

Via email
August 18, 2026

Amanda Kisty, Secretary
Manchester Township Planning Board
1 Colonial Drive
Manchester, NJ 08759

Planning Review Letter No. 1
PB2026-16 (Preliminary and Major Site Plan and Variance Approval)
McDonald's USA, LLC (The Applicant)
86 Lacey Road (Block 86, Lot 2.01)
Project No. MCP-0123

Dear Ms. Kisty,

As requested, our office has reviewed application PB2026-16, submitted by McDonald's USA, LLC (the Applicant), seeking Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan and Variance Approval for a commercial development.

The following documents, which were submitted in support of the Application, have been reviewed:

- 1) Checks:
 1. Preliminary & Final Application Fee Check #694 - \$4,250.00
 2. Preliminary & Final Escrow Fee Check #699 - \$12,633.38
- 2) Cover Letter for Submittals to Manchester Township Planning Board, prepared by Prime, Tuvel & Miceli, signed by Danielle Novak Kinback, Esq., dated 06/04/26;
- 3) Land Use Development Application Checklist and Documents Required to be Submitted, 245 Attachment 3, Appendix 3, unsigned, undated;
- 4) Application for Development Before Zoning Board of Adjustment and Planning Board, 245 Attachment 7, Appendix 7, signed by Applicant, dated 06/04/26;
- 5) Corporate Ownership Disclosure Statement, unsigned, undated;
- 6) List of Variances and Outside Agency Approvals, unsigned, undated;
- 7) Electric Service Availability Letter, prepared by JCP&L, signed by Patrick J. Carfano, Supervisor, dated 05/01/26;
- 8) Gas Service Availability Letter, prepared by NJ Natural Gas, signed by Danielle Simone, Sales Department, dated 05/06/26;
- 9) Water and Sewer Availability Letter, prepared by Remington & Vernick Engineers, signed by Alan B. Dittenhofer, P.E., P.P., C.M.E., dated 05/07/26;
- 10) Copies of Aerial and GeoWeb Mapping of Property, undated;
- 11) Tax Records Summary of Property, signed by Andrea Gaskill, Tax Collector, dated 04/16/26;
- 12) List of Properties Owner within 200 Feet, signed by Martin W. Lynch, Tax Assessor, dated 04/21/26;
- 13) Copies of Easements and Deed Restrictions for Subject Property, unsigned, undated;

- 14) Traffic Impact Report entitled, "Traffic Impact Analysis for McDonald's USA, LLC, Proposed Fast-Food Restaurant with Drive-Thru, Block 86, Lot 2.01, 88 Lacey Road (CR 530), Manchester Township, Ocean County, New Jersey," consisting of (145) sheets, prepared by TPD, Inc., signed by Paul B. Going, P.E., and David W. Fahim, P.E., dated 05/15/26;
 - i) August 4, 2026
 - ii) Re: Applicant: McDonald's USA, LLC
 - iii) Application: Preliminary and Final Major Site Plan Approval
 - iv) Zone: B-1 "Business" Zone
 - v) Block/Lots: 86/ 2.01
 - vi) Site Address: 86 Lacey Road
 - vii) Manchester Township, Ocean County, New Jersey
 - viii) Completeness & Technical Review Letter #1
 - ix) Morgan Engineering, LLC - Project No MTPB26-16
 - x) Page 2 of 17
- 15) Stormwater Management Operations & Maintenance Manual entitled, "Stormwater Management Facilities Operations & Maintenance Manual prepared for McDonald's USA, LLC, Block 86 Lot 2.01, 86 Lacey Road, Manchester Township, Ocean County, New Jersey," consisting of (12) sheets, prepared by Bohler, LLC, signed by Brad A. Bohler, P.E., dated 05/26;
- 16) Stormwater Management Report entitled, "Stormwater Management Report prepared for McDonald's USA, LLC, Block 86 Lot 2.01, 86 Lacey Road, Manchester Township, Ocean County, New Jersey," consisting of (282) sheets, prepared by Bohler, LLC, signed by Brad A. Bohler, P.E., dated 05/26;
- 17) Architectural Plans entitled, "2025 Optimized Building – BB20 4590 – Wood/Wood, prepared for: McDonald's USA, LLC," consisting of (3) sheets, prepared by Colwell Group, signed by Dennis Colwell, dated 03/26/26;
- 18) Survey entitled, "ALTA/NSPS Land Title Survey, McDonald's, Block 86, Lot 2.01, 86 Lacey Road, Township of Manchester, Ocean County, New Jersey," consisting of (1) sheet, prepared by Dynamic Survey, LLC, signed by Craig Black, P.L.S., dated 10/27/25;
- 19) Site Plan entitled, "Preliminary & Final Major Site Plan for Proposed Fast-Food Restaurant with Drive-Thru, 86 Lacey Road (County Road 530), Ocean County, Manchester Township, New Jersey," consisting of (29) sheets, prepared by Bohler, LLC, unsigned, dated 05/13/26;

