



### **MINOR SITE PLAN REVIEW MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Absecon City Planning Board

**From:** Robert L. Reid, AICP, PP, Board Planner

**Subject:** Review for Completeness/Minor Site Plan Review  
Danielle Collette - DMC Holding Company LLC  
24 New Jersey Avenue  
Block 158, Lot 4  
Project No. ABS 118.01

**Date:** April 1, 2013

---

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The applicant, Danielle Collette - DMC Holding Company LLC proposes lease the existing vacant building at 24 New Jersey Avenue. The applicant is requesting relief from the submission requirements for site plan. This request is made due to the nature of the application. No site improvements are proposed.

### **SITE INVENTORY**

On March 29, 2013, the project site was visited to become familiar with the existing conditions on site as well as the surrounding uses. The subject property consists of the former Title Company of Jersey which been closed for at least 5 years. The building is approximately 4,954 SF gross floor area, with no on-site parking. The site is the former location of Absecon Furniture and before that the ACME. The site historical always relied on public parking for its patrons. The site is surrounded by commercial uses.

### **DOCUMENTS Received:**

<b><u>Drawing/ Item No.</u></b>	<b><u>Latest Date</u></b>
Application for Land Development	03/05/13
Certification of Understanding	02/20/13
Statement of Application	03/19/13
Minor Site Plan Checklist	no date
Minor Site Plan Checklist Narrative with Justifications Waiver of Certain Submission Requirements	03/11/13
Planning Analysis and Justifications for Variance	03/12/13

1960 Photo of site	03/20/13
2013 Photo of site	03/20/13
Parking Inventory Table	no date
Map of Property prepared by J. Thomas Wood, Jr.	09/22/62

Plans prepared by Thomas H. Darcy, PLS, PP:

1 of 4	Existing Conditions Plan for Minor Site Plan	03/19/13
2 of 4	Outbound Survey for Minor Site Plan	03/19/13
3 of 4	Existing Site Conditions Plan for Minor Site Plan	03/19/13
4 of 4	Existing Floor Plan for Parking Analysis	03/19/13

#### **COMPLETENESS REVIEW**

The Minor Site Plan Checklist was reviewed. The following is the Application was reviewed for completeness. The Applicant has requested a wavier of submission requirements due to the minor nature of the application. The numbered items below directly correspond to the numbers items in the Checklist.

4. Evidence of Application fees should be provided.
5. Evidence of Escrow fees should be provided.
6. Proof of Taxes paid should be provided.
7. Proof of public notice should be provided prior to public hearing.
9. Atlantic County Approval Block – not applicable
16. A Site plan depicting the existing building is provided.
17. Soil Erosion Plan is not applicable.
18. Stormwater Management Plan is not applicable.
20. Status of other prior approvals are not applicable.

There is no objection to deeming the application complete subject to the above outstanding items being provided prior to the public hearing. The applicant has submitted sufficient information for review.

## ZONING

The site is situated in the C-1 Residential District, which permits; retail stores and shops; general business establishments; and dwellings in combination with retail uses.

Required bulk and area requirements are as follows:

	Permitted or Required	Existing Conditions	Status
Min. Lot Area:	7,500 SF	4,954 SF	Pre-Existing Non-Conforming
Min. Lot Width	75'	45'	Pre-Existing Non-Conforming
Lot Coverage	75% Max.	100%	Pre-Existing Non-Conforming
Front Yard	8'	-0.4'	Pre-Existing Non-Conforming
Side Yard	4'	0.1',-0.2'	Pre-Existing Non-Conforming
Rear Yard	5'	0.1'	Pre-Existing Non-Conforming
Building Height	35'	18.5'+	Conforms
Building Length	50'	113'	Pre-Existing Non-Conforming
Parking	22 to 25 (1) 27 (2)	0 0	Pre-Existing Non-Conforming Does Not Confirm

### Note

(1). Former Office Use 4,954 SF / 300SF =	16.5
Estimated Employees : 10 / 2 =	5
Estimated Total Parking Required for Former Office use:	22
Former Retail Use 4,954 SF – less 20% for storage = 3,963.2 SF / 200SF =	19.8
Estimated Employees : 10 / 2 =	5
Estimated Total Parking Required for Former Retail use:	25
(2). Estimated Total Parking Required for proposed use:	35
See PARKING VARIANCE Below	

The proposed commercial use conforms to the C-1 District requirements. The existing bulk and area conditions are not being altered as part of this application. The existing non-conformities are not being expanded as a result of the development proposed. Because there is no increase in the non-conformity in the pre-existing non-conforming conditions, variance relief is not required.

## **SITE PLAN REVIEW**

The applicant is proposing to lease the 4,954 SF to Cross Fit that offers instruction for exercise and fitness.

### **Lighting**

No new lighting is proposed as part of this application. The applicant should provide testimony regarding adequate lighting at the site.

### **Landscaping**

No new landscaping is proposed as part of this application.

### **Parking**

No parking exists at the site. No additional parking is proposed. The applicant seeks relief from the parking requirements. See Variance below.

