

The Planning Board of the Village of Montebello held a meeting on Tuesday, September 14, 2021, on Zoom. Chairman Caridi called the meeting to order at **7:00 p.m.** and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT

Anthony Caridi, Chairman  
Howard Hochberg, Member  
David Levine, Member  
Stan Shipley, Member  
Thomas Ternquist, Member

OTHERS

Alyse Terhune, Asst. Village Attorney  
Jonathan Lockman, Village Planner  
Martin Spence, Village Engineer  
Regina Rivera, Planning/Zoning Clerk

ABSENT

Marlo Dickman, Ad Hoc Member

**Meeting Minutes Approval**

Member Ternquist made a motion to approve the August 10, 2021, Planning Board meeting minutes, seconded by Member Levine and upon vote, all were in favor.

**CDRC Update**

There were no applications for the August 31, 2021, CDRC meeting.

**Rella Warehouse—Site Plan, Subdivision  
100-300 Rella Blvd., Montebello, NY**

Application of ACG Acquisitions LLC, 95 Chestnut Ridge Road, Montvale, NJ 07645. The Applicant is proposing the construction of a 291,820 square foot warehouse with supporting office space on 18.52 acres at 100-300 Rella Boulevard. The parcel is located on the north side of Rella Boulevard at the intersection of Airmont Road in the Village of Montebello, which is designated on the Ramapo Tax Map as Section 55.08, Block 1, Lots 5 and 6 in the LO-C Zone.

Present were the Applicant Joseph Brachfeld of ACG Acquisitions, his attorney Michael Klein of Hartmann, Doherty, Rosa, Berman & Bulbulia LLC, Engineers Brian Brooker and Joseph Nyitray of Brooker Engineering PC, Sound Engineer Michael Bontje, Architects Jason Anderson and Stosh Zamons of Anderson Design Group, and Blyth Yost of Yost Landscape Architecture Design. Mr. Klein stated that the Planning Board issued their notice of intent to be lead agency for SEQR in July. Now that more than 30 days have passed, he was hoping the Board was inclined to declare lead agency tonight and to consider the adoption of the FEAF part II at the next meeting.

After Mr. Klein presented an overview of the proposed 291,031 square foot warehouse with accessory office space, Engineer Joseph Nyitray presented the site plan dated April 4, 2021, latest revision date June 6, 2021. Mr. Brooker summarized the layout, noting that the two lots will be merged, that there will be a large, uncleared buffer along the frontage of Airmont Road, an access

road for emergency vehicles at the northwest corner of the property, and a sidewalk along Airmont Road and Rella Boulevard. Existing mature shade trees along Rella Boulevard will remain, and the employee parking will be at a higher grade than the road atop a retaining wall which, along with the trees, will obscure the parking lot from Rella Boulevard.

The proposed sound barrier and concrete retaining wall beginning at the cul-de-sac and extending along the perimeter of the property counterclockwise to the northwest corner will blanket the noise of all trucking activity and bring the traffic decibels to acceptable levels. Regarding stormwater management, Mr. Brooker stated there will be two naturally shaped drainage basins, one at the southeast corner and the other on the west side of the property.

Chairman Caridi asked why there is a proposed sidewalk along Airmont Road. Mr. Lockman said that the Village recommends a sidewalk for easier access to public transportation. The CDRC required one but the Planning Board does not have to if it so chooses, he said. Chairman Caridi said they can address the issue as the project progresses but that he would prefer no sidewalk. Mr. Brooker said he had no objections either way.

Chairman Caridi noticed the demising line in the building and asked if they planned on housing more than one tenant. Mr. Brooker said it is designed for one or two tenants. Chairman Caridi wanted more details on the sound barrier. Mr. Brooker showed the profile of the wall showing the sections and material types being considered for the four-foot concrete base supporting an eight-foot acoustic wall, which ideally can be planted with ivy on the outside facing the residences to render it more aesthetically pleasing. Sound engineer Mr. Bontje noted that several materials were being considered for the sound wall above the base but that concrete stone and pillars would be best to better support the weight of the sound-absorbing materials and the landscaping on the outside of the wall. Sound absorbing materials are proposed for the building itself, placed 12 -16 feet high to absorb sound from elevated exhausts of larger trucks, and more sound-deadening matting will be installed around the loading dock to muffle the sound of the reverse truck beepers.

In response to the Board's concern about impacts of trucking and warehousing operations so close to an assisted living facility, Mr. Bontje agreed that The Sentinel assisted living facility is a sensitive noise receptor but noted that it is already embedded in a high-noise area due to the proximity to I-87. Normally a residential area would be in the 50-53 decibel range. Daytime sound measurements of the property showed on average 59.8 decibels so it is not too far off, and the wall is designed with the size of the interstate trucks in mind, he said.

Chairman Caridi was concerned that these 75-foot tractor trailers would not have enough swing space to turn into the property and asked if they proposed any modifications to the intersection. Mr. Brooker said they will work with the Rockland County Highway Department for modifications to the curb to ease the radius for right-turn movements. Chairman Caridi asked if this modification was included in the Traffic Impact Study. Mr. Lockman said that [Village Traffic Consultant] Osman Barrie concentrated on the intersection itself and not the truck turning issue, which is the purview of the Rockland County Highway Department. Mr. Spence said that he made comments about this in his July 11, 2021, memo in which he notes conflicts with the truck-turning radius at the entrance to Rella Boulevard.

