

Barbara L. Geddis, FAIA
296 Cannon Road
Wilton, CT 0687

October 6, 2022

Historic District Commission

Town Hall

238 Danbury Road

Wilton, CT 0697

Attention: Allison Sanders, Chair and Commissioners Pojano, Weatherly, Bendremer and Fusco

Re: 8-24 Referral: Wilton Water Pollution Control Authority-to P& Z: Extension of Sanitary Sewer from 19 Cannon Road to Danbury Road for a proposed development at 19 Cannon Road

Commissioners and Chairperson Sanders,

As I wrote in a letter to you and testified at our March 2022 meeting, our family continues to recommend that this referral be denied. The rationale for the denial remains powerful and grounded in the guiding principles of the 2019 POCD.

As I wrote before, five (5) of those principles directly refer to history or strongly infer an historic context:

- **4.0 Preserve Wilton's Rural Character, Historic Resources and Cultural Landscapes.**
- **6.2 Strengthen the economic viability of the Cannondale area while protecting its unique design and historical character.**
- **3.1 Conduct a master planning process for Cannondale.**
- **Acknowledge the Cannondale Node:** "Densities should be lower than the Greater Wilton Center area and should align with the gradual decrease in density north of Cannon Road."
- **7.1. Water and Sewer Goals that reflect Land use goals.** "Extensions of sewer and water should be limited to those that address risks to environmental and/or public health or as requested by the property owners of a certain area in accordance with the recommendations of this Plan and the Town Water and Sewer Plan."

Some things have not changed since March and other things have changed.

- What has not changed is that a thirty-six units per acres in a multi-story building (73 units and over 90 cars) on a single family, two-acre parcel lodged across from the train parking adjacent to an Aquarion water property will shatter this particularly fragile context. This height and density and intensity of cars and loss of tree canopy at the gateway to Cannondale on the Norwalk River defiantly violates the POCD. It

seems to be a rather strident test case of our land use, safety, health and environmental policies.

- Yet what has changed is the evident lack of care on this property and that now another property in the village behind the Historic Grange is for sale. The real estate and developer market must be watching closely to see what happens.
- What is also emerging subtly and incrementally in other recent developments is a new "brand" of Wilton and Cannondale. What can be seen is eclectic combinations of adaptive reuse of historic vernacular buildings alongside contemporary settings which can be economically and aesthetically attractive.

Since we moved here in 2017 with Cannondale Village as one major factor in our move, we have been puzzled at the lack of definition of the boundaries of Cannondale Village. The National Register designation offers many contributing buildings and supportive history about this working village's unique qualities as riverfront, bridge, train, workplace, and place to live.

Setting aside this case, which we hope can again be turned down, it does seem that HDC could have an especially key role in the P and Z re-mapping of Cannondale district and align it more closely to the Register. I would hope that at the very least an overlay of the station-centric village could provide some guidance for future changes of property and development.

As I wrote in March, "it is patently obvious that Cannondale Village will not survive this kind of development's density and fundamental misfit of 'scale.'" But, as I have previously stated in several public meetings, there are many promising and innovative ideas for Cannondale Village. We remain in favor of new uses being permitted and incentivized here in retaining some of the contributing historic and other structures. P and Z is on that kind of trajectory with support from HDC. Current property owners within Cannondale Village should be optimistic about future mixed-use potential including residential.

As it was in March, and remains even more important today in October, you of the HDC once again should have a powerful voice in this test case of fundamental criteria produced by vigorous public dialogue in 2019 which now needs practical realization in policy.

Thanks as always for your thoughtful consideration of this important case.

Best,

Barbara

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