



TOWNSHIP OF WEST ORANGE

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Department of Planning and Development

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TO: Applicant
Zoning Official
Planning Board
Planning Board Engineer
Township Engineer

FROM: Paul Grygiel, AICP, PP, Township Planning Director

DATE: December 14, 2022

RE: **PB 22-08/Cummings**
Block: 80.03; Lots: 10 & 21; Zone: R-1
Ridge Road and Mount Pleasant Avenue
Site Plan Review Advisory Board Report

The Township of West Orange Site Plan Review Advisory Board (SPRAB) held a virtual meeting on December 13, 2022. At this meeting, the SPRAB reviewed the above application with the applicant's principal, attorney, site engineer and geotechnical engineer. The applicant is proposing to consolidate two lots and subdivide the overall property into four single-family residential lots.

The SPRAB's review of applications is typically limited to major site plans. However, given the size of the subject property (12.7 acres) and potential issues related to its topography and other features, it was determined a request by the applicant to appear before the SPRAB to discuss technical issues was appropriate.

The following site plan and design issues were discussed at this meeting:

- Steep slopes: The subject property has varied topography, with a grade change of over 100 feet and rock outcrops in the eastern portion of the site. The Township recently



adopted an enhanced steep slope ordinance which the applicant is proposing to address through a two phase approach: identifying rock outcrop and rock face areas to provide buffer areas to them, and to undertake geotechnical testing in accordance with the steep slope ordinance. The applicant was asked whether it would be possible to provide a conservation easement for rock outcrop buffers and other areas of non-disturbance.

- Storm water management: The plans currently propose to route stormwater from dwellings on the western portion of the property to the eastern portion of the site into an existing swale. Questions were asked about potentially modifying this approach, such as connecting the drainage for the two southernmost lots to reduce overland flow, connecting pipes to tie into the system on Mount Pleasant Avenue, and creating a single basin for the overall property instead of individual basins. Suggestions were made to indicate the top of the basin surface water elevation for the 25 year storm and to note on the plans that roof leaders from dwellings will connect to the drainage system.
- Pedestrian circulation: The applicant was asked to consider whether it would be possible to install a sidewalk or otherwise provide for safe pedestrian access along Ridge Road on the subject property to get to Mount Pleasant Avenue and bus stops on that street, with a design that is sensitive to the site's context (i.e. an existing wooded area on a low traffic private street).
- Ridge Road: The applicant was asked to provide additional information regarding the ownership of this private street and any restrictions on development along it, as well as who is responsible for its maintenance. It was also noted in my original review letter that the front yard setback lines for the four proposed lots need to be measured from the street line of the lot, which per the Land Use Regulations Ordinance is "the dividing line between the street right-of-way and a lot, tract, or parcel of land which street line shall be no less than 25 feet from the center line of the street to right-of-way." The applicant acknowledged this change.
- Application procedure: The applicant is seeking subdivision approval without the exact location and design of dwellings on the new lots, with the intention of seeking subsequent approval of individual plot plans when dwellings and other improvements on the lots are designed. This approach would likely require separate preliminary and final subdivision approval by the Planning Board, in order to ensure that adequate information regarding tree removal and replacement, steep slope ordinance compliance, drainage and other issues are addressed at the appropriate time. If there are items in the applicable ordinances for which the applicant would like to defer submittal, requests can be made for waivers, which would be evaluated by the Board's professionals to determine if they are warranted.

The applicant indicated its professionals will submit additional information and revised plans, as necessary, with the intention of being scheduled for a public hearing at an upcoming Planning Board meeting.



It is noted for the record that two other issues were raised by SPRAB members in written correspondence submitted after the meeting:

- A STOP sign, a STOP line, and a crosswalk need to be included on Ridge Road at its intersection with Mount Pleasant Avenue.
- The addition of a fire hydrant centrally located in the vicinity should be installed.

