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TO: Borough of Sayreville Planning Board

FROM: Michael P. Fowler, AICP/PP, Board Planner *MPF*

DATE: August 31, 2023

SUBJECT: Colonial Gardens Builders, LLC
Minor Subdivision
Block 2, Lots 54 - 59
21 John Street, Sayreville, NJ

We have reviewed the above referenced Minor Subdivision Plan prepared by Ameritech Engineering, Inc. dated May 24, 2023, last revised July 31, 2023, consisting of one sheet. Also provided by the Firm was a Tree Preservation Plan and a Boundary and Topographic Survey. In addition, building elevations and floor plans were prepared by Grammer Designs, LLC and included with the Application.

We have the following comments as provided below:

1. PROJECT

1. The Application for Minor Subdivision consists of subdividing existing Block 2, Lots 54 – 59 into two conforming lots in the R-7 Single Family Residential Zone. The property in question contains an existing single-family dwelling, detached garage and shed and is 18,750 SF, while the R-7 Zone requires a minimum lot area of only 7,500 SF. The Applicant proposes to remove the existing structures and create two conforming 75 X 125 FT lots, both of which will front on John Street. A new three-story dwelling is proposed for each of the proposed lots. The rear of the lot is vegetated with deciduous trees and common understory. The surrounding area is sparsely developed with a mix of single-family homes and vacant lots.

2. MASTER PLAN

1. The Borough of Sayreville adopted its last Master Plan in February 2013 and completed and adopted a Re-Examination of the Master Plan in June 2023. The Master Plan identifies the property as Medium Density Residential on the Future Land Use Plan Map.

3. ZONING

1. As previously stated, the subject site is in the R-7 Single Family Residential Zone, with a minimum lot area of 7,500 SF. The bulk standards for the R-7 Zone in comparison to the proposed lots are depicted in the Zoning Data Table shown on the Applicant's Minor Subdivision Plan set and on page 1 of the Board Engineer's 9/6/2023 report.

The table indicates the proposed subdivision meets all the bulk standards except for the maximum number of stories. A maximum of 2 ½ stories is permitted and the Applicant proposes two 3 story dwellings. However, it should be noted that the Applicant will satisfy the maximum height requirement of 35 FT or less.

Also noted by the Board Engineer, "As per Borough Ordinance requirements, concrete curb and sidewalk is required to be installed along the frontage of the property. The majority of the lots in this area do not contain curb or sidewalk. The Applicant is requesting a waiver of this requirement. (Ordinance 26-97.1 t + u)."

2. Additional Waivers will be required from the Ordinances Design Standards related to Residential Districts. The applicable sections of the Ordinance are listed below:

26-96 – General Design Standards.

26-96.3 Supplemental Design Standards in the Residential Districts.

- b. No more than fifty (50%) percent of the first-floor facade which faces the street shall be devoted to garages or car ports. (*The garages appear to exceed 50% of the first-floor façade*).
- c. The entry face of a garage shall be offset a minimum of three (3') feet from the face of the first story of the house or have a design which similarly minimizes the streetscape dominance of the garage. (*The entry faces of the garages do not appear to be offset*).

26-96.9 Building Appearance.

- a. General.

4. Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, a building permit may be denied to a proposed development consisting of two (2) or more houses where the proposed development proposes to construct a building or buildings of such a dissimilar

character and appearance to those prior existing structures and/or buildings as to destroy the character of the existing neighborhood. In determining whether a proposed building is of such dissimilar character, a review shall be made of the existing neighborhood on the same street within three hundred (300') feet of the proposed building or buildings. The distance herein specified shall be construed to mean the distance between the sidelines of each lot or parcel as extended and measured along the center line of the street. In determining the character of the existing neighborhood, and/or the similarity or dissimilarity to that neighborhood, the review process shall be based upon basic house design standards universally accepted by architects and planners. (For example, the review shall include whether the proposed and/or existing buildings are of split-level, ranch bi-level, cape cod, colonial, Victorian, adobe, etc., and further whether the proposed design is so similar or dissimilar as to affect the character of the existing neighborhood.) In addition, the review shall include, but not be limited to, a determination as to the existence of any historical buildings or landmarks as determined by the laws of the State of New Jersey, and a determination as to the existence of environmentally sensitive areas, including but not limited to wetlands.

6. In determining whether a proposed development is of such a similar and/or dissimilar character to the prior existing buildings, any proposed building which is either twenty-five (25%) percent larger and/or smaller in height, mass, and/or displacement shall be presumed to be dissimilar. A potential developer may rebut the presumption by presenting evidence indicating that the proposed building is proportionately sized with respect to the proposed lot as are the prior existing buildings in the neighborhood, that the proposed building is situated and/or landscaped to present the appearance of a building much smaller or much larger than its actual size, and other evidence which is relevant to this issue. (*The proposed elevated 3 story dwellings appear dissimilar to many of the surrounding structures*).
- b. Single-Family Homes. The following architectural and visual standards for single-family homes shall apply to all developments of two (2) or more homes. This subsection shall not apply to any existing or proposed single-family home, nor to any proposed construction of a single-family home on a single conforming lot.
 1. In any proposed development of two (2) or more single-family houses, there shall be a variety of separate basic house designs. (*The designs for the proposed homes appear identical*).
 3. Exposed concrete block (cinder block) or other such masonry units shall not be permitted as an exposed surface in residential zones. Split-face, ribbed, scored, and glazed masonry units, or an approved equal, with integral color, are permitted. Nothing in this section shall be construed as to limiting brick, brick face, stone, or other similar materials. (*The Applicant should address the type of block proposed for the ground floor elevation and whether it meets the above criteria*).

4. GENERAL COMMENTS

1. The subject property is in a designated Flood Hazard Area. The Applicant should identify the applicable Flood Zone and its limits on the Subdivision Plan.
2. The Applicant should acknowledge they are aware of being subject to the requirements of the Borough's Flood Hazard Prevention and Protection Ordinance, Chapter XXIII, and will seek out the assistance of the Borough's Floodplain Administrator prior to submitting construction plans.
3. As noted in the Board Engineer's Report, the Applicant will be required to obtain any applicable permits from the NJDEP for the proposed subdivision and construction in the Flood Hazard Area.
4. The Applicant should state whether they will comply with all applicable Landscape Design standards listed in Section 26.96.7 of the Borough's Ordinance.
5. Approval of this Application is subject to all required outside agency approval.
6. The Applicant is subject to all applicable requirements of the Borough's Affordable Housing Ordinance – Chapter XXXV.
7. The Applicant should provide adequate testimony to justify any variance and waiver relief. The testimony should include any hardship created by features of the site, better planning alternatives being proposed and the benefits thereof, advancing purposes of the MLUL, any possible detrimental impacts on neighboring properties, and impacts on the Borough's Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

We are available to answer any questions regarding this planning report.

Very Truly Yours,

Michael P. Fowler

Michael P. Fowler, AICP/PP