A. Existing Conditions

The subject site, consisting of Lot 2.01 of Block 86 is located near the southwest corner of Lacey Road (County Road 530) and Station Road. School Lane is across the street from the property. The property has two existing commercial buildings, each with parking lots. The property is located within the B-1 (Business) zone.

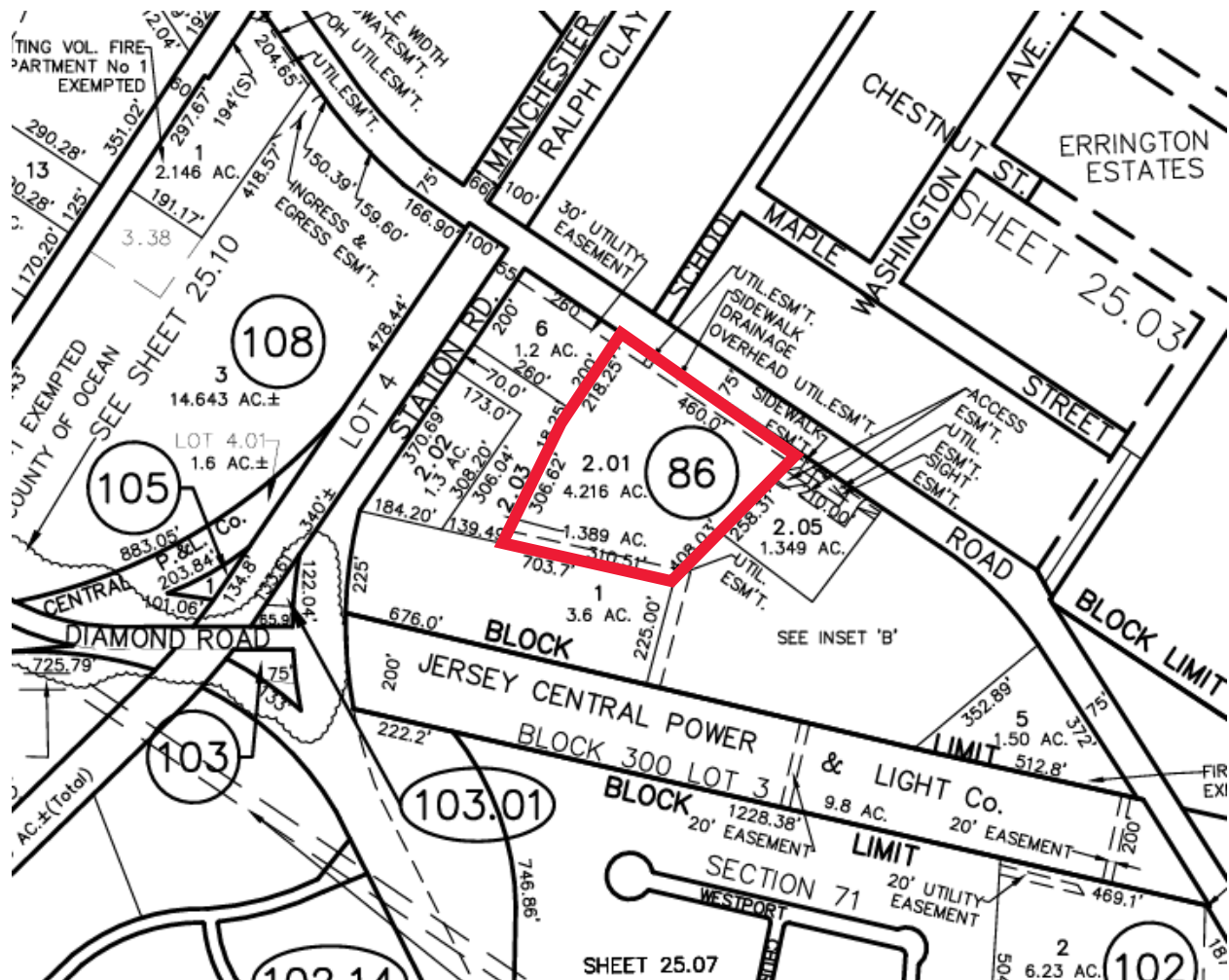


Figure 1: Tax map excerpt with boundary approximated

The property is surrounded by a church to the north across Lacey Road, a commercial use to the east, an undeveloped area to the southeast, a utility to the south, a commercial use to the southwest, a gas station and auto repair shop to the west, and a park to the northwest across Lacey Road.

B. Applicable Land Use Controls

The subject property is located in the B-1 (Business) zone district.



Figure 2: Ocean County aerial imagery with subject parcel boundary approximated.

C. Proposed Conditions

The Applicant seeks to demolish the western commercial building to build a one-story restaurant with a drive-thru and parking lot. The eastern commercial building will remain.

D. Variances

Per our review, the Applicant requires the variances listed below:

1. Wall Signs¹ - §245-27.E(15b) allows one wall sign per site. Signs that the Applicant has listed as "pay here/pick up here", "arch sign", "McDonald's sign", and "blade sign" are all wall signs. The total number of proposed wall signs on the site, is 8.
 - a. "Pay here/pickup here", 2.5 sq. ft. each, 3 proposed (aka "Sign E")
 - b. "Arch sign", 14 sq. ft. each, 2 proposed (aka "Sign F")
 - c. "McDonald's sign", 18.3 sq. ft. each, 1 proposed (aka "Sign G")
 - d. "Blade sign", 2.25 sq. ft. each, 2 proposed (aka "Sign H")

¹ Per § 245-8 Definitions; word usage, a wall sign is "any sign which is affixed to an exterior wall of any building, not projecting more than one foot beyond the building wall."

