

# The Abbey / Alnwick Hall Redevelopment Plan

TOWNSHIP OF MORRIS, NEW JERSEY | Block 8409, Lot 1

Phillips Preiss Grygiel Leheny Hughes LLC



March 2020

## BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

- The Township Committee by Resolution No. 164-18 authorized the Planning Board to conduct an investigation of Block 8409, Lots 1 and 26 in order to determine whether the lots met the requirements for designation as an “area in need of redevelopment” as established under N.J.S.A. 40A:12A.
- On October 1, 2018, the Planning Board conducted a public hearing on the investigation study and by resolution dated October 1, 2018, the Board recommended that the Township Committee designate Block 8409 Lot 1 as a Non-Condensation Area, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 40A:12.
- On October 17, 2018 by Resolution No. 229-18, the Township Committee determined that, based upon the recommendation of the Planning Board, Block 8409 Lot 1 should be designated as a Non-Condensation Redevelopment Area.
- Phillips Preiss Grygiel Leheny Hughes was authorized on behalf of the Township Committee to prepare a Redevelopment Plan.

# LOCATION

- Property is nearly 4 acres
- Located at the southeastern section of the Township at 355 Madison Avenue
- Improved with building and grounds known as The Abbey or Alnwick Hall
- In OS/GU (open space/government use) zoning

# SITE CONTEXT

- Area has frontage on Madison Avenue to the northeast and Canfield Road to the northwest
- To the southeast are single family homes having access from Crescent Drive
- To the southwest are single family homes having access from Canfield Road
- Across Canfield to the northwest are office buildings
- Across Madison Avenue to the northeast are also office buildings
- Other uses along Madison Avenue include banks, gas stations, and single family homes
- Access to the Area is currently provided by Madison Avenue

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## HISTORY OF THE PROPERTY

- The Abbey, also known as Alnwick Hall, is a 21,000 square foot structure constructed in 1904.
- The brick manor home was modeled after 15th and 16th century English prototypes and the architecture is based on the design of Alnwick Castle in Northumberland, England.
- The structure is a remnant of “Millionaire’s Row,” the stretch of Madison Avenue between Morristown and Madison that, during the area’s Gilded Age, was lined by large estate homes.

## HISTORY OF THE PROPERTY

- From 1961 to 1984, the structure served as Saint Mark's Lutheran Church.
- Alnwick Hall was listed on the State and National Register of Historic Places in 1985.
- Later the building was sold to new owners who converted the former home to an office building known as "The Abbey."
- The current owner, NYC Skyline Realty LLC, bought the property in 2008.
- The building has been vacant since 2008.
- Additions and modifications to The Abbey have taken place at various times over its almost 115-year history to accommodate the various adaptive reuses.



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# PLAN VISION AND OBJECTIVES

- To preserve a historic structure and grounds important in the history of Morris Township by encouraging appropriate reuse options that respond to the demands of the marketplace.
- To transform, through adaptive reuse, a vacant historic property into a viable, more productive retail/commercial property that will provide for an increase in the economic base of the Redevelopment Area and the entire Township.
- To create land use requirements specific to the Redevelopment Area that effectuate the preservation of and are sensitive to the historic nature of the Area's building and grounds, as well as the development pattern of nearby residential neighborhoods.
- To improve the aesthetics of the property and establish site and building design standards that will foster high-quality development within the Redevelopment Area.
- To foster appropriate relationships between buildings, streets, parking areas, walkways and landscaped areas within the Redevelopment Area and in the context of the surrounding area.

