

PLANNING & ZONING
COMMISSION
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TOWN HALL ANNEX
238 Danbury Road
Wilton, Connecticut 06897

MEMORANDUM

Public Hearing: March 25, 2024

TO: PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

FROM: Staff, Michael E. Wrinn, Town Planner

RE: 131 Danbury Wilton Dev LLC (as affiliate of AMS Acquisitions, LLC) – 208 Residential Units – 2 separate applications for the project:

SP # 515 - Special Permit for 208 units

CHZ#23-406 – Change to allow the use of the overlay DE-5R (Design Enterprise Residential District Overlay District)

Applicant: 131 Danbury Wilton Dev AMS LLC (an affiliate of AMS Acquisitions LLC) c/o Agent: Craig Flaherty, Redniss and Mead, 22 First St Stamford, CT

Owners: FGI Wilton LLC, 525 Homestead Avenue, Mt Vernon, NY

Property Location: 131 Danbury Road, Tax Map 70, Lot 1, Zone: DE-5, 4.75± Acres

PROPOSAL:

- Removal of existing 50,000 SF commercial office and the construction of a 4 ½ story building with a total of 208 units.
- 10% of these units (21 total) of which will be affordable in accordance with the current Wilton Zoning Regulations, Section 29-5.B.10. The applicant will be required to file on the Land Records an Affordable Housing Plan, showing an equal distribution of the units throughout the project and unit mixes, approved by Town Counsel.
- Unit mix is 95 one BR, 105 two BR, and eight 3 BR.
- Standards of Review for the Special Permit have been submitted, along with a drainage study, traffic statement and an environmental impact statement. Also, a flood study and Flood Preparedness plan have been submitted.

OVERLAY DISTRICT

- The entire parcel (4.75 acres) would be included in the DE-5R Overlay District (Design Enterprise Residential District).
- The overlay is broken down into 2 separate zoning classification: East and West side of Danbury Road. The west side allows denser development than the east side, given that the west side backs up to the Norwalk River, the railroad and power lines.

TRAFFIC/CIRCULATION

- Traffic impact statement has been provided. The report concludes that the future traffic generated by the replacement of a 50,000 SF office building with a 208 unit multifamily development “is expected to be similar to the amount of traffic that would be generated by the sites existing use per industry data”.
- A Peer Review Traffic consultant has been engaged by the Commission, who submitted a report with a number of recommendations, which the applicants have responded to. The Commission's consultant will review that submittal and respond accordingly. The consultant noted that traffic operations along Danbury Road are not anticipated to be impacted by the project.
- 321 parking spaces are required under the regulations. 343 parking spaces are being provided, with 207 below the building and 114 outside on grade. Applicant is showing 22 tandem parking spaces (one behind another) on the south side of the building. These tandem spaces are allowed under the regulations as they are additional spaces over the parking minimum.
- Applicant is proposing 10 electric vehicle charging stations with another 24 equipped with conduit and infrastructure to convert on line in the future. Fire Department would be needed on specific locations.
- Sidewalks are along the entire property frontage on Danbury Road; additional being provided on site.
- **The applicants have revised plans (March 20, 2024) in order to accommodate the Fire Department's request. The change involves flipping the parking on the north side of the building towards the building in order to allow the fire apparatus a better angle for ladders towards the building. This shift involves the need to request a waiver of the landscape buffer regulations.**

SITE / UTILITIES / SITE WORK

- Will use public water and sanitary, located on Danbury Road and on the site.
- Sanitary will require approval from the Wilton Water Pollution Control Authority (WPCA), which is currently reviewing the project.
- The Norwalk River runs through the rear of the site and, as such, the site is in a flood zone. The building living spaces and mechanical and electrical systems are above the flood plain but the parking (below the building and on grade) is below the Base Flood Elevation. This is an allowed practice.

- Given the potential for flooding in the parking areas, the applicants have created another vehicle exit from the garage, out of the flood area. They have prepared a “Flood Preparedness Plan” for residents and building management. This plan will be given to all residents and to make them aware of the situation.
- Signage will be posted in the garage along with a blue line in the garage marking the flood zone, raising the awareness. Dry access out is provided through the front doors.
- The project engineer has reviewed the flood data and confirmed that the proposal will not decrease the flood plain storage and that there will no increase in the base flood elevation.
- Flood certification would need to be provided prior to occupancy.
- A full drainage study has been provided
- Sedimentation and erosion control plans submitted
- Full landscaping and lighting plan with full cutoff fixtures submitted

DEPARTMENTAL REVIEWS:

- Fire Department review of revised plans is underway.
- WestCOG referral was made, and the response back was that “The opinion of the WestCOG staff is that the proposals are of local interest with minimal intermunicipal impact. Therefore, they are not being forwarded to adjacent municipalities and the regional staff is making no comment”
- The public Hearing with Inland Wetlands has closed. An extensive peer review process was completed and a decision from Inland Wetlands is expected shortly. A report from Inland Wetlands needs to be given due consideration by the Planning and Zoning Commission before it can vote on the matter.
- Architectural Review Board: Applicants have revised plans in response to comments on the initial plans and a positive report has been issued.