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Mr. Jonathan Colman and Ms. Lynda Laureano  
Director and Assistant Director  
Town of Bloomfield Planning and Zoning  
Bloomfield Town hall  
800 Bloomfield Avenue  
Bloomfield CT, 06002

## **1151 Blue Hills Avenue Masterplan - Detailed Statement of Use and Project Narrative**

Dear Mr. Colman and Ms. Laureano,

On behalf of The First Cathedral of Bloomfield, also referred to as the First Baptist Church of Hartford, BSC Group would like to offer this detailed statement of use and project narrative to the Planning and Zoning Commission of the Town of Bloomfield in support of a Zoning Map Amendment. The Cathedral, in association with Grow America - a community development entity in support of affordable housing, is proposing to amend the 4054 Acre parcel from its current split "PO" and "R-15" Zones to "Design Development Zone II (DDZ-II)"

In accordance with the latest adopted Town of Bloomfield Planning and Zoning Regulations, the application for a Zoning Map Amendment to a DDZ-II zone requires the submission of a Master Plan, including several specific regulations and information associated with the Map amendment. This information is included in the attached First Cathedral Master Plan drawing set and following narrative.

### **Detailed Statement of Existing and Proposed Use**

Currently on the Bloomfield GIS property card for the Parcel, the Land Use is listed as "960 Church." Reviewing the property itself, the site is naturally split into three sections by the onsite wetland system: The north portion of the site housing the Cathedral and associated parking, The Southeast portion of the site containing the auxiliary 552 space parking lot, and the Southwest portion, including a softball field, volleyball courts, tennis courts, basketball courts and their associated parking area. Also, included in the Cathedral administration area there is a subordinate public daycare that operates out of the Cathedral building as its own independent entity.

Under the development Master Plan, the Land Uses are proposed as follows (in accordance with section 5.6.C of the Zoning Regulations). The uses being presented below are listed in order of potential construction schedule, from first to last.

#### Phase 1: Category 7 – Multi-family Dwelling

Phase 1 of the Master Plan is located on the southeast portion of the site, in the former location of the auxiliary parking lot. The development team is proposing three (2) new five-story buildings accommodating 101 residential units. All units will be affordable housing, targeting a range of households from 30%-50% of the Area Mean Income.

#### Phase 2: Category 7 – Multi-family Dwelling and Category 5 – Daycare Facility

Phase 2 of the Site Master Plan is also located on the southeast portion of the site but north of Phase 1. The development team is proposing a single five-story mixed-use building accommodating both

45 residential units and a community daycare center with a capacity of 90 children between the ages of 3 months and 5 years old. At this time, residential units will be a mix of affordable housing and market rate housing, depending on the available funding.

**Phase 3: Category 2 and Category 5 – Professional, Business Office/Medical Facility and Church**

Phase 3 of the Site Master Plan is proposed as a 2-story addition onto the southeast side of the Cathedral sanctuary on the north portion of the property. In this Case, the “Church” use is not changing. For the new office use, the development team is proposing an employment training and counseling center for the surrounding community.

Also in Phase 3, to satisfy sidewalk regulations for the Town of Bloomfield, The development team is showing a sidewalk connection along Blue Hills Avenue from the southeast Cathedral entrance to the intersection of Blue Hills Avenue and Wintonbury Avenue where it will connect into new pedestrian ramps installed by CT DOT. Further coordination with the Town and with CT DOT will be required.

**Phase 4: Category 8 – Accessory use to the Category 5 “Church” use for a Storage Facility**

Phase 4 of the Site Master Plan is proposed on the Southwest portion of the Property in the former location of the athletic fields. The development team is proposing a private, Cathedral use storage facility for storage of various pieces of equipment, the two shuttles (vans) the Cathedral currently operates, and other ancillary materials. The facility is not proposed to be staffed and is not designed to include offices, water services, or sewer facilities. In addition to the storage facility, the Cathedral is proposing to use remaining area on the southwest portion of the property for a 138 parking space auxiliary parking area for use by the Cathedral in the event over flow parking for the sanctuary is required.

