

**HISTORIC DISTRICT &
HISTORIC PROPERTY
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**TOWN HALL
238 Danbury Road
Wilton, Connecticut 06897**

TO: Water Pollution Control Authority
Planning & Zoning Commission

FROM: Allison Sanders, Chair

DATE: October 6, 2022

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

Cannondale is small but complex area both geographically and historically. Packed into a handful of acres in a scenic valley are a river, a bridge, a railroad track and station, a mill pond, dam, old trees, stone walls, and diverse historic buildings. It has retained its authentic New England-style small village character. It is an irreplaceable piece of Wilton's history.

**Regarding Hinckley Allen letter of September 1, 2022 re: 19 Cannon Road:
Page 2, Item A "The parcel is not located in a historic district."**

The Historic District and Historic Property Commission takes issue with the above statement. Recognized in the national program to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources, Cannondale has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1992. Cannondale National Register District documentation codifies the inventory of important buildings and features as well as providing a professional appraisal of the extent of the existing historic neighborhood.

19 Cannon Road is located in the Cannondale National Register District

In addition to the area being designated as the Cannondale National Register District, the structure at 19 Cannon Road, which is to be demolished to make way for the proposed project, is

listed on Wilton’s Historic Resource Inventory (HRI) of structures that are important to the town for their historical and/or architectural attributes. The Colonial Revival-style “Ambler House” c 1905 “contributes to the original residential character of Cannondale” and is further described as “picturesque . . . set on generous, park-like grounds” as described by architectural historian Mary McCahon in the 1989 historic house survey.



Catherine and Lewis Ambler House c 1905

Master Planning

Following the directive of the POCD, the town is engaged with master planning for Wilton Center. **The POCD also calls for the town to implement a master planning process for the area, and for “the Cannondale Node.”** A planning process would carefully and thoughtfully strive to create a plan that embraces and enhances the topography and existing historic architectural features of this undervalued resource.

Any sizeable project, such as the proposal for 19 Cannon Road, should not be pursued until Master Planning is complete.

POCD Goal 4 “Preserve Wilton’s Rural Character, Historic Resources and Cultural Landscapes”

Even without a master plan, there is no question that the size, density, and use of the proposed project would be antithetical to what is appropriate for Cannondale Village as envisioned by the POCD. The POCD’s Goal 4 “Preserve Wilton’s Rural Character, Historic Resources and Cultural Landscapes” states: “Wilton has significant historic assets from its rural origins, which fundamentally complement its natural environment and contribute to its character, sense of place and quality of life. Notable historical and scenic assets include [among others]: Cannondale National Register District.” This is a place to “establish zoning incentives for preserving historic structures” which is in the POCD as well. A variety of incentives are already being discussed in the current master planning of Wilton Center, using the HDC-provided “Historic Preservation Tools for Commercial Buildings” report.

The design proposed for 19 Cannon Road would dominate the surrounding structures. **Overall, it would be non-compliant with POCD Goal 3 which is to “Strengthen the economic vitality of the Cannondale area while protecting its unique design and historical character.”**

When it comes to the future of Cannondale Village – an area with an unmistakable New England-style sense of place – it is impossible to justify proceeding with a sewer extension before master planning.