

**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING**

Dr. Robert L. Yeager Health Center  
50 Sanatorium Road, Building T  
Pomona, New York 10970  
Phone: (845) 364-3434 Fax: (845) 364-3435

**Douglas J. Schuetz**  
*Acting Commissioner*

**Arlene R. Miller**  
*Deputy Commissioner*

May 17, 2018

Spring Valley Zoning Board of Appeals  
200 N. Main Street  
Spring Valley, NY 10977

**Tax Data:** 57.23-1-35

**Re: GENERAL MUNICIPAL LAW REVIEW:** Section 239 L and M

**Map Date:** 3/15/2016

**Date Review Received:** 2/26/2018

**Item:** 6 COLUMBUS AVENUE (SV-892)

Variances for lot area, lot width, front yard, side yard, rear yard, total side yard and street frontage to permit the construction, maintenance and use of a two-family residence on .1147 acres in an R-2 zoning district.

South side of Columbus Avenue, 60 feet west of Lake Street

**Reason for Referral:**

Pascack Brook

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***

The subject site does not meet the minimum lot area standard of 8,500 square feet required for a single-family residence, and provides less than half of the lot area required for a two-family dwelling. The lot is also non-conforming for lot width and street frontage. The proposed two-family residence will require substantial yard variances to accommodate an oversized residential building on an undersized parcel. The surrounding neighborhood is characterized by similarly-sized parcels. Granting these bulk variances will set a precedent that may result in nearby property owners seeking the same relief. A doubling 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, leading to congestion and traffic conflicts. While two-family residences are permitted as of right in the R-2 zoning district, they are subject to stricter bulk requirements. This site is particularly deficient in meeting these more stringent standards. We recommend that the required variances be denied.

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 lot area is less than 50 percent of the required minimum. The lot width is deficient by 50 percent. Street frontage is 71 percent of the required minimum. Front, side, total side and rear yard variances are also needed. The ability of the existing infrastructure to accommodate

## **6 COLUMBUS AVENUE (SV-892)**

increased residential density on undersized, nonconforming 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 Village must consider the cumulative and regional impacts of permitting such development. The building footprint and the number of units must be reduced to more closely conform to the R-2 bulk standards.

The following comments address our additional concerns about this proposal.

- 1 A review must be completed by the Rockland County Drainage Agency, and all required permits obtained.
- 2 A review must be completed by the Rockland County Department of Health to ensure compliance with Article XIX (Mosquito Control) of the Rockland County Sanitary Code.
- 3 A review must be completed by the Rockland County Sewer District #1, and all required permits obtained.
- 4 The NYS Department of State has determined that the Village 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 Village'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.
- 5 A review must be completed by the Rockland County Office of Fire and Emergency Services, the Village of Spring Valley 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.
- 6 All proposed exterior staircases, building entrances, window wells and sidewalks must be delineated on the site plan demonstrating that they will not impact yard requirements, pedestrian safety and parking maneuverability on the site.
- 7 The site plan indicates the proposed structure will have three stories and a FAR of 0.65. However, a building footprint of approximately 1,905 SF is shown on the map. The floor plans illustrate that the building will consist of three floors, each of similar square footage. Assuming each story will have a gross floor area equal to the footprint, the proposed structure will have an overall gross floor area of approximately 5,715 SF. This would result in a FAR of 1.14. Although this is an estimate, a FAR of 1.14 is 75 percent greater than the allowed maximum FAR of 0.65. The architectural plans provided by Artistic Design Studio, dated August 16, 2017, indicate a total floor area of 4,834 SF. This translates to a FAR of .97, or 49 percent greater than the permitted maximum. The magnitude of the FAR discrepancy requires further attention. The applicant must positively demonstrate that the proposed structure will conform to the Village's FAR requirement. If the FAR exceeds the allowable 0.65, the variance application must be amended, and the public hearing notice must be reissued. Any application that is revised due to an increase in FAR must be sent to this department for review as required by the NYS General Municipal Law.
- 8 The use of tandem parking spaces prevents egress for the vehicles blocked in by other vehicles, and creates an inconvenient situation for residents. This layout will encourage residents to park vehicles off-site instead of in their designated spaces and negates the purpose of on-site parking requirements. The tandem parking spaces must be reconfigured to allow independent access for all parking spaces.
- 9 The site plan shall contain map notes, including district information. The purpose of a vicinity map is to show the parcel in context to the surrounding area. Locating the subject parcel near the southern edge of the map defeats this purpose, as little information is provided to the south of the site. The vicinity map must be updated to place the subject parcel in the center of the map.

**6 COLUMBUS AVENUE (SV-892)**

10 The application form indicates the property receives water service from United Water. The form must be corrected to Suez.

11 The application form incorrectly indicates that the property is within 500 feet of the Town of Ramapo. This must be corrected.

12 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.

13 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.

*Arlene Miller*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
for Douglas J. Schuetz  
Deputy Acting Commissioner of Planning

cc: Mayor Alan Simon, Spring Valley  
Rockland County Drainage Agency  
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.

Moses Friedman

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.*