Also in Phase 4, similar to Phase 3, the development team is showing a sidewalk connection along Wintonbury Avenue from an existing bituminous sidewalk connection at the southwest corner of the Cathedral parking area to the intersection of Blue Hills Avenue and Wintonbury Avenue, where the sidewalk will again connect into new pedestrian ramps installed by CT DOT. Further coordination with the Town and with CT DOT will also be required.

**Project Narrative and relevant information**

**Relevant information pertaining to 5.6.F “Establishment of District” for DDZ-II**

1. Conformance with section 5.6.A “Purpose”

The First Cathedral of Bloomfield is one of the largest church communities in New England and has supported the Bloomfield community for over 40 years. Their existing Cathedral property is 40.5 Acres in size and consists of the Cathedral sanctuary, its associated parking, auxiliary parking, and various outdoor athletic facilities. However, large portions of the athletic fields and auxiliary parking have a history of being underutilized on the property since their installation. Therefore, First Cathedral and their development partner Grow America, Inc. are requesting a Zoning Map Amendment to convert the property from it's current dual zone of “PO” and “R-15” into “DDZ-II”. The Uses they are proposing: Affordable Housing, a Daycare Facility, and an employment assistance/training and counseling center are intended to extend the outreach and support the Cathedral strives to provide the Bloomfield community beyond what it provides spiritually as a religious institution. Following the intent of the DDZ-II Regulation, the proposed Master Plan uses combine work, service, residential, and community support while the unique site topography allows for the maintenance of quality open space, reduces the traffic generation of the

individual uses, enhances the quality of the proposed facilities to the parishioners and surrounding community while retaining the character of the area. The large wetland complex that subdivides the center of the property naturally separates and, in most cases, buffers the development areas far beyond the required buffer sizing stipulated in the bulk table for the DDZ-II zone.

2. Conformance with section 9.7 – “Zoning Map Amendment Application Procedures”
  - a. In accordance with 9.7.A.3.d – DDZ, A Master Plan design for the Parcel was created and attached to this application package under separate cover: “First Cathedral Master Plan, 1151 Blue Hills Ave., Bloomfield CT, September 22, 2025.”
  - b. In accordance with 9.7.H.2 – All information pertaining to bulk requirements, building coverages, and proposed uses are provided in a table on the title page of the attached Master Plan documents including:
    - i. Proposed Uses and Land Use Area
    - ii. Proposed impervious surface
    - iii. Proposed building development
    - iv. Maximum building height

Relevant information pertaining to 5.6.F “Establishment of District” for DDZ-II

3. Following the Bulk table requirements for DDZ-II, the building height shall be 5 story, 58'-8" in total height, just beneath the 60 ft. maximum. Although structured parking is not proposed, the program of the development shows a cumulative reduction in impervious coverage from the existing condition.
4. Consolidated Development is not being requested, although the project will propose 2 separate lot subdivisions, to be discussed in the next section.
5. Landscaping:
  - a. Due to the location of the wetlands throughout the site, there is a substantially greater buffer provided around all proposed uses identified in the Master Plan.
  - b. Due to the previous parking lot and athletic field condition of the proposed use areas, there is essentially no existing landscaping provided that would be considered of value worthy of protection. All proposed development is well within the originally disturbed areas of the project with no additional disturbance required to any naturally landscaped areas outside the proposed limit of work for all Master Plan phases.
  - c. Circulation: All parking lot aisles are 24 ft. in width and all lots shall be constructed with curbs and sidewalks in accordance with the zoning Regulations.
6. Utilities:
  - a. Public Water and Sewer is available in Blue Hills Avenue with direct access to phase 1, 2 and 3. Public Water is available on Wintonbury Avenue along the frontage of Phase 2 to the southwest. The proposed storage building is strictly for storage. There shall be no office facilities or full or part-time employees, therefore per building code, a restroom is not required. Therefore, there is no proposed sewer connection to phase 4 at this time. 3-phase electrical is available on both Blue Hills and Wintonbury Ave. as well as Fiber Telecommunications. Gas is also available though the exact location needs to be verified.
  - b. As previously stated, concrete sidewalks connecting the southeast and southwest portions of the property are shown for installation during Phase 3 and Phase 4 of the project. Additional coordination between the Development Team and Town Staff, as well as coordination with CT DOT will be required for the sidewalk installation.

