Rockland County

Ed Day, Rockland County Executive

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
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Douglas J. Schuetz
Acting Commissioner

Arlene R. Miller
Deputy Commissioner

April 10, 2018

Ramapo Zoning Board of Appeals
237 Route 59
Suffern, NY 10901

Tax Data: 50.17-2-32

Re: GENERAL MUNICIPAL LAW REVIEW: Section 239 L and M
Map Date: 1/18/2018 **Date Review Received:** 2/28/2018

Item: ***SHULEM SCHIK/6 PARK STREET (R-2639)***

Variances for lot width, front setback, front yard, rear setback, street frontage and maximum development coverage to allow the construction, maintenance and use of an additon to and the conversion of a single-family dwelling to a three-family dwelling on .2341acres in an R-15C zoning district.

South side of Park Street, approximately 180 feet east of Twin Avenue

Reason for Referral:

Village of Spring Valley

The County of Rockland Department of Planning has reviewed the above item. Acting under the terms of the above GML powers and those vested by the County of Rockland Charter, I, the Commissioner of Planning, hereby:

***Disapprove**

1 The subject site does not meet the minimum lot area standard of 15,000 SF required for a detached three-family residence on a conforming parcel in the R-15C zoning district. Additional non-conformities include lot width and street frontage. The applicant is proposing to convert a single-family residence to a three-family dwelling by constructing a large addition at the rear of the existing structure. The proposed building will require yard and setback variances. The maximum permitted development coverage will be exceeded by 20 percent. The surrounding neighborhood is characterized by similarly-sized parcels with modest single-family dwellings. Granting these bulk variances will set a precedent that may result in nearby property owners seeking the same relief. A tripling of the residential density in this neighborhood of non-conforming parcels will negatively impact its community character. Additional residents will generate more traffic on the local streets. The potential for traffic conflicts is great. While three-family residences are permitted as of right in the R-15C zoning district, they are subject to stricter bulk requirements. This site is deficient in meeting these more stringent standards. We recommend that the required variances be denied.

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2 Pre-existing, non-conforming lots are given special consideration under Section 376-131 of the Town's Zoning Law. The bulk standards for several residential zoning districts are relaxed to accommodate the residential uses permitted by right in these zones. The subject site is 10,197 SF or 32 percent smaller than the minimum lot area required for a new three-family residence on a conforming parcel in the R-15C zoning district. It is also deficient in meeting the reduced minimum lot width and street frontage standards. The building footprint and the number of units must be reduced.

3 Permitting development that does not comply with the applicable bulk standards can set an undesirable land use precedent and result in the overutilization of individual sites. The ability of the existing infrastructure to accommodate increased residential density on undersized parcels is a countywide concern and must be evaluated. This evaluation must consider whether local roads will become more congested and the sewer system, stormwater management systems and the public water supply will be overburdened. The Town must consider the cumulative and regional impacts of permitting such development. The building footprint and the number of units shall be reduced.

The following comments address our additional concerns about this proposal.

4 The Village of Spring Valley is the reason this proposal was referred to this department for review. The municipal boundary is along the southern property line of the site. New York State General Municipal Law states that the purposes of Sections 239-l, 239-m and 239-n shall be to bring pertinent inter-community and countywide planning, zoning, site plan and subdivision considerations to the attention of neighboring municipalities and agencies having jurisdiction. Such review may include inter-community and county-wide considerations in respect to the compatibility of various land uses with one another; traffic generating characteristics of various land uses in relation to the effect of such traffic on other land uses and to the adequacy of existing and proposed thoroughfare facilities; and the protection of community character as regards predominant land uses, population density, and the relation between residential and nonresidential areas. In addition, Section 239-nn was enacted to encourage the coordination of land use development and regulation among adjacent municipalities, and as a result development occurs in a manner that is supportive of the goals and objectives of the general area.

The Village of Spring Valley must be given the opportunity to review the proposal and its impact on community character, traffic, water quantity and quality, drainage, stormwater runoff and sanitary sewer service. The areas of countywide concern noted above that directly impact the Village of Spring Valley must be considered and satisfactorily addressed, as well as any additional concerns about the proposal.

5 A review must be done by the Rockland County Department of Health to ensure compliance with Article XIX (Mosquito Control) of the Rockland County Sanitary Code.

