



MEMORANDUM

TO: Stephen Hunter, Chair and Members of the Village of Dobbs Ferry Planning Board

FROM: Valerie Monastra, AICP

CC: Dan Roemer, Building Inspector
Anthony Oliveri, P.E., Village Engineer
Dan Pozin, Village Attorney

DATE: October 31, 2022

RE: 0 North Mountain Drive

Tanya Giglio c/o Joseph LoCascio, Esq. (the “Applicant” and “Owner”) is seeking Site Plan approval to construct a single-family home. The property is located at 0 North Mountain Drive, Section Block and Lot 3.10-1-3 (“Project Site”) and is located in the OF-2, One Family Residential 2, zoning district.

GENERAL AND PROCEDURAL COMMENTS

1. **SEQR.** This application is categorized as a Type II action under SEQR because it consists of the “construction or expansion of a single-family, two-family, or a three-family residence on an approved lot.” No additional SEQR review is necessary.
2. **Site Plan Approval.** This application requires Site Plan approval by the Planning Board per Section 300-52 of the Zoning chapter. A public hearing will be required for Site Plan approval.
3. **Zoning.** The Applicant provided a zoning table for the OF-2 district. This property was before the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) for a variance from the minimum lot area. The ZBA referred this application over to the Planning Board based on the issues and concerns enumerated in this memorandum. The Project will require an in-depth zoning review.
4. **Architectural and Historic Review Board.** This application will require Architectural and Historic Review Board approval.
5. **Local Waterfront Revitalization Consistency.** The Planning Board will need to make a consistency determination with the Village’s LWRP per §300-52 (D) as part of its final Site Plan approval. The Applicant has provided a Coastal Consistency Form.

SITE PLAN COMMENTS

While this application is before the Planning Board for an initial review, the extent of regrading that will be necessary for the construction of the proposed house will require more detailed drawings in order to adequately review the proposed site plan.

1. **Regrading.** A regrading plan will need to be submitted including information on the anticipate cut and fill. Will blasting be required?
2. **Retaining Walls.** An extensive amount of retaining walls will be required for the construction of the house. Additional details on the heights and design of the retaining walls should be provided.
3. **Utilities.** Please provide a utilities plan.
4. **Lighting.** Is lighting proposed for the site? If so, the Applicant should provide a lighting plan, and all proposed lighting must comply with §300-41 of the Zoning chapter.
5. **Landscaping.** The Applicant should provide a landscaping plan per §300-44 of the Zoning chapter.
6. **Trees.** The Applicant is proposing the removal of seven trees. The Village of Dobbs Ferry recently adopted new tree removal regulations. The Applicant will need to provide a tree replacement plan that meets §300-51(i), Tree Valuation. Please provide the total aggregate diameter of trees proposed for removal and the total aggregate diameter of trees that are proposed to be planted.
7. **Stormwater Management Plan.** The Applicant has not provided a stormwater management plan. The Village Engineer will need review and provide comments on this information.
8. **Erosion and Sediment Control.** The Applicant still needs to provide a proposed erosion and sediment control plan. The Village Engineer will need to review and provide comments on this information.

SUBMISSION MATERIALS

The following materials were submitted by the Applicant and examined by our office for the preparation of this review:

- Site Plan Application, dated October 13, 2022
- Coastal Assessment Form, dated June 17, 2022
- Short EAF form Part 1, dated June 17, 2022
- Site Plans by Gotham Design and Community Development LTD, dated October 13, 2022
 - CS Cover Sheet
 - SP-1.0 Proposed Site Plan
 - SP-1.1 Slopes Analysis
 - SP-1.2 Slopes Analysis

- SP- 1.3 Tree Removal Plan
- SP-2 Floor Plans
- SP-3 Elevations

ZBA COMMENTS

Chairman Hunter and Members of the Dobbs Ferry Planning Board,

0 North Mountain Drive came to us seeking an area variance to build a new house. Reductions mandated by the Steep Slopes ordinance make this property undersized by about 23.80%. The variance the applicant is seeking is material. Nonetheless we believe it is possible to design a house that will fit the site and not cause harm to neighboring properties. The challenges that come with the site, however, are significant. Thus we are passing this project on to the Planning Board for its review as the hurdles that need to be overcome are those with which your board is most familiar. After your review it will return to the ZBA for approval/denial of the specific project that meets your approval. The ZBA will then make its decision based on the standard tests for an area variance. This memo lists some of the challenges that have arisen during our meetings with the applicant and from information submitted with this application.

North Mountain Drive is very appropriately named. It is more of a driveway than a street or avenue even as it is heavily trafficked by member's cars and numerous trucks servicing the Ardsley Country Club.

Among the challenges are:

Water. The site is steep and burdened with rock and North Mountain Drive, like other streets in the area has no curbs or storm sewers. Thus rain water runs downhill from this property, across 62 North Mountain Drive (Chris and Carrie O'Dea letter) and to the backyard of 8 Osceola Ave (Joe and Therese Valvano letter). The Valvanos have put in extensive drainage and dry wells in their back yard to control the runoff from reaching their home. The Valvano home was being built in 1989 so the full impact of rain on that property was not known at the time the lot at 0 North Mountain Drive was created in 1989.

Safety. North Mountain Drive is a narrow, winding and heavily travelled thoroughfare with poor sight lines for drivers. Any new house will need a significant driveway to provide the ability of cars to turn on the property as backing onto North Mountain is not safe, and likely a semi-circular driveway to accommodate guests. Both will need good sight lines at street level to oncoming traffic to provide for safe entry and exit from the property.

Rock. Extremely old and very hard rock is prevalent throughout this entire neighborhood, and on this property. The garage and master bedroom of 62 North Mountain Drive is built on rock that may well be the same rock formation also located on the 0 North Mountain Drive property. Blasting might harm the house at 62 North Mountain Drive, chemical based rock removal might send harmful chemicals down into the properties below, and rock chipping, at neighboring Ardsley Country Club, has proven to be unsuccessful. The last thing Dobbs Ferry needs is another project like at Beechdale and Judson where the rock has proven so difficult to deal with that the project remains in progress after 10 years or more. At a minimum we think any proposed house would have to drill down along the proposed foundation lines and the proposed dry well sights to clearly demonstrate in advance that building the proposed structure according to the plans is possible and without further need for variances.

Size. The applicant wishes to build a "large" house. Adding a house, driveways, walkway, patios etc creates more impermeable areas to handle rainwater, while at the same time, building atop the areas that currently absorb much of the rainfall (assuming the house is not sited on the steepest and rockiest portions of the property). Thus, balancing the size of the house with the ability to retain rainwater on site will present another challenge.

Thank you for considering these issues that arose on our brief dealings with this application and from the documents submitted. There may be others that arise during your review as safety, water and engineering are among your areas of expertise.

Sincerely,

Peter W. Hofmann
Chairman
Zoning Board of Appeals
Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522