



Berkeley Heights Environmental Commission
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www.BH-EC.org

MEMO

November 2, 2020

TO: Planning Board

Subject: Stratton House, Block 702, Lots 17 and 18

Findings of Fact:

- Applicant proposes 3-4 story apartment building (211 units total) w/ multi-level parking garage
- The applicant proposes maximum building coverage of 55% where 70% is allowed.
- The applicant proposes impervious lot coverage of 74% where 85% is allowed.
- The applicant proposes to replace 36.4 trees for trees that are removed (sheet 8). Eleven trees appear to be dead according to the application. The diameters of the trees are measured at three feet above the base.
- At least half of proposed list of trees, shrubs and grasses appear to include native plants
- Less than half of proposed list of perennials and ground covers appear to include native plants.
- The streetscape plan (sheet 18) consists mostly of native plants.
- The lots appear to be in a Zone AE and Floodway Area in Zone AE.
- Lot 18 appears to have a recharge value of greater than 12 inches per year, while lot 17 appears to have a recharge value of zero inches per year.
- The southeast part of lot 17 appears to border on a riparian zone.
- A large part of lot 17 appears to be a heat island. And a parking lot to be constructed on lot 18 may contribute to heat island effect.
- General Construction and Design & Grounds and Landscaping Considerations are not included.

Recommendations:

- Since maple is a dominant tree in Berkeley Heights, the Commission recommends adding diversity by replacing some maples with another native species, such as blackgum (*nyssa sylvatica*).
- At least half of the perennials and ground covers shall include native plants.
- Employ green infrastructure to mitigate stormwater runoff, especially in lot 18, which appears to have a high recharge value.
- Plant appropriate native plants instead of lawn along the border to the riparian zone on the southeast part of lot 17.
- Mitigate the heat island effect with white roofing or a green roof and larger canopy trees in parking areas.
- Ask applicant to include General Construction and Design & Grounds and Landscaping Considerations.

R. Lei