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PLANNING BOARD
TOWN OF RAMAPO

REVISED NARRATIVE SUMMARY

AVON GARDENS EAST FINAL SITE PLAN

Tax Lots 50.09-3-4, 5, 6, 7, 8, & 9;
50.13-3-5, 6, 7, & 8

Avon Gardens is a redevelopment proposal for an existing, but unbuilt, subdivision in the Spring Valley/Hillcrest area of the Town of Ramapo.

The parcel is located on the North side of Viola Road, approximately 365 feet East of Union Road. It abuts the New York Country Club property, which is to the North. The parcel has a total lot area of 4.28 acres (3.33 acres net). The East side of the parcel includes and abuts NYSDEC-regulated wetland TH-19 and wetlands adjacent areas.

Background and Prior Approvals

In 1974, in connection with the extension of Viola Road to Eckerson Road, the parcel and other lands were subdivided under their then-current R-15 zoning. A copy of the filed subdivision plat, called “Country Squire Estates” is attached as Exhibit A.

Country Squire Estates was divided into three sections. Section A is west of Viola Road, and includes Gilda Court and surrounding homes. Sections B and C are east of Viola Road. Section B is bounded by Viola Road to the west and a new street, to be called “Van Ness Road”, to the east. As mapped, Van Ness Road was to run northerly from Viola Road, and end at a stub within the parcel. Section B contains four lots. Section C is east of Van Ness Road and consists of six lots. Neither the homes nor the street in Sections B and C were ever built.

Although not shown on the filed subdivision plat, portions of Van Ness Road and all of the lots in Section C are within the DEC wetland and adjacent area. Portions of some of the lots in Section B are also within the adjacent area.

In 2013, an application was made to obtain a use variance to allow the construction of “three multi-family dwellings consisting of fifty-four residential housing units”, generally conforming to the MR-16 bulk regulations. During the course of the ZBA proceedings, the proposal was scaled back from 54 units to 48 units.

The ZBA granted the use variance to allow 48 units based on the MR-16 bulk regulations on December 19, 2013 (Case No. XBA-4058). A copy of the ZBA Decision is attached as Exhibit B. A copy of the plans on which the use variance was granted is attached as Exhibit C.

The plans presented to the ZBA avoided direct intrusions into the DEC wetlands, and were therefore an improvement over the filed subdivision. However, the new driveway and parking area were still located within the adjacent area.

The proposed intrusion of the driveway and parking area into the adjacent area created difficulties with respect to proceeding to Planning Board approval of this plan. As a result, the applicant has reconfigured its proposal to avoid the DEC wetlands and the adjacent area entirely.

Current Proposal

The project has evolved as it has gone through the land use approval process. The applicant responded to comments from Town staff, consultants and outside agencies to revise the project.

The current proposal is for 46 dwelling units arrayed among 12 buildings. This is a reduction from the 48 units approved by the ZBA. The plan conforms to the MR-16 bulk regulations, as required by the use variance.

The unit and bedroom count are:

Building 1: 1x 2-bedroom & 1x 5-bedroom

Building 7: 4x 2-bedroom

Buildings 2-6, 8,9,12: 4x 3-bedroom

Building 10,11: 4x 4-bedroom

Total per bedroom count:

5x 2-bedroom

32x 3-bedroom

8x 4-bedroom

1x 5-bedroom

The site plan is based on a looped driveway, with two connections to Viola Road. The southerly connection has been moved away from the wetland adjacent area, as has the driveway and parking spaces. This connection allows full movements in and out of the site. The northerly connection is limited to right turn exits, only. This configuration has been accepted by the Rockland County Highway Department, subject to the issuance of a highway work permit from that department.

The twelve attached buildings are grouped into two pods. One pod, consisting of eight buildings, is aligned near the northern lot line. The other pod, with four buildings, is between Viola Road and the driveway.

The MR-16 district requires two spaces per unit, but “this requirement may be modified by the Planning Board to reduce the requirement to 1 space per unit.” MR-16 Use Table, Col. F, #1. The plans provide for 70 spaces for 46 units, or 1.52 spaces per unit.

Existing sewer and drainage easements will remain. An existing slope easement along Viola Road is proposed to be abandoned to allow for the proposed reconfiguration.

The DEC wetland and adjacent area are designated as green areas and will not be developed. Approximately 2.45 acres of green space will therefore be preserved to protect the wetlands. In addition, there are two proposed playground areas of 1,300sf and 1,000sf, respectively, plus incidental lawn and landscaped areas.

As a result, although the use variance allowed development coverage of 82%, and the MR-16 zone allows 65%, only 28.9% of the lot will have impervious surface, leaving 71.1%, or 3.04 acres, as greened areas.

No additional variances are required.

The site is served by all public utilities.

SEQRA and GML status

The project is an Unlisted action under SEQRA.

The site is located on a County highway (Viola Road – County Route 74). It is adjacent to the boundary with the Village of New Hempstead, and within 500 feet of the boundary of the Village of Spring Valley. Referral to the Rockland County Planning Department is therefore required under NY General Municipal Law § § 239-1, -m, and -nn, as is referral to the Villages of New Hempstead and Spring Valley.

Dated: August 30, 2022
New City, New York

EMANUEL LAW P.C.


By: _____
Ira M. Emanuel, Esq.