

Memo

To: Woodbridge Town Plan and Zoning Commission

CC: Kristine Sullivan, Woodbridge Land Use Analyst/Acting ZEO

From: Justin LaFountain, AICP, Woodbridge Town Planning Consultant

Date: May 28, 2025

Re: 804 Fountain Street-Special Permit Application

Background

The Woodbridge Town Plan and Zoning Commission received a special exception application from Fountain Street Associates LLC (represented by Hurwitz, Sagarin, Slossberg & Knuff, LLC) for a 96 unit multifamily building at 804 Fountain Street. Special exceptions require a public hearing, which has been set for June 2, 2025.

This applicant was before the Town Plan and Zoning Commission in December of 2024 regarding their zoning text amendment application. The application, which was approved by the Commission, included changes to the bulk requirements for Opportunity Housing in Woodbridge (found in Section 3.4.E of the Woodbridge Zoning Regulations). The proposal currently before the Commission utilizes the changes to the Regulations.

Analysis:

I have reviewed the plan set submitted with this application from a planning and zoning perspective. The plans appear to be largely in compliance with the Woodbridge Zoning Regulations, with several exceptions. A memo noting those exceptions was sent to the applicant on Wednesday, May 21st. As of the writing of this memo, a response has not yet been received. The memo listing the potential issues is included at the end of this memo.

The proposal consists of a 96 unit multifamily building located at 804 Fountain Street. The site is zoned Residential A, is not located within the watershed, and has access to public sewer and water. Therefore, the site is eligible for Opportunity Housing, as provided in Section 3.4.E of the Zoning Regulations. Of the 96 units, 16 are studio units, 55 are single-bedroom, and 25 are two-bedroom units.

Parking:

The proposed building has four stories of residences, with a basement/cellar parking garage. The garage is partially underground, with an entrance facing the northern side of the property, and contains approximately 55 parking spaces (a final corrected count is awaited from the applicant). The parking lot to the eastern side of the building contains 92 parking spaces, for a total of approximately 147 parking spaces. The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that five parking spaces be handicapped accessible (with at least one being a wider van-accessible space), and this plan provides six of such spaces, with one being van accessible.

The van accessible parking space is shown in the garage. If the garage is accessed by key card and not for visitors, a visitor requiring a van accessible space would not be able to park. Ideally, a van accessible space should be provided both inside and outside of the garage to provide wider accessibility.

Woodbridge does not dictate a number of required parking spaces, however the State of Connecticut does not require all municipalities to require more than one parking space for studio or single bedroom units, or two spaces for two bedroom units (in this case, 121 spaces). Based on this statute, the parking provided on site exceeds the threshold. In addition, the applicant provides two bike storage rooms in the parking garage.

Affordability:

In order to construct multi-family housing at this site, the applicant is required to provide deed-restricted affordable housing. The Zoning Regulations provide two options for the affordable housing allocations: either 20% of the housing units must be restricted to 80% of area median income (or lower), or 6% of the units must be restricted at 80% of the area median income and 6% of the units must be restricted to 60% of the area median income, for a total of 12% deed-restricted units. The applicant has chosen to follow the 12% method, by providing six units restricted to less than 80% of the area median income, and six units restricted to 60% of the area median income, all for at least 40 years.

The applicant has provided an Affordability Plan to ensure that the housing is restricted as outlined above. From a planning perspective, the Plan meets the requirements of the Zoning Regulations. Any questions from a legal perspective should be directed to the Town Attorney, as required in the Zoning Regulations.

Site and Design:

804 Fountain Street contains approximately 5.59 acres, and is the last piece of property located in Woodbridge on the southern side of the road. To the east and south of the property is the Wilbur Cross Parkway and the City of New Haven, to the west is an approximately 10.17 acre

parcel owned by the Woodbridge Land Trust, and to the north are several single family residences and two very small (and likely unbuildable) parcels owned by the Town of Woodbridge.

The site access would come solely from Fountain Street, State Route 243. As the roadway is owned and maintained by the State of Connecticut, the applicant will need to seek approval from the Department of Transportation for the curb cut and to ensure that traffic access on to the roadway is safe.

No wetlands are located on the subject site, and all work proposed exceeds 100 feet from wetlands located on State-owned property and within the City of New Haven. The applicant has provided a letter from a soil scientist noting that no wetlands approvals are required for this application.

