

ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 2004-25, AS AMENDED, ENTITLED AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING THE CENTER CITY REDEVELOPMENT PLAN CONSISTENT WITH RESOLUTION 5203 OF THE PLANNING BOARD OF THE CITY OF VINELAND SO AS TO ALLOW A VACANT RETAIL USE (SEARS BUILDING) TO BE CONVERTED TO A HOUSE OF WORSHIP AT 8 WEST LANDIS AVENUE, BLOCK 2802 LOTS 20, 21 AND 22 CONSISTENT WITH RESOLUTION 6697 OF THE PLANNING BOARD.

WHEREAS, on March 23, 2004, the City of Vineland adopted Ordinance 2004-25, An Ordinance Adopting the Center City Redevelopment Plan consistent with Resolution 5203 of the Planning Board of the City of Vineland; and

WHEREAS, the City Council acknowledges that a Redevelopment Plan is meant to be an evolving plan subject to amendment from time to time consistent with the interest to revitalize the Center City area; and

WHEREAS, True North Territory, D/B/A True North Church has requested the City Council consider amending the Redeveloping Plan to permit the conversion of a former and vacant retail building located at 8 West Landis Avenue, Block 2802 Lots 20, 21 and 22, to a House of Worship; and

WHEREAS, City Council passed a Motion to request the Planning Board review the proposed Redevelopment Plan Amendment so as to permit the Requested Use; and

WHEREAS, on February 7, 2025, Planning Staff submitted a Redevelopment Plan Amendment Report recommending the conversion and presented its findings to the City of Vineland Planning Board for consideration; and

WHEREAS, on April 9, 2025, the Planning Board took testimony from planning staff including Kathleen Hicks, PP., recommending the amendment to the Center City Redevelopment Plan and adopted Resolution 6697 a Resolution of Findings and Conclusions and Decision of the Planning Board setting forth the following findings:

1. The application proposes conversion of the property, which was formerly the Sears Department Store/Automotive Center to a church.
2. The property is located in a PC-Plaza Commercial Redevelopment District where churches aren't permitted.
3. The property, having been vacant for many years, is dated and deteriorated.
4. The applicant has submitted conceptual plans for the exterior of the building, the interior space allocation and the site improvements.
5. Because of the size of the property, the applicant only has plans to partially use the department store building at this time.
6. The City professional staff recommended that site plan approval be required. Of particular concern is landscaping to improve the aesthetics by breaking up the sea of asphalt. In particular, the following was recommended:
 1. establishing front buffers along both Delsea Drive and Landis Avenue
 2. installing more extensive landscaping when viewed from Delsea Drive
 3. establishing a grassed area for outdoor events, especially for children
7. Pastor Eisenhart agreed to install landscaped buffers along Delsea Drive and Landis Avenue, and this was reflected on the most recent conceptual drawing. He further explained that at both his existing church in Mullica Hill and at this proposed church, there are no outdoor events for children. The churches are large enough to accommodate all activities for children indoors for safety reasons.
8. The City staff further recommended that the yellow brick exterior of the department store building should be maintained to preserve the historic, art deco character of the building, similar to the Landis Theater. Pastor Eisenhart said that the church would incorporate some of the brick, but that some needed to be covered because of its deteriorated condition. The Planning Board believed that this recommendation could be considered by the applicant, but members did not feel that this condition should be imposed.

CITY OF VINELAND

- 9. The City staff further recommended that Planning Board approval should be required for utilization of additional interior space to insure the adequacy of parking and to determine the need for additional site improvements (e.g., handicapped ramps). The applicant agree to this condition.
- 10. In the City of Vineland Master Plan, the property is designated ‘downtown commercial’. While the Plan recognizes houses of worship as existing uses in downtown commercial, the incorporation of the provisions of the Center City Redevelopment Plan into the Master Plan results in the existing church and proposed expansion being inconsistent with the Master Plan.

