

January 21, 2025

Board of Adjustment
Township of Verona
600 Bloomfield Avenue
Verona, New Jersey 07044

Attention: Ms. Caitlin Kester, Zoning Board Secretary

Re: Islamic Center of Essex County
Board of Adjustment Application – Change of Use
544 Bloomfield Avenue (aka 10 Park Place)
Block 1703, Lot 68
Township of Verona
Our File No. 25VAZ101

Dear Board Members:

We have received copies of the following documents relative to the above referenced application:

- a. Township of Verona Board of Adjustment Application, no date, including the following:
 - Affidavit of Ownership, dated January 8, 2025
 - Schedule 1
 - Tax map sheet 17
- b. Zoning Denial Letter prepared by Kathleen Miesch, dated December 23, 2024.
- c. Architectural Plans (1 sheet) entitled, “Proposed House of Worship Interior Alterations, 544 Bloomfield Avenue w/ Access to 10 Park Place, Township of Verona, county of Essex, New Jersey”, prepared by Heritage Madison Architecture LLC, dated 12-13-2024.
- d. Engineering plans (2 sheets) entitled Location Map and Illustration Map, prepared by MEH Engineering LLC, dated 1-8-2025.

Based on our review of the above referenced documents, we offer the following comments:

Application

1. The Applicant in this matter is:

The Islamic Center of Essex County c/o Mohamad Solaiman
21 Howell Drive
West Orange, New Jersey 07052



The Owner in this matter is:

KWC & H@ Corporation
642 Bloomfield Avenue
Verona, New Jersey 07044

The Applicant must notify the Township of any changes in this information.

2. The site (Block 1703, Lot 68) is an “L” shaped interior lot located on the north side of Bloomfield Avenue and the west side of Park Place. The site is accessed off of Park Place. The site is located within the TC (Town Center) Zone District.
3. The lot is currently developed with a 2-story building and asphalt access and parking area off of Park Place.
4. The Applicant is now seeking approval to lease a maximum of 4,000 square feet of the ground floor area to be used as a House of Worship. The Application indicates no exterior or interior alterations are proposed. The Applicant also indicates the use of the adjacent municipal lot for parking.
5. The Applicant received a zoning denial (#2024-214) for the proposed use dated December 23, 2024, outlining variances associated with the application.

Submission Status

6. The application is deemed **complete** for a public hearing with respect to the items of the Municipal Code the Municipal Engineer is charged to review.

Variances

7. The following variances are required as indicated in the Zoning Denial Letter dated December 23, 2024:
 - a. Permitted Uses: Per Section 150-17.14 A & D, a house of worship is not a permitted use or conditional use. A variance is required.
 - b. Parking: Per Section 150-12.6 C, for House of Worship, parking is 1 space per 3 seats or 72 inches of bench seating space. The Applicant suggests use of the public parking available within the adjacent municipal lot located on Park Place. A variance is required.

Architectural Plan

8. Spaces for signature shall be provided for the Board Chairman, Board Secretary, and Township Engineer.
9. The Applicant shall provide testimony and summarize the Architectural Plan submitted. The Applicant shall confirm if any building or site modifications are proposed.
10. The Applicant should provide testimony as for the approximate number of attendees/ worshippers that typically attend each of the specified times of worship, as well as during the high holy days.



11. The Applicant should confirm in testimony that there will be no outside speaker for a call to worship for the services.
12. The Applicant shall confirm if any identification signage on the site or the building is proposed.
13. The Applicant shall address the movement of pedestrians from the proposed adjacent parking to the building access into the interior house of worship space.

Engineering Plans

14. The Applicant should provide a site plan of the property.
15. The Applicant shall provide testimony and summarize the Engineering Plans submitted.
16. A Parking Analysis is recommended to be provided to define the parking deficiency and define the variance request. The Analysis should have the existing parking requirement and the proposed parking requirement.
17. The Applicant should provide testimony as to how many parking spaces are available on site and how many parking spaces are in the municipal parking lot.
18. The tax map highlights the parcel as an "L" shaped lot. The Engineering Aerial plan indicates the property in question as rectangular with no "frontage" on Park Place. Please clarify.

