

George Latimer
County Executive

September 25, 2020

Paula DiSanto, Village Clerk
Village of Croton-on-Hudson
One Van Wyck Street
Croton-on-Hudson, New York 10520-2501

**County Planning Board Referral File CRO 20-003 – 25 South Riverside Avenue
Site Plan and Special Permit Approval**

Dear Ms. DiSanto:

The Westchester County Planning Board has received a site plan (dated revised June 12, 2020) and related materials for a proposed site plan and special permit application to construct a new multifamily residential building on a 1.2 acre site located at 25 South Riverside Avenue (NYS Route 9A) (SBLs 78.8-5-42, 43, 59, & 60). The site is located in the newly designated C-1R(B) – Riverside Transition district, and currently hosts a two story commercial building and associated parking lot. All structures on the site are to be demolished.

The proposed three-story building would contain 44 units: 28 one-bedroom and 16 two-bedroom. An underground parking garage is proposed to contain 66 parking spaces. As the site slopes downhill from the east to the west, a section of the garage will be exposed at street level, where an entrance drive would provide two-way vehicular access. Pedestrian access to the lobby would be accessed via a staircase and ramp from the sidewalk. Residential amenities include a fitness center, co-working space, outdoor terraces, and a rooftop lounge. Rooftop solar panels are also proposed. To accommodate the building, a section of the hillside is to be excavated, and terraced retaining walls constructed. A three foot retaining wall would also be constructed along a portion of the front of the property.

We have no objection to the Croton-on-Hudson Board of Trustees assuming Lead Agency status for this review.

We have reviewed this matter under the provisions of Section 239 L, M and N of the General Municipal Law and Section 277.61 of the County Administrative Code and we offer the following comments:

1. Consistency with County Planning Board policies.

The proposed development is generally consistent with the County Planning Board's long-range planning policies set forth in *Westchester 2025—Context for County and Municipal Planning and Policies to Guide County Planning*, adopted by the Board on May 6, 2008, amended January 5, 2010, and its recommended *strategies* set forth in *Patterns for Westchester: The Land and the People*, adopted December 5, 1995 because it will add to the range of housing types available within an existing center.

2. Affordable affirmatively furthering fair housing.

The submitted materials did not indicate how the proposed development would comply with the Village's affordable housing ordinance. Under the zoning code, 10% of the total number of dwelling units shall be set aside as affordable affirmatively furthering fair housing (AFFH) units. We encourage the applicant to work with the Village to provide as many affordable units as possible in the proposed development.

3. Unbundled parking.

Many prospective apartment tenants look for buildings that are near transit and shopping as a way to reduce car ownership. We recommend this be incentivized by “unbundling” the cost of a parking space from rents, where a tenant only pays for a parking space that they need. Providing parking spaces that are included in rent incentivizes a tenant to keep additional cars on site, even though they may not need them, because parking is “free”.

The County Planning Board's policies aim to reduce unnecessary driving of single-occupancy vehicles and to reduce housing costs so that more housing options are affordable to people who live and work in Westchester. Unbundling parking from rents can help meet both goals and could potentially allow municipalities to eventually lower parking requirements, which can have positive benefits in reducing land disturbance and stormwater runoff.

4. County sewer impacts.

The proposed development will increase sewage flows from this site into the existing infrastructure. The increased flow will add to the volume of sewage flow requiring treatment at a Water Resource Recovery Facility operated by Westchester County. Since 2010, it has been the policy of the County Department of Environmental Facilities (WCDEF) that municipal governments require the applicant to identify mitigation measures that will offset the projected increase in flow. The best means to do so is through the reduction of inflow and infiltration (I&I) at a ratio of three for one for market rate units and at a ratio of one for one for any affordable units.

The County Planning Board further recommends that the Village implement a program that requires inspection of sewer laterals from private homes for leaks and illegal connections to the sewer system, such as from sump pumps. These private connections to the system have been found to be a significant source of avoidable flows. At a minimum, we encourage the Village to enact a requirement that a sewer lateral inspection be conducted at the time property ownership is transferred and any necessary corrective action be enforceable by the municipal building inspector.

5. Recycling.

While we note that the plans show a specific refuse room to handle waste generation, the Village should request the applicant to verify that sufficient space will be available to store recyclables under the County recycling program which includes plastics numbered 1 through 7. County regulations for plastic recycling may be found at: <http://environment.westchestergov.com>.

6. Green building technology.

We appreciate the applicant's inclusion of solar panels and rooftop stormwater collection in the site plan description. We encourage the applicant to include as much green, or sustainable building technology as possible into the proposed development.

7. Bicycle parking.

We recommend the applicant provide indoor bicycle parking for building residents within the garage area, especially as the site is within close biking distance of the Municipal Way Gateway commercial center and the Croton-Harmon Metro-North station. Electrical facilities should also be provided within the parking area for the charging of e-bicycles.

8. NYS DOT review.

South Riverside Avenue (NYS Route 9A) is a State highway. The Village should forward a copy of the application to NYS DOT to identify any required permits for the proposed project and to evaluate potential traffic impacts to South Riverside Avenue.

Please inform us of the Village's decision so that we can make it a part of the record.

Thank you for calling this matter to our attention.

Respectfully,
WESTCHESTER COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

By: 

Norma V. Drummond
Commissioner

NVD/MV

cc: Lance MacMillan, Regional Director, NYS Department of Transportation, Region 8
Anne Darelius, NYS Department of Transportation, Region 8