2. Ground Signs² - §245-27.E(15a) allows one ground sign per site. Signs that the Applicant has listed as "menu board", "pre-browse menu board", "order here", "gateway/clearance", "directional signs", and "ground signs" are all ground signs. In addition, a 32 square foot freestanding ground sign exists in front of the former pharmacy building. As such, the total proposed ground signs is 12. A variance is required.
 - a. "Menu board", 19.97 sq. ft. each, 2 proposed (aka "Sign A")
 - b. "Pre-browse menu board", 10.13 sq. ft. each, 2 proposed (aka "Sign B")
 - c. "Order here", 5.76 sq. ft., 2 proposed (aka "Sign C")
 - d. "Gateway/clearance", 9.07 sq. ft. each, 1 proposed (aka "Sign D")
 - e. "Directional signs", 6 sq. ft. each, 3 proposed (aka "Sign I")
 - f. "Ground signs", 32 square feet (existing-pharmacy) and 39 sq ft (proposed—aka "Sign J")
3. Per §245-27.E (5), ground sign setback shall be at least half of the required front yard depth for the principal building. As the front yard setback of the B-1 Zone is 50 feet, any ground sign must be placed at least 25-feet. The site plans show two signs located within 25 feet of the property line: a 6 square foot directional sign ("Sign I"), and a 39 square foot pole sign ("Sign J"). As the proposed front yard signs are both placed less than 25 feet from the property line, they will require a variance. We note that the plans indicate that Sign J is dimensioned 15 feet from the property line, but Sign I is not dimensioned. This shall also be clarified.
4. Per §245-28.B, the required minimum number of parking stalls for the site is 83, whereas the applicant is proposing 73 stalls, including the existing stalls related to the eastern commercial building. This requires a variance. We note, however, that the parking spaces surrounding the proposed restaurant meet the requirement; it just appears that the site as a whole is deficient.