Additional Relevant Information

## 1. A-2 Survey:

- a. An A-2 and partial T-2 Survey of the entire 40.5 acre Parcel was prepared by BSC Group. It is also included in the Attached documentation for review.
- b. BSC documented the entirety of the buildable area of the parcel via UAV Drone Survey for horizontal planimetric features and generated a resultant ortho photomosaic, which is included in the Master Plan documents for clarity of existing features.
- c. BSC also digitized portions of the Phase 1, 2, and 3 drone flights of the property for vertical integration into the survey with T-2 level accurate topography.

## 2. Wetlands:

- a. The parcel contains approximately 18.7 acres of wetlands, of which 50% is counted toward Lot Coverage. The proposed Master Plan is intentionally designed to have 0% disturbance over the field delineated wetland boundary. There is disturbance proposed within the upland review area, however, following coordination with the Town Wetland Agent, all Inland Wetland permitting associated with this development will occur at the site plan level following approval Zoning Map Amendment.
- b. Portions of this parcel are also subject to a conservation easement that also roughly corresponds to the wetland boundary. The proposed Master Plan is intentionally designed to have 0% formal improvement within the conservation easement area.

## 3. Drainage:

- a. Phase 1 and 2: The overall impervious coverage of the developable area will be reduced from the 552 parking space auxiliary parking lot to the proposed 3 building Residential/Cay Care mixed use development. Therefore, the existing stormwater management system for the existing parking lot should be sufficient in size and capacity to handle the proposed development stormwater runoff, as the discharge volumes should be substantially lower.

Stormwater quality shall be designed to comply with the DEEP 2024 Connecticut Water Quality Manual. BSC is proposing a Low Impact Development (LID) approach of multiple small watershed areas to be treated by bio-retention units spaced throughout the development (refer to the Master Plan documents for potential treatment area locations). These treatment areas will ultimately connect into the existing parking lot drainage system with minor system modification as needed.

Additional investigation and coordination will be required during the site plan permitting process for phases 1 and 2.

- b. Phase 3: As a result of the increase in impervious area associated with the construction of the Empowerment Center, BSC is proposing the installation of a small underground detention system to offset the minor increase only. Any modifications to parking areas will also be designed to provide for LID treatment of the stormwater runoff. Full design of the stormwater management and its connection into the existing drainage system around the Cathedral will be formalized during the site plan application for phase 3.
- c. Phase 4: By removing the unused athletic fields and replacing this area with the storage building and auxiliary parking, there will be an increase in peak runoff discharge. Therefore, BSC is proposing underground detention with LID treatment measures throughout the parking area.

After review of the Conservation Easement language, we are able to discharge the treated and detained runoff via piping (or potentially via drainage swale) to its ultimate discharge point toward the wetland area (following the original site drainage patterns). Full design of the stormwater management and conveyance will be formalized during the site plan application for phase 4.