WHEREAS, the Planning Board has considered the Redevelopment Plan amendment report and the testimony from Planning Staff, which report is attached hereto and incorporated here in at length and in accordance with Resolution 6697 has recommended City Council allow for the conversion of the property at 8 West Landis Avenue, Block subject to certain conditions as follows:

- 1. Site plan approval shall be required.
- 2. Planning Board approval shall be required for utilization of additional interior space to ensure the adequacy of parking and to determine the need for additional site improvements (e.g., handicapped ramps)

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Vineland that Ordinance 2004-25, as amended, be amended so as to allow the conversion of a vacant retail building located at 8 West Landis Avenue, Block 2802 Lots 20, 21 and 22, to a House of Worship subject to the following conditions:

- 1. Site plan approval shall be required.
- 2. Planning Board approval shall be required for utilization of additional interior space to ensure the adequacy of parking and to determine the need for additional site improvements (e.g., handicapped ramps)

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that any ordinance or portion thereof in consistent herewith shall be vacated to the extent of such inconsistency.

BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED that should any portion of this Ordinance be deemed unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, the balance thereof shall remain in full force and effect.

Passed first reading: April 22, 2025

Passed final reading: May 13, 2025

President of Council pfs

Approved by the Mayor:

Mayor arf

ATTEST:

City Clerk rgf

RESOLUTION NO. 6697

**RESOLUTION OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS AND
DECISION OF THE VINELAND PLANNING BOARD**

WHEREAS, City Council of the City of Vineland, on August 14, 2024, requested that the Planning Board review a proposed amendment to the Center City Redevelopment Plan for 8 W. Landis Avenue (Block 2802/Lots 20, 21 and 22), submitted by True North Territory DBA True North Church and provide comments regarding consistency of the proposed amendment with the Master Plan of the City of Vineland; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Board, having considered the sworn testimony of Kathleen Hicks, PP, AICP, Supervising Planner, having considered the Redevelopment Plan Amendment Report developed by City staff, having considered testimony from the Robert DeSanto, Esq. and Pastor Jesse Eisenhart, and having discussed the most recent conceptual drawing submitted on April 9th, made the following factual findings:

1. The application proposes conversion of the property, which was formerly the Sears Department Store/Automotive Center to a church.
2. The property is located in a PC-Plaza Commercial Redevelopment District where churches aren't permitted.
3. The property, having been vacant for many years, is dated and deteriorated.
4. The applicant has submitted conceptual plans for the exterior of the building, the interior space allocation and the site improvements.
5. Because of the size of the property, the applicant only has plans to partially use the department store building at this time.
6. The City professional staff recommended that site plan approval be required. Of particular concern is landscaping to improve the aesthetics by breaking up the sea of asphalt. In particular, the following was recommended:
 - establishing front buffers along both Delsea Drive and Landis Avenue
 - installing more extensive landscaping when viewed from Delsea Drive
 - establishing a grassed area for outdoor events, especially for children
7. Pastor Eisenhart agreed to install landscaped buffers along Delsea Drive and Landis Avenue, and this was reflected on the most recent conceptual drawing. He further explained that at both his existing church in Mullica Hill and at this proposed church, there are no outdoor events. The churches are large enough to accommodate all activities indoors for safety reasons.
8. The City staff further recommended that the yellow brick exterior of the department store building should be maintained to preserve the historic, art deco character of the building, similar to the Landis Theater. Pastor Eisenhart said that the church would incorporate some of the brick, but that some needed to be covered because of its deteriorated condition. The Planning Board believed that this recommendation could be considered by the applicant, but members did not feel that this condition should be imposed.
9. The City staff further recommended that Planning Board approval should be required for utilization of additional interior space to insure the adequacy of parking and to determine the need for additional site improvements (e.g., handicapped ramps). The applicant agree to this condition.