In addition to the above, the Applicant has identified the following existing nonconforming conditions, which do not appear to be exacerbated by this application.

1. Per § 245-28.D(2), A parking setback minimum of 10 feet from the property line is required for the pharmacy building, whereas a setback of 6.6 feet currently exists. No change is proposed for the parking area near the pharmacy.
2. Per § 245-28.E(1) A minimum of 1 loading space is required for the existing vacant pharmacy building, whereas no space currently exists. No change is being proposed
3. Per § 245-28.G(2): A driveway exclusive of curb return radii shall be no more than 36 feet in width, whereas the existing driveway is 39 feet in width. No change to the driveway is proposed.
4. Per § 245-28.G(7): Parking areas for 25 or more cars and access drives for all parking areas on arterial highways provide curbed return radii of not less than 15 feet for all right-turn

² Per § 245-8 Definitions; word usage, a ground sign is "Any sign supported by either uprights affixed to the ground or supported by a base affixed to the ground."

movements and left-turn access from one-way streets and concrete aprons on entrance and exit drives, whereas the existing driveway is less than 15 feet. No change is being proposed.

5. Per § 245-28.G(9a): The maximum curb depression shall be the driveway shall not be more than 35 feet, whereas the existing curb depression is 58.3. No change is proposed.
6. Per § 245-28.G(10): An acceleration and/or deceleration lane is required, whereas it is not provided in the existing layout. No change is proposed.
7. Per § 245-28.G(11): A driveway shall not be located within 200 feet of the intersection of two public streets, nor within 100 feet of an existing driveway or private street, whereas the existing driveway is 68.3 feet to an intersection. No change is proposed.

In addition, the Applicant has indicated that the following nonconforming condition will be eliminated by this application:

1. Per § 245-28.F(1) Required number of ADA stalls for the bank is 2, whereas none were provided. The proposed development would add 2 stalls.

N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70C: Municipal Land Use Law Requirements:

NJSA 40:55D-70(c) sets forth the criteria by which a variance can be granted from the bulk requirements of a zoning ordinance. The first criteria is the C(1) or hardship reasons including exceptional narrowness, shallowness or shape of a specific piece of property, or exceptional topographic conditions or physical features uniquely affecting a specific piece of property, or extraordinary and exceptional situation uniquely affecting a specific piece of property.

The applicant has indicated that the signage variances requested are relevant to a flexible "C" variance where the purposes of the MLUL would be advanced by a deviation from the zoning ordinance requirements and the benefits of the deviation would substantially outweigh any detriment.

The Applicant should be advised that, pursuant to the Municipal Land Use Law (N.J.S.A. 40:55D-70C), deviation from a bulk standard can be granted under either a "C(1)" hardship variance or a "C(2)" flexible variance.

A "C(1)" hardship variance can be granted to relieve peculiar and exceptional practical difficulties to, or exceptional and undue hardship upon, the developer of a specific piece of property that is uniquely affected by (a) exceptional narrowness, shallowness or shape, (b) exceptional topographic conditions or physical features, or (c) other extraordinary and exceptional situations affecting the property or the lawfully existing structures. For a "C(1)" variance, the Applicant must demonstrate that there is some specific physical feature of the property that prevents compliance with the ordinance.

A "C(2)" flexible variance requires the Applicant to demonstrate that the benefits of allowing the proposed deviation will substantially outweigh any detriments associated with the deviation. The Applicant must show that the requested "C(2)" variance will result in a better plan for the property.