## RELATIONSHIP TO LOCAL OBJECTIVES

- The Township's most recent Comprehensive Master Plan was prepared in 1994 and most recent Reexamination Report in August 2017 which put forth the following recommendation regarding The Abbey:

*“The Planning Board should evaluate the current OS/GU zoning of the mansion property and determine whether there are any appropriate reuse options that respond to the demands of the marketplace while also affording protection to adjacent single-family homes. One example to consider is Constitution Hill in Princeton which subdivided a mansion owned by the Morgan family into separate condominiums and then constructed townhomes around the original mansion.”*

## LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT PLAN: *LAND USES*

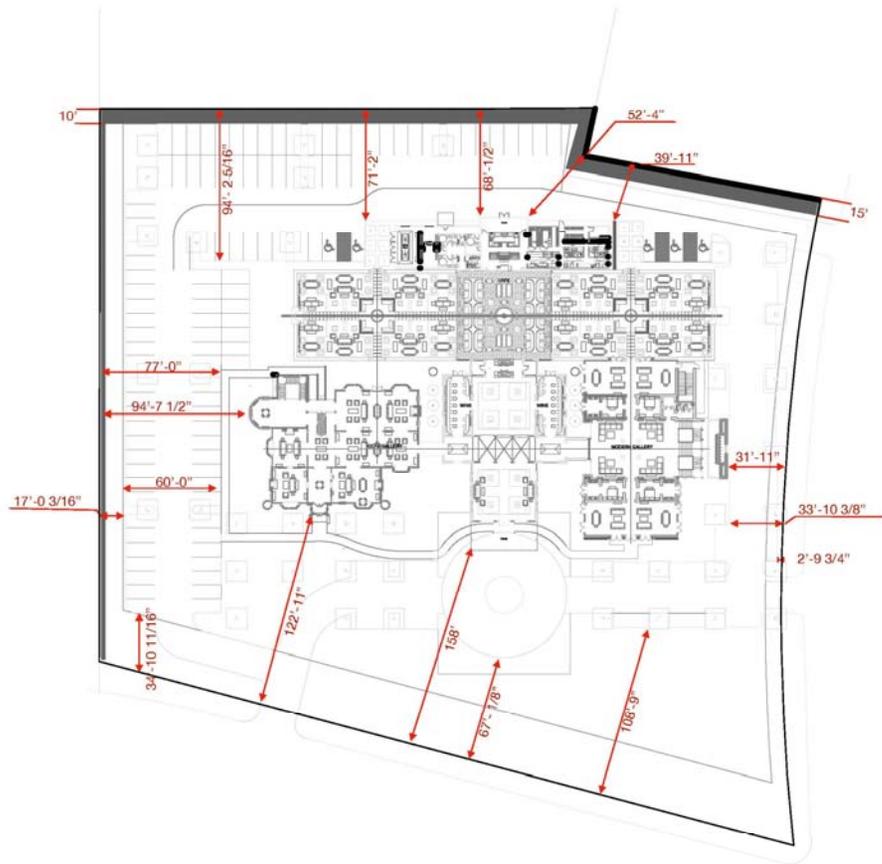
- Permitted Principal Uses
  - A home furnishings store which may include galleries, showroom spaces, an outdoor patio for display of merchandise, consultation and meeting areas, and offices for related design services.
  - A restaurant, operated under common control with the home furnishings store, which may include a related wine bar. The restaurant shall be physically connected to and integrated with the home furnishings store. Patrons served at the wine bar shall be permitted to consume beverages within showroom or consultation areas. Any consumption of alcoholic beverages on the premises shall be subject to the rules established by the New Jersey Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control (i.e., ABC).

LAND USE &  
DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN:  
*LAND USES*

- Prohibited Land Uses
  - No warehousing or storage of product inventory (i.e., other than for purposes of customer display) shall be permitted, nor shall any customer deliveries originate from the home furnishings store, other than floor model sell-offs.

LAND USE &  
DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN:  
BULK AND  
YIELD

BUILDING AND PARKING SETBACKS



LAND USE &  
DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN:  
*BULK AND YIELD*

- Preservation of Front Lawn Area
  - It is intended that a significant portion of the existing front be retained and preserved.
  - The existing entry drive from Madison Avenue shall be retained in its current location, and shall lead to a new drop-off circle, all portions of which shall be located at least 60 feet away from the Madison Avenue property boundary.



## LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT PLAN: *BULK AND YIELD*

- Building Yield of Indoor Space
  - The total amount of permitted indoor space exclusive of basement area shall not exceed 44,000 square feet, and shall be distributed as follows:
    - A total of  $\pm 14,000$  square feet of the existing Abbey to be repurposed for retail “gallery” or showroom space, to be spread roughly evenly across the first and second floors.
    - A new modern gallery of  $\pm 15,000$  square feet, spread across two floors.
    - A restaurant and associated wine bar of  $\pm 15,000$  square feet, containing a single-story restaurant with indoor seating and food and beverage preparation space.
      - A maximum of 120 seats are permitted indoors at this restaurant
      - A maximum of 44 seats are permitted indoors at the wine bar.
    - In addition to the above, a total of  $\pm 14,500$  square feet of basement space shall be permitted to include existing basement space at the Abbey and new basement space at the modern gallery which shall be used for showrooms, storage, offices, or other employee functions.

LAND USE &  
DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN:  
*BULK AND YIELD*

- Building Height
  - Maximum building height for new construction shall be two stories and 42.5 feet. The existing building shall not be subject to the height limitation.
  - With the exception of vaulted or peaked skylights, new roofs shall be flat.

LAND USE &  
DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN:  
*BULK AND YIELD*

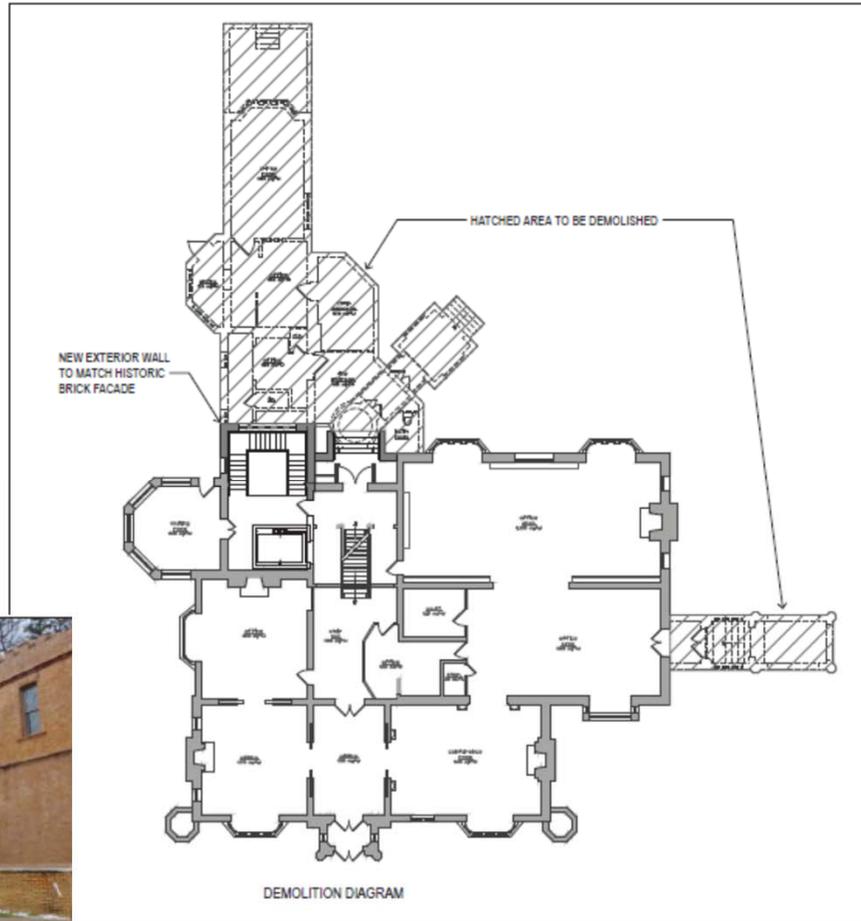
- Building Coverage
  - Maximum permitted building coverage shall be 25 percent.
  - Maximum permitted lot coverage shall be 65 percent.