The building contains four stories and a partially underground parking garage, which based on the Zoning Regulations, is classified as a cellar or basement. The Regulations require a pitched roof, however the applicant is requesting permission to construct a flat roof to limit the overall height of the building. Per Section 3.5.E.5 of the Regulations, the Commission can choose to grant this approval as part of the Special Exception applied for here. The Regulations note that the Special Exception is based on overall excellence in design.

A sign is proposed at the entryway to the development; however, it does not appear to be in compliance with the sign regulations. If the applicant wishes to move forward with this signage, a variance would be required.

A trash area is noted at the northwest corner of the building, however no screening appears to be proposed. The Regulations require that screening be provided for refuse areas (Section 3.5.E.5.d).

A site lighting plan has been provided by the applicant, which is in compliance with the Zoning Regulations. However, it appears that the entry/exit of the site is not illuminated. The Commission should seek clarification from the applicant if entry lighting is anticipated, or if there is adequate street lighting along Fountain Street to safely illuminate the driveway.

The landscaping plan provided by the applicant has several issues, including incorrect calculations and mislabeling, and an area that requires a tree without a tree being shown. Revisions have been requested, but have not yet arrived as of the writing of this memo. When revisions are received, they will be reviewed for compliance with the Regulations.

Municipal Impacts:

Town staff has requested that the Fire Marshal review the application in order to ensure adequate safety and fire access is available to the site. As of the writing of this memo, a report

from the Fire Marshal has not yet been received. The Commission should consult with the Fire Marshal to ensure adequate safety and accessibility is provided.

I have reviewed the proposal based on Goman+York's modeling for student enrollments resulting from new housing. Based on the number and breakdown of unit types in the proposal, we would anticipate seven new-to-district enrollments, with a total of ten students living in the complex (the new-to-district enrollments are lower as we anticipate some students will be moving in from other housing nearby). Note that this estimation is for all students, who would attend either the Beecher Road School or the Amity Regional High School. The methodology for this estimation is broken down below (note that there is a significant amount of rounding up in numbers to ensure that the estimates provided are as conservative as possible).

Housing Types	Units	Multiplier (1)	PSAC (2)	NTDE (3)
Studio	16	0.04	0.64	1
One-Bedroom	55	0.04	2.20	2
Two-Bedroom	25	0.25	6.25	4
Totals	96		9.09	7

Notes:

(1) **Multipliers:** Derived from Rutgers University, Center of Urban Policy Research "*Residential Demographic Multipliers-Connecticut.*"

(2) **PSAC:** Stands for Public School Age Children, or school district enrollments.

(3) **NTDE: New-to-District Estimates:** represents the percent of student enrollments who are projected to be new to the Woodbridge School District-most enrollments from new residential developments are associated with students already enrolled in the district. This consideration is derived from the *South Windsor Board of Education Public Schools Enrollment Projections* (2018, 2019, and 2020) that have shown NTDEs fluctuate between 13% to 30% of enrollments from new housing. Therefore, to be conservative, we utilize 50% NTDEs. This is an important consideration for calculating the actual municipal impact of new residential developments.

Commission Action:

The Zoning Regulations require that the Commission consider the following items when rendering a decision on Special Exceptions, per Section 6.3.C:

1. The health, safety, and welfare of the public in general, and the immediate neighborhood, in particular, compliance with the Plan of Conservation and Development;
2. The location and size of the proposed use;
3. The nature and intensity of the proposed use and any operations involved in the use;
4. The safety and intensity of traffic circulation on the site, and on adjacent streets;
5. The scale of the proposed site and structures;
6. The harmony and appropriateness of the use and site design in relation to the general area and to adjacent properties; and
7. Compliance with the Zoning Regulation and site plan objectives set forth in Section 6.4.C. Any permit granted under this section shall be subject to any and all conditions and safeguards imposed pursuant to Section 6.3.D (*these two referenced sections allow the Commission to impose reasonable conditions on any approvals granted*).

If the Commission believes that these criteria are met and wishes to approve the application, the approval should be conditioned upon the following, along with any other conditions the Commission feel are reasonable for the proposed use:

1. The outstanding issues in the planner memo dated May 21, 2025 must be resolved.
2. Any outstanding comments from the Woodbridge Fire Marshal, Town Attorney, and/or other reviewing parties must be addressed.
3. The affordability documents must be executed and filed with the Woodbridge Town Clerk prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.
4. The approval is contingent upon approval from the Connecticut Department of Transportation for the access on to Fountain Street (Route 243).
5. The approval shall not be valid until such time as the Certificate of Special Exception is filed on the Land Records with the Woodbridge Town Clerk.
6. Any changes to the approved plans, beyond the items that require revision, will necessitate further review from the Town Plan and Zoning Commission.

