

George Latimer
County Executive

County Planning Board

May 17, 2019

Adam R. Kaufman AICP, Director of Planning
Town of North Castle
15 Bedford Road
Armonk, NY 10504

**Subject: Referral File No. NOC 19-007 – Mariani Gardens -
Revised Petition for Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Text, and
Map Amendments**

Dear Mr. Kaufman:

The Westchester County Planning Board has received a revised petition to amend the North Castle Comprehensive Plan, the text of the North Castle Zoning Ordinance, and the Zoning Map with respect to an application to construct a multi-family residential development on a 4.213-acre site located at 45 Bedford Road. The site is currently occupied by a local nursery business – Mariani Gardens – and it is the only property in the Town that is currently zoned NB Nursery Business.

The applicant is petitioning the Town to create a new R-MF-DA – Residential Multifamily Downtown Armonk District, and to rezone the site to R-MF-DA to permit the proposed development. The current proposal shows 43 dwelling units with 112 parking spaces, of which 51 are located inside garages. The proposed unit mix is 24 one-bedroom apartments, nine two-bedroom apartments, six three-bedroom apartments and four four-bedroom apartments. The units would be arranged in a mix of townhouses towards the front of the site, attached duplexes in the middle of the site, and a 23-unit apartment building towards the rear of the site. All of the buildings would be placed along internal driveways with one access to Bedford Road for the whole property. Ten percent of the units would be set aside as affordable affirmatively furthering fair housing (AFFH) units.

This revised application includes updating the Town Comprehensive Plan to include full residential uses within the area of Mariani Gardens, as well as the consideration of a new zone to supplant the current NB zone. Both of these changes are to fit the proposed plan for the site into the Comprehensive Plan. Other revisions to the application include a new Design Objectives section to the proposed R-MF-DA zone that is applicable to residential buildings. The Allowable Density clause is also revised to restrict unit counts to one unit per 3,600 square feet of lot area, and the number of bedrooms to 1 bedroom per 1,950 square feet of lot area. Minor dimensional regulation changes are also proposed. The concept plan for the site has also been revised, removing one of the townhouses at the front of the site to bring the total to four, and removing originally proposed duplex buildings along the site's frontage with Maple Avenue. All the proposed duplexes are now to be attached and located along the western side of the property.

We previously offered preliminary comments under the provisions of Section 239 L, M and N of the General Municipal Law and Section 277.61 of the County Administrative Code in letters dated July 30, 2018, November 20, 2018, and December 21, 2018. We offer the following comments at this time:

1. Review by County Department of Public Works and Transportation. We continue to recommend the inclusion of the Westchester County Department of Public Works and Transportation (WCDPWT) as an Involved Agency for the review of the application due to the following:

STREAM CONTROL PERMIT – Depending on the exact scope of work involved with the proposed development, construction activity may take place within 100 feet of Wampus Brook, which is a County stream channel. A County Stream Control Permit may be required from WCDPWT as part of the approval process for this proposal. The applicant should contact the WCDPWT to determine if a stream control permit is necessary.

BEE-LINE BUS – Bee-Line Bus stop #5062 is located along the site's secondary frontage with Maple Avenue. As the conceptual development plans are refined, the applicant should reach out to the Transportation Division of the County Department of Public Works and Transportation to determine the proposed development's relationship to the bus stop and whether or not improvements to the bus stop are warranted or desired.

2. Sidewalks. The proposed redevelopment of this site offers the opportunity to construct a sidewalk along the site's Maple Avenue frontage, which we recommend be included in this development application. Providing a sidewalk in this area would increase pedestrian accessibility into downtown Armonk from areas south of Route 22, such as Business Park Drive and the proposed Eagle Ridge development. We also point out that Bee-Line Bus stop #5062 along Maple Avenue currently has no sidewalk connecting to it, forcing bus riders to walk in the road shoulder to get to and from the bus stop. A sidewalk along Maple Avenue should also be combined with a new crosswalk across Route 22 (connecting to Business Park Drive) as well as with a pedestrian signal. We recommend the Town and applicant work with the NYS Department of Transportation with respect to providing this crossing of Route 22, which is a State road.

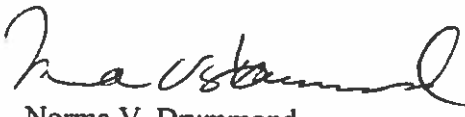
3. Orientation of "Unit A" residences. We continue to agree with the Town Planning Director's recommendation from December 2018 to reorient the "Unit A" buildings to place the front entrances of these units along Bedford Road and locate the garage parking and driveways in the rear. Doing so would help create a more pedestrian friendly streetscape along Bedford Road that is near historic structures.

4. Recycling provisions. We recommend that the Town require the applicant to verify that sufficient storage measures are provided to accommodate the expanded County recycling program. County regulations for recycling may be found at <http://environment.westchestergov.com>.

5. Green building technology and bicycle parking. The Town should encourage the applicant to incorporate as many "green" or sustainable building methods and technologies as possible into the proposed redevelopment. We also recommend providing a bicycle storage area for residents, particularly in the apartment building towards the rear of the site.

Thank you for calling this matter to our attention.

Respectfully,
WESTCHESTER COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

By: 
Norma V. Drummond
Commissioner

NVD/MV

cc: Naomi Klein, Planning Director, Transportation Division, County Department of Public Works and Transportation
Jeffrey A. Dean, Senior Engineer (Civil), County Department of Public Works and Transportation
Michael Dispenza, Contract Administrator, County Department of Public Works and Transportation
Christopher Lee, NYS DOT, Region 8