Stormwater Management

19. Per Section 150-25.2, minor developments are defined as any development resulting in 400 or more square feet of new impervious surface. This application is proposing no alterations to the building or lot coverage. The building and lot coverages have not been quantified. As submitted, this project does not qualify as a minor development and stormwater management is not required in accordance with Section 150-25.7 of the Township Code.
20. The Applicant is requested to summarize the existing drainage patterns of the site and highlight the existing drainage infrastructure and integrity for providing ongoing stormwater control.

Tree Removal

21. The Applicant shall confirm no trees are proposed for removal.
22. The Township of Verona has a Tree Removal Ordinance (Chapter 493, Article II). Any trees to be removed are subject to review and approval by permit only. The permit application is available on-line at the Township website and shall be reviewed independently of this review letter by the Township Zoning Official.
23. If any building or site modifications are proposed, the Applicants shall be aware of their responsibility to repair any damage to improvements within the Bloomfield Avenue and Park Place Right-of-Ways including, but not limited to, any sidewalk, curb, and asphalt, caused by construction activities associated with the improvements on the subject lot.



Roof Leaders, Sump Pump Discharge, Grading and Property Maintenance Guidelines

24. The owner/applicant must submit an as-built survey, post construction, mapping all the improvements, including the stormwater system. This survey must include finished elevations.
25. Sump pump, roof leaders and storm water pipe drain discharge shall preferably be directed onto an absorbent surface as grass, mulch, rock or soil so the discharge will be dissipated and not immediately drain to the Township Right-of-Way or adjacent properties. The discharge location shall be as approved by the Engineer or Public Works Manager or his/her designee. In the event it is not feasible to direct discharge on to an absorbent surface, the discharge may be directed to a storm sewer, swale, ditch, detention basin, drainage basin or other drainage facility or location as approved by the Engineer, Public Works Manager or his/her designee. If a connection to the storm sewer is approved, a permit will be required from the Engineer, Public Works Manager prior to installation. The connection must also be inspected by the Engineer or Public Works Manager.
26. The discharge location shall not create a public nuisance. This includes any condition or act which is or may become injurious or hazardous to the public.
27. The discharge shall not create a build-up of icing, standing water or algae growth on the street, sidewalk or public Right-of-Way.
28. The discharge shall not be directed towards an adjacent property in such a manner as to cause damage to the adjacent property or create a nuisance.
29. No person shall connect, or cause or permit to be connected, any sump pump, pipe drain, floor drain, surface drain, subsoil drain or leader pipe with the house sanitary sewer, or to use the sanitary sewer connection or any pipe or drain connected therewith for the purpose of receiving and discharging drainage of any kind other than from plumbing fixtures.
30. Sump pump and pipe drain discharges may not be directed into a Township Street or Right-of-Way unless permission is granted by the Engineer, Public Works Manager or his/her designee.
31. Roofs and outdoor areas shall be sloped to direct water away from buildings. Roof drains shall be connected to an approved storm water drainage system where and when possible. If a subterranean leader system is to be utilized, the system must be approved by the Township Engineer.
32. Please note the following:
 - a. Water runoff which historically flowed from one property to another prior to an uphill home or developed area being built may continue to flow in the same direction after the home is built or area developed only if:
 - There is no diversion or channeling which results in the water flow being concentrated in one area, and;
 - There is no substantial construction on the uphill lot resulting in increased rates of surface run-off.
 - b. If a detrimental change in the natural pattern of drainage on an uphill lot has occurred, the uphill property owner is responsible for interception and piping or directing surface water to a natural drainage area or a storm water drainage system.



- c. The downhill property owner is responsible for providing proper drainage for water flow that occurs in accordance with natural drainage patterns, which existed prior to construction.
- d. Due to the inherent difficulty in accurately predicting post-construction water flow from a property, changes in water flow may not be discovered until well after the construction is completed. In such cases, if it is determined the lot is generating an additional flow or intensity of storm-water across an adjacent property, in excess of what existed prior to construction, the Applicant, at the Applicant's expense, will be responsible for all measures necessary to abate the excess flow of stormwater.

Thank you for your kind attention to this matter. Should you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P. Ten Kate'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'P'.

Peter C. Ten Kate, P.E.

PCTK/jm

Cc: Kathleen Miesch – via email