4. Parking:

a. Parking for the Original development is calculated as follows:

- i. Total Church seating count = 3,400  
Total parking required: 1 space / 3 seats = **1,134** Spaces Required (Per 6.2.D.1)
- ii. Total provided: 778 spaces in primary Cathedral lot + 552 in Southeast auxiliary Lot = **1,330** Spaces

Therefore, the Existing Condition is overparked by 196 spaces.

b. Parking for Phase 1 and 2 is calculated as follows:

- i. Multifamily Dwelling: 1 space / studio,1-bedroom  
2 spaces / 2-bedroom or >

Housing Proposed:

(68) 1BR & STUDIOS	X	1 SPACE PER UNIT	=	68 SPACES
(78) 2BR & 3BR	X	2 SPACES PER UNIT	=	156 SPACES
		HOUSING STAFF	=	4
		<b>TOTAL HOUSING REQUIRED PARKING</b>	=	<b>228 SPACES</b>

ii. 90 Child Day Care Center:

(19) ADMINISTRATORS & STAFF	=	19
ESTIMATED VISITORS	=	3
<b>TOTAL DAY CARE REQUIRED PARKING</b>	=	<b>22 SPACES</b>

iii. Total parking spaces required: 228 + 22 = **250** Spaces

Total provided in Master Plan phase 1 and 2: **252** Spaces

iv. Visitor Parking: Visitors have the ability to park in the closest spaces across the interconnection between the Southeast portion of the site, and the main Cathedral parking lot as these spaces will not be used for Cathedral activities the majority of the time.

v. Parking associated with housing cannot be “shared” in accordance with section 6.2.H, therefore the total reduction in parking for the Cathedral shall be:

1,330 Spaces – 552 spaces (former auxiliary lot) = 778 Parking Spaces, leaving a parking deficit for the Cathedral of: 1,134 – 778 = 356 spaces.

During the interim phases between the start of Phase 1 construction and the completion of Phase 4, Cathedral Ownership is investigating using the fields and courts in the southwest portion of the site for temporary parking in the event of a large event or Holiday that would exceed the demand of the 778 spaces in the main

Cathedral lot. Anecdotally, in their estimation they have only ever seen 1/4 to 1/3 of the existing auxiliary lot full, which calculates to between 130 and 180 vehicles. Given the size of the field area and court area and understanding that there will be guides assisting the individuals to park, we believe between 130 and 180 vehicles could temporarily park in the athletic field portion of the site with little disruption to the surrounding areas while always staying outside the conservation easement boundary. The Cathedral also operates its own shuttles, so there should be no concern regarding distance of the temporary parking to the main Cathedral.

c. Parking for Phase 3 is calculated as follows:

- i. Medical Office: 5 Spaces / 1000 s.f. G.F.A = **74** Parking Spaces
- ii. Following Guidance from the Ownership team, the Empowerment Center will follow standard work hours. Therefore, they do not foresee a situation where the Empowerment Center and the Cathedral would operate at the same time. Therefore, in accordance with section 6.2.H, The Empowerment Center will share 100% of its spaces with the Cathedral.

d. Parking for Phase 4 is calculated as follows:

- i. Most closely related use: Commercial use (Warehouse) = 1 space / 500 s.f. building area = **12** Spaces
- ii. Spaces provided: 138 Spaces

Additional spaces are provided in this location to offset the 356 space deficit generated as a result of the Southeast lot auxiliary lot being eliminated:

356 space deficit - 138 spaces in Phase 4 = **218** Space remaining deficit

The 138 spaces are also  $\frac{1}{4}$  the former 552 space auxiliary lot, which was previously stated by Ownership as the maximum quantity of vehicles observed as overflow from the main lot.

e. In Summary, The Development Team believes the parking provided for the entire Master Plan is sufficient for the uses both existing and proposed. The Development Team is also willing to coordinate with Town Staff and the Zoning Commission if there is a desire (based on the information discussed at the informal presentation on August 28<sup>th</sup>) to reduce parking even further.