Mr. Brooker said their truck maneuverability study shows that the intersection needs improvements. There was an earlier iteration of the site plan in which a long, gradual road traverses through the front of the property directly from Airmont Road, but this plan was abandoned because the buffer

would not be preserved, he said. Mr. Lockman said that the main concern is to preserve the landscaped corridor and that he felt that the curb modification at the right-turn intersection is a better solution. Ms. Terhune countered that an alternate road would possibly lessen the noise along Rella Boulevard, but Mr. Lockman noted that the trucks would still need to exit via Rella Boulevard. Mr. Bontje said the sound wall would have to be extended and Mr. Brooker concluded that it would not be the ideal plan for the operations, particularly regarding how the trucks would stack once on the property.

After more discussion about traffic flow and the traffic impact study, Mr. Lockman speculated that there might be an advantage to an alternate road but explained that the Village code states that a buffer shall be maintained along Airmont Road in the LO-C District. Chairman Caridi said that this Board can waive that buffer requirement and that the Applicant can be very creative with the landscape plan to meet the setback requirement and hide the access driveway, and the only accommodation to consider is the additional curb cut. He then suggested a trucks-only entrance at the north corner of the property where the emergency access road is currently proposed. Mr. Brooker said that would entertain yet another curb cut but that he would explore the suggestion. Chairman Caridi said he was willing to sacrifice aesthetics for a better traffic flow, especially if it prevents the intersection of Rella and Airmont Road from worsening.

Mr. Brooker asked there was enough information provided for a Part II SEQR response. Mr. Lockman said there are five comments regarding the FEAF Part I in his memo dated June 23, 2021, none of which would change for the alternative scenario just discussed. There is much concern, however, regarding the 24-hour construction as per the FEAF form. Mr. Brooker noted that the box was checked on the FEAF in error and will be corrected.

Architect Jason Anderson reviewed the basic architecture of the proposed warehouse and shared some renderings with the Board. Chairman Caridi had some questions about the façade materials and colors. Mr. Anderson said the glass on the façade will have low reflectivity of a grayish or blue hue. Mr. Lockman asked to see renderings with the brick and beige façade as discussed in his memo, adding that he anticipated the Board would prefer a color scheme that complements The Sentinel across the street. Mr. Anderson shared that rendering but it seemed the Board preferred the gray and black façade. Materials, textures, colors and sound attenuation mats were discussed. Mr. Anderson added that there will be a lot of windows to let light rendering the building more energy efficient, and that they were considering installing solar panels on the roof.

Chairman Caridi noted the 43 load bay doors and asked how they would reduce noise from interior warehouse operations. Mr. Anderson said the walls will be 10 inches thick with an outer layer of concrete and insulation within that will stop any noise from escaping. The bay doors, also insulated, will compression-seal onto the trucks for unloading. There will be no provisions made for outside unloading, and if the truck can't be sealed in the loading bay, they can use one of the two drive-in docks to enter the warehouse entirely, he said.

Chairman Caridi explained that there were problems regarding operational noise involving another warehouse in the Village. Mr. Lockman said this issue is mentioned in comment number six of his June memo and that Section 195-87.3 of the Village code specifically states that the Planning Board may prohibit outdoor loading or operations that generate noise for any special permit use in the LO-C district. The Board is serious about this issue and there is an ordinance to back it up, he said. Mr. Anderson said that any outdoor operations are not the intent, and beyond that, the site layout does not allow any opportunity for such.

Chairman Caridi asked if the Applicant had in mind a specific type of product for warehousing. Mr. Anderson said they were not yet sure, but that getting to this level in the Planning Board process has given them sufficient momentum to pursue a tenant. He clarified that it will be an in-and-out operation, not a last point warehouse, and that there are variations yet to be explored as the application progresses. Chairman Caridi asked Mr. Anderson to submit possible uses to ensure that they will only pursue only warehousing/distribution operations.

Member Shipley asked if the warehouse accommodates tandem trailers. Mr. Brooker said that the geometry of the property does not allow maneuverability for these trucks. Mr. Lockman advised that the prohibition of tandem trailers can be a condition of approval.

The Chairman asked the Applicant to address all comments outlined in Mr. Spence's and Mr. Lockman's memo. No one else having any more comments, Member Ternquist made a motion to declare the Planning Board as lead agency for SEQR, seconded by Member Shipley. Upon vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Brooker said that the revised plans will include the entrance from Airmont road. Mr. Klein suggested they be adjourned to the November meeting and asked if they can expect a Part II response by then. Mr. Nyitray said that the Part I correction as discussed will be made immediately. Mr. Lockman said he would write a Part II for the Board's consideration. Chairman Caridi agreed with this course of action and said the Board will have the option to adopt Parts I and II at the November meeting. He noted also that the public hearing will likely be set at that time.

No one having any more comments, Member Ternquist made a motion to adjourn the application to the November 9, 2021, Planning Board meeting, seconded by Member Shipley and upon vote, all were in favor.

Member Ternquist made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:53 p.m. seconded by Member Shipley. Upon vote, all were in favor.