Memo

To: Attorney John Knuff
CC: Kristine Sullivan, Woodbridge Land Use Analyst/Acting ZEO
From: Justin LaFountain, AICP, Woodbridge Town Planning Consultant
Date: May 21, 2025
Re: 804 Fountain Street-Special Permit Application

I have reviewed the plan set titled “Residential Development, 804 Fountain Road [sic], Woodbridge, CT,” with a most recent revision date of 03-2025. The following comments represent my initial review of this site plan.

A. Overall:

1. Please comment on the need (or lack thereof) for the City of New Haven to review this plan, as a portion of the property is located outside of Woodbridge.
2. The monument sign shown on Sheet A-201 does not comply with the Woodbridge Zoning Regulations. As the property is located in the A Residential zone, any signage needs to comply with the regulations for residentially zoned property found in Section 4.3 of the Regulations. A variance may be required.
3. The elevator in the floorplans is listed as Elevator #1, however it does not appear that there are any additional elevators. Does this proposed elevator have the sizing and capacity necessary for residents moving in and out of the building? To that point, where will moving trucks be best able to access the building?
4. It appears that there is a refuse area in the parking portion of the building. Please provide details on what will be included in that area. Will garbage trucks have access to that area, and if so, how?
5. Additional colored elevation drawings, particularly showing the appearance of the building from the roadway, may be helpful to the Commission.
6. Approval from the Department of Transportation will be necessary due to the curb cut along Fountain Street. Any potential approval from the Woodbridge Planning and Zoning Commission will be contingent upon approval from the DOT.

B. Cover Sheet

1. The revision table on the cover sheet does not match the rest of the plan set. Please ensure all tables are consistent.

2. The calculation for the ground floor at 2,207 square feet does not appear to match what is shown on Sheets A-102A and B. Please review and revise accordingly.

C. Sheet SP-1

1. The Zoning, Parking, and Land Coverage Tables have the following errors, please review and revise accordingly:
 - i. The impervious coverage and building coverages appear to add up to 28.3% based on the land coverage tables, however in the zoning table, the lot impervious coverage is listed as 29.9%.
 - ii. The parking table notes that 4 ADA spaces are provided, however the drawings show 6 (note that 5 are required, with at least one being van accessible).
2. The parking counts within the garage do not add up to the numbers provided. Please review and revise. Note that this will likely change the counts within the parking table.
3. A trash area is noted, however no details are provided for trash enclosures. Please provide details of how these areas will be screened.
4. Will there be a key card entry into the garage? If so, please provide a van-accessible space on the exterior of the building as well (it appears that the only van-accessible space is inside the garage).
5. The parking table notes that a bike rack will be provided, however bike storage rooms are shown. Is the bike rack in addition to the bike storage areas? If so, please show where the bike rack will be located.
6. There are four 'B' notations in diamonds located near the entrance, however they are not defined. Please define accordingly.

D. Sheets SP-2/SP-2A/SP-3

1. There are several lines labeled SE which are undefined. I assume they are for electrical lines. Please define accordingly.
2. Are the electrical lines proposed to be underground? If not, can underground utilities be provided instead of overhead lines?
3. Are any stockpile areas proposed? If so, please include. If not, please disregard this comment.
4. Please note how soon after a heavy rainfall (excess of 1 inch) an inspection will occur.

E. Sheet SP-7

1. Very little lighting is shown near the entrance/exit of the site on to Fountain Street. Lighting to illuminate the entrance and exiting vehicles should be provided.

F. Sheet SP-8

1. The number of trees/shrubs/etc. shown on the landscaping plan do not match the numbers in the table. For example, the switch grass total in the table shows 29, however I count a minimum of 41 on the plan itself. Additionally, the notations and lines are not at all clear, and some symbology is inconsistent. Please revise the table and site plan to ensure that the Commission knows what the final proposal includes.

2. Section 5.17.E does not appear to be fully met, which requires all landscaped areas within a parking lot to have a minimum dimension of one tree not less than 2" in caliper. At a minimum, the island at the northern end of the parking lot is missing a tree. Please review and revise to ensure the landscaping requirements are met.
3. Please provide calipers for all trees to ensure compliance with the Regulations.
4. Please ensure that all trees proposed in the parking lot area comply with the table in Section 5.2 of the Zoning Regulations.