LAND USE &  
DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN:  
*DEMOLITION,  
DECOMMISSIONING,  
AND NEW  
CONSTRUCTION*

- Demolition
  - The long, narrow southern wing or projection of the Abbey shall be demolished in order to open up the site to allow a more effective development pattern with better overall site circulation and a more efficient parking supply.
  - The narrow core of this extension was previously used as service quarters and was expanded outwards in 1984 in an effort to convert the building to professional offices.

LAND USE &  
DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN:  
*DEMOLITION,  
DECOMMISSIONING,  
AND NEW  
CONSTRUCTION*

- Demolition
  - Interior and exterior reviews of the portion of the building planned for demolition reveal that it has deteriorated beyond the conditions found in the rest of the building. The roof of this section is compromised, leading to deterioration of the corresponding internal spaces, including water damage, and the parapets have fallen into disrepair.
  - According to a Nomination Form filed with the National Register of Historic Places inventory, no rooms in the area to be demolished (the service quarters) have particular historical significance. The demolition will leave the main body of the Abbey intact, an area that includes all of the most significant portions of the building, including the great hall, library, dining room, breakfast room, and drawing rooms.



LAND USE &  
DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN:  
*DEMOLITION,  
DECOMMISSIONING,  
AND NEW  
CONSTRUCTION*

- New Construction
  - All new construction shall be connected to the existing Abbey so that the site continues to have only one building.
  - The Abbey is permitted to be expanded through construction of two new wings whose massing will lie largely apart from the Abbey building, so as not to crowd or intrude upon the historic structure.
  - Both new wings shall be connected to the existing Abbey by means of a hallway running roughly parallel to Madison Avenue, which shall also include the new primary entryway to the building.
  - One wing, in the portion of the building closest to the corner of Madison Avenue and Canfield Road, is envisioned as a two-story mass with retail gallery / showroom spaces.
  - The other wing, which will extend from the center-front of the building into the rear portion of the lot, is envisioned as a single-story mass with a restaurant and wine bar and related kitchen facilities.

LAND USE &  
DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN:  
ACCESS AND  
CIRCULATION

- The current entry driveway shall be maintained as a two-way driveway.



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MORRISTOWN, New Jersey

DATE: 12.23.19  
SCALE: 1" = 10' @

**LAND USE &  
DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN:  
ACCESS AND  
CIRCULATION**

- Two additional driveways are permitted to be constructed from Canfield Road, both with right-turn-only exits from the site.
- A section of Canfield Road immediately west of the intersection of Canfield Road and Madison Avenue is planned for realignment to form a regular four-way intersection with Punch Bowl Road.



# LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT PLAN: PARKING REQUIREMENTS

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- Location and Availability of Parking Supply
- Parking Configuration
- Post-Occupancy Monitoring of Off-Site Parking

PROPOSED USE	PARKING REQUIREMENT
Retail gallery / showroom, outdoor patio, and basement space (excluding any floor area devoted to the restaurant, wine bar, kitchen, and related back of house functions)	2.0 spaces per 1,000 square feet (SF) of floor area
Indoor restaurant and wine bar seating	1 space for every 2-1/2 seats

LAND USE &  
DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN:  
*BUILDING  
DESIGN*

- Massing and Distribution of New Wings
- Articulation
- Vertical Articulation
- Fenestration and other Detailing
- Architectural Style
- Materials



LAND USE &  
DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN:  
*LANDSCAPING  
PLAN*

- Existing Trees
- Buffer Planting
- Outdoor Patio Furnishings
- Outdoor Patio and Related Plantings
- Plant Selection and Maintenance
- Fences and Walls

LAND USE &  
DEVELOPMENT  
PLAN:  
*SIGNAGE*

- Façade Sign
- Entry Signs
- Monument Sign

## REDEVELOPMENT ACTIONS

- No condemnation
- No relocation
- No municipal property acquisition
- Demolition of certain portions of existing building and portions of existing parking and lawn

## GENERAL PROVISIONS

- Overlay zoning for the site
- Have to come before Planning Board for Site Plan approval
- Provision for deviation requests
- No “d” variances can be granted. Any changes in use, height in excess of 10 feet/10 percent require an amendment to the plan