5. Circulation:

a. Phase 1 and 2:

- i. With 552 Spaces in the existing auxiliary lot, the trip generation entering and exiting onto Blue Hills Avenue from the lot appeared to be substantial enough to warrant the design of a dedicated left turn in lane from the northbound side of Blue Hills Ave. Also, the Exit from the site includes dedicated left turn only and right turn only lanes onto Blue Hills Ave.
- ii. There will be a Traffic Study performed as part of the project. The Development team paused for school to be back in session to obtain accurate traffic counts before

performing the analysis. In our professional opinion, BSC believes that, although the trip generation timing will be different for a mixed-use housing/day care, the capacity of the traffic measures already in place at the site entrance are sufficient for the proposed uses without alteration. This will be confirmed by the traffic study and through coordination with CT DOT.

- iii. Regarding the Daycare, An operations plan will be prepared identifying that the entrance/exit to the Daycare drop-off will be via the Blue Hills Ave. entrance to the Cathedral. This allows Daycare users to access, queue, and exit following a circulation scheme entirely separate from the residential circulation into and out of the southeast portion of the site.
- b. Phase 3: Circulation will be through the Cathedral parking lot. Access will be from either of the main Cathedral entrances off Blue Hills Ave. or Wintonbury Ave.
- c. Phase 4: BSC Designed the proposed lot to align with the exiting curb cut.
- d. Note: The size of the project triggers CT DOT Office of the State Traffic Authority "Major Traffic Generator" review. The site already contains an MTG certificate. I do not anticipate major changes to any proposed design as a result of the OSTA review.

6. Subdivision:

- a. Due to the nature of the original use as a "Church," Portions of the development would be considered tax exempt. For multiple reasons, however, the housing portion of the site needs to be switched to a regular status. Therefore, as part of the Master Plan process, we are showing the subdivision of the main parcel into 2 separate lots. (Please refer to the Master Plan documents for further information) These separate lots shall conform independently to the Bulk Table requirements for Lot Coverage, Landscaping, Buffers, Setbacks, etc.:
  - i. Proposed Lot 1 – Consisting of the Existing Cathedral, the proposed Empowerment Center, and the proposed Storage facility and parking (Phase 3 and 4):

Total Area: 25.78 ac  
Wetland Area: 10.68 ac  
Lot Area: 20.44 ac (in accordance with definitions section of Regulations)
  - ii. Proposed Lot 2 – Consisting of the Mixed-Use Residential and Community Day Care (Phase 1 and 2):

Total Area: 14.72 ac  
Wetland Area: 8.06 ac  
Lot Area: 10.69 ac (in accordance with definitions section of Regulations)
- b. Due to funding requirements for Affordable Housing, Phase 1 – Buildings A and B containing 101 Units are required to be developed independently of Building C, including the need for the Phase 1 construction area to be identified as an entirely separate parcel. Therefore, in

accordance with Section 5.6.K.2, Proposed Lot 2 shall be re-subdivided into the following Subordinate Lots:

i. Subordinate Lot 1

Sublot Area:  $8.01 \pm$  ac  
No. Dwelling Units: 101  
No. parking Spaces: 17

ii. Subordinate Lot 2

Sublot Area:  $2.68 \pm$  ac  
No. Dwelling Units: 45  
No. parking Spaces: 75

c. Also in accordance with Section 5.6.K, The Subordinate lots shall NOT be required to independently conform to the Bulk Table requirements, provided that the sum of the individual components of the Subordinate Lots add up to a cumulative lot that does conform to the standards. Please refer to the Master Plan documents for a graphical representation of the Subordinate lot split.

7. Phase 1, 2 and 3 Building Information:

a. At the request of Town Staff, please find the proposed phase 1, 2, and 3 building Floorplans, Elevations, and Renderings included at the end of the Master Plan documents for review.

Conclusion

Providing the above information, The First Cathedral of Bloomfield and Grow America respectfully request approval of the Zoning Map Amendment to "DDZ-II" for the property Located at 1151 Blue Hills Avenue by The Bloomfield Planning and Zoning Commission.

Please contact me with any questions or comments at [fvacca@bscgroup.com](mailto:fvacca@bscgroup.com).

Respectfully submitted,  
BSG Group, Inc.



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