10. In the City of Vineland Master Plan, the property is designated 'downtown commercial'. While the Plan recognizes houses of worship as existing uses in downtown commercial, the incorporation of the provisions of the Center City Redevelopment Plan into the Master Plan results in the existing church and proposed expansion being inconsistent with the Master Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Planning Board of the City of Vineland recommends that City Council give positive consideration to the proposed amendment to the Center City Redevelopment Plan to allow for the conversion of the property at 8 W. Landis Avenue (Block 2802/Lots 20, 21 and 22), which was formerly the Sears Department Store/Automotive Center to a church, conditioned on the following:


- Site plan approval shall be required.
- Planning Board approval shall be required for utilization of additional interior space to insure the adequacy of parking and to determine the need for additional site improvements (e.g., handicapped ramps)

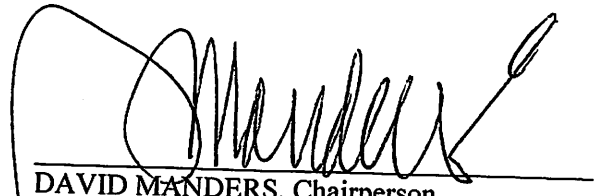
The foregoing is a true copy of the Resolution of decision adopted by the Planning Board of the City of Vineland at a meeting held on April 9, 2025, as reflected in the recorded minutes of said meeting.

ADOPTED DATE: April 9, 2025

PLANNING BOARD OF THE
CITY OF VINELAND

Attest:


YASMIN PEREZ, Secretary


DAVID MANDERS, Chairperson

ROLL CALL VOTE

VOTING IN FAVOR

John Casadia
David Catalana
Jeffrey Dimatteo
Doug Menz
Michael Pantalone
Thomas Tobolski
Sandy Velez
Nilsa Rosario
Robert Odorizzi
David Manders

ABSTAINING

None

ABSENT

None

OPPOSED

None



REDEVELOPMENT PLAN AMENDMENT REPORT REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL 2024-4

APPLICANT: True North Territory DBA True North Church

PROPERTY: 8 W. Landis Avenue (Block 2802/Lots 20, 21 & 22)

REQUEST: Church

STAFF REVIEW: Kathleen Hicks, Ryan Headley, David Maillet, Sandra Forosisky,
Elizabeth Jambor & Patrick Finley

DATE: February 7, 2025

Staff members met on February 3, 2025 regarding the above-referenced Redevelopment Plan Amendment Request. It is recognized that this project isn't far enough along to identify the usage of all the interior space. The project will evolve once established. Nevertheless, the consensus of the staff is that the request should be approved subject to the following:

1. Site plan approval shall be required. Of particular concern is landscaping to improve the aesthetics by breaking the sea of asphalt. In particular, the following are recommended:
 - establishing front buffers along both Delsea Drive and Landis Avenue
 - installing more extensive landscaping when viewed from Delsea Drive
 - establishing a grassed area for outdoor events, especially for children
2. Planning Board approval shall be required for utilization of additional interior space to insure the adequacy of parking and to determine the need for additional site improvements (e.g., handicapped ramps).
3. The yellow brick exterior should be maintained to preserve the historic, art deco character of the building, similar to the Landis Theater.



REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL 2024-4

NAME OF APPLICANT

True North Territory DBA True North Church
333 Aura Road
Mullica Hill, NJ 08062
(856)270-5261

REPRESENTED BY

?

NAME OF CURRENT PROPERTY OWNER

True North Territory

DATE OF APPLICATION

July 11, 2024

BLOCK & LOT NUMBERS

Block 2802/Lot 20, 21 & 22

ADDRESS

8 W. Landis Avenue

EXISTING USE

Vacant – formerly retail department store & auto center

PROPERTY DIMENSIONS

Over 300' of frontage on Landis Avenue
Over 400' of frontage on Delsea Drive
9.64 acres

PROPOSED USE

Church,

REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

PC – Plaza Commercial District

UNDERLYING ZONING DISTRICT
B-4 Business Zone

PLAN AMENDMENT REQUIRED (YES/NO)
Yes – Proposed use not permitted

NORTH DELSEA DRIVE

COMMERCIAL BUILDING

EXISTING ASPHALT

COMMERCIAL BUILDING

NEW ASPHALT SEAL COAT

CONC. RAMP

GRASS

L.S.A. PUMP STATION

TRUE NORTH CHURCH

NEW ASPHALT

EXISTING ASPHALT

NEW ASPHALT SE

NEW ASPHALT SE