The applicant state that the only improvements proposed is conforming identification signage. Further review of the minor site plan is deferred to the Board Engineer.

## **PARKING VARIANCE**

The applicant is seeking relief for the parking requirements to allow the occupancy of the vacant portion of the building.

### **Parking Requirements:**

Section 224-128 (4) Public or private assembly area requires one (1) space for every 3 seats.

*The Absecon Developmental Ordinance is silent on parking requirements for assembly areas without fixed seating or for gymnasium / exercise space. The International Building Code – NJ Edition provides floor area allowances for various functions in assembly areas without fixed seating, such as for a gymnasium use or exercise space.*

Table 1004.1.1 provides for the following floor area allowances per occupant for the following functions:

Assembly without fixed seats ( standing space ):	5 SF
Assembly with chairs	7 SF
Exercise:	50 SF

Section 224-128 (7) Office space requires one (1) space / 300 SF of floor area. Projected required parking for office use.

Section 224-128 (17) One space for each two employees on largest shift.

Projected approximate required parking for combination office / assembly use.

Existing Gross Floor Area of the first floor is:	4,954 SF
The proposed area for the Training Area is:	2,345 SF
The remaining area that will be used for support and office space is:	2,609 SF

Required Parking Space Calculations:

1.	Proposed Training area: 2,345 SF / 50 SF = 46.9 occupants / 2 =	23.5(1)
2.	Office floor area: 2,609 SF / 300 SF =	8.7
3.	Estimated Employees : 4	2
	Total Estimated Parking Required	<u>35(2)(3)</u>

- (1). Assumes that at least 2 patrons sharing vehicle for the exercise session.
- (2). The estimated grandfathered shortfall of parking for historical uses range from 22 to 25 spaces. Refer to Zoning above.
- (3). The applicant requires relief from the parking requirements.

In 2001, 2006 and 2009 a performed a parking analysis for our downtown business district. The analysis determined that there is adequate parking downtown. In 2001, 2006 and 2009 it was determined that Friday midday (12:30 – 1 PM) was the peak period for parking demand. In 2001, 29% of the available parking spaces were taken at the peak demand period. In 2006 (after the lost of parking along US Route 30) only 47% of the available parking spaces were taken. On Friday May 8, 2009, only 39% of the available parking spaces were taken.

Downtown businesses sell products and services. More important then the products and services they sell is the convenience that they offer the consumer. New Jersey Avenue (Absecon's downtown Main Street) has evolved into a place were we run more errands then actually do slow paced casual shopping. When a patron visits our "downtown business district" to grab lunch, pick-up dry cleaning, stop at the bank or insurance office, each patron expects to park directly in front of the establishment they intend to patronize. In most cases patrons compete for the same parking space only steps from the front door. The New Jersey Avenue patron is usually running errands in between other scheduled commitments. The New Jersey Avenue patron may only have minutes to park their car, hurry to the establishment make the transaction and hurry back to the car. Conversely, the expectation of mall shopper or large discount store shopper is much different. The mall shopper expects to walk a distance from the car to the front door of the establishment. They usually allot more time to walk through the mall or large discount store.

I have patronized New Jersey Avenue business establishments for over 35 years. I have always found a parking space on New Jersey Avenue. Evidence that there is adequate parking available is demonstrated by the fact that several owners of business establishments park directly in front their store entrance on a regular basis.

Although not true, the public perception is that there is a “parking problem” on New Jersey Avenue. To reduce this perception, business establishments must cooperate by sharing parking. Because patrons of New Jersey Avenue business establishments need and expect the convenience of parking at the front door of every establishment. Establishments that have on-site parking should encourage their employees and their neighboring business establishments’ employees to utilize existing “back door” parking and reserve “front door” parking for the patrons. Business owners should be discouraged from parking in front of their own stores.

The applicant has provided an inventory of 271 available parking spaces within a 5 minute walk of the subject property. I agree with the applicant’s professional findings. The Parking Inventory provided clearly demonstrates that there is parking available to cover the shortfall. I have no objection to the Board granting the parking variance.

It should be noted that business must offer convenience along with services they provide. Close, available parking is a convenience that patrons expect. Parking for such an establishment is self-policing. If the patrons find it too inconvenient due to the lack of parking, they will not continue to patronize the establishment.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Applicant should provide testimony regarding the anticipated parking generation; hours of operation, number of employees, lighting and waste removal.
2. The Board is not required to grant or deny the application as proposed by the applicant. The Board may require modifications to the plan if it feels it will increase public safety, improve the proposal, and reduce any negative impacts.
3. Detail of proposed identification sign should be provided. This can be a condition of approval.
4. The payment of escrow fees in accordance with Section 224-195 C.
5. Additional comments and recommendations may be offered in response to additional information provided by the applicant and / or testimony being offered at the public meeting.

cc: Andrew Previti, PE, Board Engineer  
Michael Malinsky, Esq., Board Attorney  
Danielle Collette, DMC Holding Company, LLC  
Thomas Darcy, Esq., Applicant’s Attorney