated October 26, 2020.
- "Long Hill Township Sewer Treatment Plant Upgrades Minor Site Plan Lot 6.02, Block 10411, Long Hill Township, Morris County, New Jersey," prepared by Stires Associates, P.A., consisting of 4 sheets, dated October 29, 2020.
- Aerial photos of site.

#### **Site Description**

The proposed project involves one tax lot, Block 10411, Lot 6.02 with a street address of 1227 Valley Road. The property is approximately ±6.53 acres and is located on the west side of a paper street (Morris Avenue) that is south of Valley Road in Stirling. Directly to the north is the Long Hill Department of Public Works ("DPW") on Lot 6.01. The Long Hill Community Center is to the north of the DPW site. The Passaic River and Warren Township in Somerset County are to the south. To the east are residential properties along Magnolia, Laurel and Cedar Avenues. To the west is vacant land owned by the Township.

In August 2020, the Planning Board granted Long Hill Township approval to subdivide then Block 10411, Lot 6 into two lots: 6.01 and 6.02. At the time, Lot 6 housed the DPW and the Township sewer plant and appurtenant structures. Pursuant to the results of the November 5, 2019 general election, the Township sold the Township



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wastewater treatment system, including the sewer plant, to New Jersey American Water Company (“NJAW”). The August 2020 application was to permit Lot 6 to be subdivided so that the Township could convey the sewer treatment plan and appurtenant facilities to NJAW. At present, Lot 6.01 contains the existing DPW buildings owned and operated by the Township, and Lot 6.02 contains the sewer treatment plant and appurtenant facilities owned and operated by NJAW.

Lot 6.02 is currently improved with a variety of structures related to the sewerage treatment facility including tanks and other ancillary buildings. There is also a temporary storage trailer onsite which is shown as “proposed” on the Site Plan (page 3 of 4) submitted by the Applicant.

**Proposed Project**

The Applicant proposes to construct an equipment storage building in the northern portion of the site in an area that appears to have been previously disturbed. The building would be roughly 40 feet deep by 75 feet in width and would store Vector trucks. Per the development application, Vector trucks are required to be stored in a heated building. The ground floor would have two trench drains, storage area, laundry room and stairs to the mezzanine level. The mezzanine level would have a women’s locker room with shower and toilet, men’s locker room with shower and toilet, and a “ready room” containing a refrigerator and sinks. A new driveway would be created along the western façade of the building. The floor plans show a ramp leading into the west side of the building and two 14 foot by 16 foot overhead doors. An ADA ramp leads into the east side of the building. Stairs would lead to the entrance doors: one on the east side of the building and one on the south side of the building. There would also be an 8 foot by 8 foot overhead door on the south elevation. The building would be set above grade 2.5 feet. The ground floor under the mezzanine would be 15.5 feet in height and the mezzanine level would be 10.5 feet in height. The building would have decorative masonry veneer on the ground level and metal paneled siding on the remainder of the facades. There would be a metal standing seam roof and two rows of snow guards on both sides of the pitched roof.

We note that in addition to the new storage building, the Site Plan (page 3 of 4 of the Engineering drawings) shows a proposed 11.75 foot by 56 foot temporary trailer with steps. Site photographs indicate that trailer is currently onsite and is equipped with steps, an ADA ramp, and trailer skirting.

**Zoning Compliance with P Public Use Zone Standards**

The site is in the P Public Use zone. A zoning table indicating the P Zone requirements and proposed minor site plan compliance is provided below.

**P Public use Compliance Table**

Bulk Requirements	Required/ Permitted	Existing	Proposed	Relief Needed
<i>Principal Building</i>				
Min. Lot Area (acres)	15,000	284,504	284,504	—
Min. Lot Width (ft.)	100	N/A <sup>1</sup>	N/A <sup>1</sup>	—
Min. Floor Area (s.f.)	1,000	8,483	10,311	—
Maximum Building Height (floors/stories)	2.5/35	1	2/TBD <sup>2</sup>	—
Min. Front Yard (ft.)	25	235.40	235.40	—
Min. Side Yard (ft.)	10	4.49 (EN)	4.48	V
Min. Rear Yard (ft.)	25	136.18	136.18	—
Max. Lot Coverage (%)	60	25.9	27.6	—
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	0.40	0.03	0.04	—

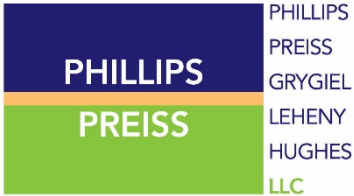
V= Variance Required EN: Existing Non-Conformity

<sup>1</sup> Lot 6.02 has no improved road frontage. The Planning Board granted a variance to allow this condition in its August 18, 2020 approval of the subdivision creating Lot 6.02.

<sup>2</sup> Per Section LU-111, Height of Building is defined as “the vertical distance from the lowest ground elevation around the foundation to the level of the highest elevation point of the roof surface.” The architecture drawings show a height of 28 feet. However, the height to the highest point of the roof surface appears to be approximately 33 feet. No variance would be required. However, the Applicant should clarify the correct height according to the zoning definition.

**Planning Comments**

1. The Applicant should explain what the new building will be used for including the space on the mezzanine level, the purpose of a Vactor truck, how many trucks will be stored in the building, where such trucks are currently being stored, how often these types of trucks are typically used.
2. The Applicant requires a “c” bulk variance and shall provide testimony justifying the request for such variances. In the case of “c” variances, the MLUL at N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70c allows for two basis of proof: 1) that by reason of exceptional physical, topographic, or other extraordinary condition uniquely affecting the property, the strict application of the regulations would result in practical difficulties or exceptional and undue hardship; or 2) that the purposes of the MLUL would be advanced and the benefits of granting the variance outweigh the detriments. In either case, the Applicant must also address the negative criteria, that the variance(s) 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.
3. The Applicant indicates that the floor area on the site is increasing by 1,828 square feet. The footprint of the proposed building is approximately 3,000 square feet. We note that calculations for floor area do not include space used for garage. However, the Applicant should provide testimony as to how



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much floor area, as defined in the Land Use Ordinance, is being provided on the ground level and mezzanine level.

4. Per Footnote 2 under the zoning table, the Applicant should provide the height of the proposed building according to the definition for Building Height in Section LU 111.
5. The Applicant should provide testimony on the status of the temporary trailer on site which, as described above, is equipped with a stairwell, ADA ramp and trailer skirting. Per Section 16-8.2 Trailers at Construction Sites of the General Ordinance, “use of trailers in any zone in connection with site construction or development shall be permitted” subject to restrictions and regulations including that “No trailer shall be moved onto a construction site until 30 days prior to the date upon which site or development work actually commences. All trailers shall be removed from the site within 30 days after issuance of the final certificate of occupancy.” The Applicant should provide testimony as to when the trailer was moved to the site, how the trailer is being used, and how long it is expected to remain on site.
6. In the architectural drawings showing the east and west elevations of the proposed storage building there appears to be a railing shown attached to the north elevation. The Applicant should clarify what this railing is and if there is a planned entrance into the north side of the building.
7. We defer to the Board engineer regarding comments regarding landscaping, lighting and stormwater management.

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

Respectfully submitted,

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Elizabeth Leheny, AICP, PP

cc: Debra Coonce  
Jolanta Maziarz, Esq.  
Mike Lanzafama, PE, PLS, PP