6 A review shall be completed by the Rockland County Sewer District #1, all required permits obtained.

7 The NYS Department of State has determined that the Town is not administering or enforcing the State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code in accordance with minimum standards set forth in 19 NYCRR part 1203. Given the concerns about the Town's administration and enforcement of the State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code raised in the Executive Deputy Secretary of State's letter of July 15, 2016, the proposed residential building must be held to the requisite minimum standards and comply with all requirements of this code.

8 A review must be completed by the Rockland County Office of Fire and Emergency Services, the Town of Ramapo Fire Inspector, or the Spring Valley Fire Department to ensure that there is sufficient maneuverability on site for fire trucks, in the event an emergency arises.

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9 All proposed building entrances, stairways, window wells and walkways for the addition must be delineated on the site plan demonstrating that they will not impact yard requirements and parking maneuverability for the site.

10 The location of the trash dumpster/refuse container must be illustrated on the site plan. Access to the dumpster must be unimpeded, and it must be demonstrated that its location will not impact yard requirements and parking maneuverability for the site.

11 The proposed parking spaces are awkwardly configured. The existing front walkway is immediately west of space 2. Residents descending the exterior stairs will walk directly behind parked cars. The location of this walkway will also make it difficult for a vehicle to exit space 3 without backing into the street. The potential for vehicular and pedestrian conflict is great with this parking layout. As noted above, the number of units must be reduced. Fewer units will require less parking spaces.

12 All existing features to be removed must be indicated on the map. Alternatively, a separate existing conditions map must be submitted, and only the proposed site plan improvements shown on the ZBA map.

13 The site plan shall contain map notes that list all appropriate information, including the district details.

14 Pursuant to the Rockland County Sanitary Code, Article XIII, Section 13.8.1, all multiple dwellings with three or more rental units must register and obtain a Multiple Dwelling Rental Certificate (MDRC). If this proposed multi-family dwelling meets the requirements of the Multiple Dwelling Rental Registry requirement, then the owner must register and obtain the MDRC. Failure to comply is a violation of Article XIII, which may result in penalties of $2,000 per day.

15 Pursuant to General Municipal Law (GML) Section 239-m and 239-n, if any of the conditions of this GML review are overridden by the board, then the local land use board must file a report with the County Commissioner of Planning of the final action taken. If the final action is contrary to the recommendation of the Commissioner, the local land use board must state the reasons for such action.

16 In addition, pursuant to Executive Order 01-2017 signed by County Executive Day on May 22, 2017, County departments are prohibited from issuing a County permit, license, or approval until the report is filed with the County Commissioner of Planning. The applicant must provide to any County agency which has jurisdiction of the project: 1) a copy of the Commissioner report approving the proposed action; or 2) a copy of the Commissioner of Planning recommendations to modify or disapprove the proposed action, and a certified copy of the land use board statement overriding the recommendations to modify or disapprove, and the stated reasons for the land use board's override.

Douglas J. Schuetz
Acting Commissioner of Planning

cc: Supervisor Michael B. Specht, Ramapo
Rockland County Department of Health
Rockland County Sewer District #1
New York State Department of State
Rockland County Office of Fire and Emergency Services
Spring Valley Fire District

Anthony R. Celentano P.L.S.
Village of Spring Valley

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Mona Montal, Chief of Staff
Rockland County Planning Board Members

**NYS General Municipal Law Section 239 requires a vote of a 'majority plus one' of your agency to act contrary to the above findings.*

The review undertaken by the Rockland County Planning Department is pursuant to, and follows the mandates of Article 12-B of the New York General Municipal Law. Under Article 12-B the County of Rockland does not render opinions, nor does it make determinations, whether the item reviewed implicates the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act. The Rockland County Planning Department defers to the municipality forwarding the item reviewed to render such opinions and make such determinations if appropriate under the circumstances.

In this respect, municipalities are advised that under the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act, the preemptive force of any provision of the Act may be avoided (1) by changing a policy or practice that may result in a substantial burden on religious exercise, (2) by retaining a policy or practice and exempting the substantially burdened religious exercise, (3) by providing exemptions from a policy or practice for applications that substantially burden religious exercise, or (4) by any other means that eliminates the substantial burden.

Proponents of projects are advised to apply for variances, special permits or exceptions, hardship approval or other relief.

Pursuant to New York State General Municipal Law §239-m(6), the referring body shall file a report of final action it has taken with the Rockland County Department of Planning within thirty (30) days after final action. A referring body which acts contrary to a recommendation of modification or disapproval of a proposed action shall set forth the reasons for the contrary action in such report.