

February 28, 2019

Ms. Jean Delios  
Assistant Town Manager  
Town of Reading  
16 Lowell Street  
Reading, MA 01867-2685

RE: Nitsch Project #13142  
Civil Engineering Peer Review  
Eaton Lakeview Apartments  
Reading, MA

Dear Ms. Delios:

Nitsch Engineering has completed a final civil engineering peer review of materials related to a Comprehensive Permit Application (M.G.L. Chapter 40B) submitted to the Town of Reading Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) by Eaton Lakeview Development, LLC (the Applicant). The materials reviewed by Nitsch Engineering included the following items:

- A copy of a drawing set entitled "Eaton Lakeview Apartments" (the Drawings), Drawings 1-16, prepared by Williams & Sparages, LLC, Inc., dated October 2, 2017, revised January 15, 2019, endorsed January 22, 2019;

The Applicant provided responses to Nitsch Engineering's second series of peer review comments via the revised materials referenced above. The following includes comments from our second peer review letter which required responses followed by a description of the Applicant's responses.

Nitsch Comment:

*The Applicant proposes to designate two (2) 12'x35' spaces on Lot B and proposes to implement a detailed loading and parking plan for the project. The plan as presented indicates that the use of the loading spaces will be well-controlled by the property management and indicates that the loading spaces may be authorized for visitor/overnight parking.*

*Nitsch Engineering notes that the loading spaces as shown on the revised drawings will result in a reduction in travel lane width to approximately 13' when the spaces are in use. This may not represent a significant restriction in terms of practical day-to-day use of the lot by passenger vehicles. However, per the Development Review Team (DRT) meeting notes dated October 3, 2018, Fire Department comment #2 indicates that the "Two-way drive aisles will be increased to 24' wide for emergency vehicle access." We recommend that the Applicant verify that the Reading Fire Department does not object to the configuration of the loading spaces as shown.*

Applicant's Response:

The Applicant has repositioned the westerly loading space and reconfigured the westerly dumpster enclosure to maintain a 24' roadway width. The easterly loading space has been relocated to be coincident with several striped parking spaces in one of the parking bays. The Applicant indicated that the building management will be responsible for coordinating the use of the loading space to avoid interference with the ordinary parking needs for the adjacent building.

**No further comment.**

Nitsch Comment:

*The drawings have been revised to indicate an increase in the finish floor elevations of the apartment buildings on Lot B in an effort to improve surface drainage conditions. However, we note several locations where surface grades are less than 1% (see items c. and d. above). We recommend that the Applicant review these areas further to ensure that open space / landscaped areas are designed with adequate surface pitch.*

Applicant's Response:

The revised drawings include additional spot grades to indicate positive pitch in the areas referenced.  
**No further comment.**

Previous Nitsch Comment:

*The drawings have been revised to include two rain gardens on Lot B. A cross sectional detail and related construction information has also been provided. The rain garden construction appears to be generally consistent with currently accepted standards. However, we recommend that the Applicant provide information on the specific plantings proposed for these project elements.*

Applicant's Response:

The revised drawings include plant specification in the areas referenced.  
**No further comment.**

Nitsch Comment:

*The Applicant proposes to install a row of arborvitae shrubs along the northerly side of Lot A as a vegetative screen between Lot A and the abutting property. The drawings indicate that the shrubs will be installed at a 4'-5' height and at 8' on center. We note that the shrubs will be installed on the at-grade side (or low side) of a retaining wall. We suggest that although over a long period of time the shrubs may sufficiently increase in height and width to provide an effective screen, as proposed they will not achieve the intended effect. We recommend that the Applicant review this condition and suggest additional measures to provide a more effective screen in this area.*

Applicant's Response:

The Applicant stated at the previous ZBA meeting that they were weighing potential impacts to an existing tree at this property line with the screening design. The revised plans do not reflect a change to the previously proposed screening approach.

**Because this is not related to a regulatory or standard design practice criterion, Nitsch offers no additional comment on this item.**

Nitsch Comment:

*The existing conditions plan indicates a tree near the northerly Lot A property line, proximate to the dwelling on the abutting property. We recommend that the Applicant comment on the disposition of the tree and any intended protection that is proposed for the construction period.*

Applicant's Response:

The Applicant's representative stated at the previous ZBA meeting that the project approach includes retention and protection of this tree.

**No further comment.**

Nitsch Comment:

*The drawings include several areas designated for snow storage. Several of the currently designated storage areas are located on portions of the site that may drain directly toward the wetland resource area to the east. We recommend that snow storage areas should be limited to those areas of the site that drain toward the stormwater collection system.*

Applicant's Response:

The revised drawings reflect revision of the snow storage areas to correspond to this recommendation.  
**No further comment.**

Nitsch Comment:

*We recommend that snow storage at areas immediately adjacent to internal and external driveway intersections should be limited in height such that sight lines of vehicles are not obstructed.*

Applicant's Response:

The revised drawings reflect a notation that corresponds to this recommendation.

**No further comment.**

Nitsch Comment:

*The drawings include a photometric plan that indicates anticipated parking lot light pole illumination condition for the project. The plan includes a note indicating that security lighting is to be determined. We recommend that the Applicant provide information related to this note relative to what security lighting may be required for the project and whether it will affect the illumination condition as currently proposed.*

Applicant's Response:

The Applicant's representative stated at the previous ZBA meeting that the "security lighting" was unrelated to and would not affect the proposed photometric conditions proposed for the project.

**No further comment.**

Nitsch Comment:

*The DRT meeting notes referenced above include comments related to transit alternative items including provisions for electric vehicle charging, "Zip Car", bicycle storage, and taxi pick-up drop off. We recommend that the Applicant comment on these items and whether they are intended to be proposed for the project.*

Applicant's Response:

The Applicant's representative stated at the previous ZBA meeting that these operational elements were not currently proposed for the project.

**No further comment.**

Based on our review of these materials and in consideration of responses/clarifications provided by the Applicant's representative at the previous Zoning Board of Appeals meeting, it is our opinion that the Applicant has adequately addressed the comments that were identified by Nitsch Engineering's peer review of the project.

If you have any questions or require any additional information, please contact us at your convenience.

Very truly yours,

**Nitsch Engineering, Inc.**



Matthew T. Brassard, PE, ENV SP  
Executive Project Manager, Associate