For both "C(1)" and "C(2)" variances, the Applicant must also demonstrate to the Board that:

1. The purposes of zoning (see N.J.S.A. 40:55d-2) would be advanced by the proposed deviation. Furthering one or more purposes of zoning would indicate that there is a benefit to granting the proposed variance.
2. The variance can be granted without substantial detriment to the public good. The focus is on the impact of the proposed variance upon the adjacent properties and whether or not it will cause such damage to the character of the neighborhood as to constitute "substantial detriment to the public good".
3. The variance will not substantially impair the intent and purpose of the zone plan and zoning ordinance. The Applicant must demonstrate that the variance is not inconsistent with the intent and purpose of the ordinance requirements from which relief is sought.

E. Waivers/Exceptions

The Applicant has requested the following submission waivers:

1. Checklist #B.24.: Location of natural slopes of 15% or greater, streams, floodplains, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive area on or within 200 feet of the project site. "Natural slopes," for checklist purposes, shall not include areas previously cleared and/or graded in gravel and mineral mining areas. (Note: Applications for bulk variances need only show these features on-site.)
 - a. Per Applicant: Waiver requested to provide environmentally sensitive areas 200' from the property. Information only shown for subject property.
2. Checklist #B.41.: Existing rights-of-way and easements within 200 feet of the tract.
 - a. Per Applicant: Waiver requested to provide easements 200' from the property. Information only shown for subject property.
3. Checklist #B. 47.: Copy of plat and plans on a CD in a .dxf file format if the plat or plans are drawn with the aid of a computer in AutoCAD or GIS format.
 - a. Per Applicant: Temporary waiver. Will be provided as a condition of approval.
4. Checklist #B.48.: Two copies of the final map as filed with the Ocean County Clerk shall be filed with the Township Tax Assessor and Engineer.
 - a. Per Applicant: Temporary waiver. Will be provided as a condition of approval.
5. Checklist #D.3.: Freshwater wetlands letter of interpretation for the project area.
 - a. Per Applicant: Temporary waiver. NJDEP Letter of Interpretation Absence/Presence is going to be filed. Will provided as a condition of approval.
6. Checklist D.8.: Statement of Environmental Impact and Assessment (SEIA).
 - a. Per Applicant: Waiver requested.

We defer to the Board Engineer for comment on each of the above-referenced waivers.

In addition to the above, our review has identified the following design waivers (i.e. exceptions):

1. Per §245-82.F(2k), 30% of parking area is required to be shaded. The Applicant indicates that there is 495 sq. ft. of a 11,648 sq. ft. parking area proposed to be shaded. The Applicant

should provide testimony as to the boundaries they used to define the parking area versus the drive-thru area and shading calculations for the whole site.

2. Per §245-86.C, the spacing of the lighting standards should be 84' based on a standard height of 21', whereas the proposed spacing is 111'. A waiver is required.
3. Per §245-86.D, the lighting standards shall not exceed the maximum building height, which proposed is 18.79 ft., whereas the proposed height of standards is 21'. A waiver is required.

F. Comments

1. Testimony should be provided as to how the Applicant intends to manage parking between the two commercial uses on the lot when both are occupied.
2. Testimony should be provided on the design of the proposed masonry trash enclosure and how its design complements that of the principal structure in accordance with the design requirements of §245-82.C. Similar testimony should also be provided for the proposed signage, and how it relates to the principal structure. The Applicant should consider providing colorized renderings of the site design for review at the hearing.
3. The Applicant shall provide evidence of all outside approvals.
4. The Applicant shall provide all applicable fees.

Should you have any questions concerning the above comments please do not hesitate to contact my office. We reserve the right to make additional comments based upon further review or submission of revised plans or new information.

Sincerely,

Colliers Engineering & Design, Inc.
(DBA Maser Consulting)



Nicholas Dickerson, PP, AICP, CFM
Board Planner

cc: Pasquale Popolizio, Township Zoning Official
Joseph D. Coronato, Jr., Esq., Planning Board Attorney
Mathew Wilder, PE, Planning Board Engineer
Danielle Novak Kinback, Esq., Applicant's Attorney (dkinback@primelaw.com)