

**STAFF REPORT - TOWN OF NORTH CASTLE PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

March 27, 2024



APPLICATION NAME & NUMBER St. Nersess Armenian Seminary - 486 Bedford Road – Town Board Special Permit Amendment Request & Planning Board Site Plan [2023-035]	SBL 108.02-1-16
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MEETING DATE April 8, 2024	PROPERTY ADDRESS/LOCATION 486 Bedford Road, Armonk
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**BRIEF SUMMARY OF REQUEST**

The site contains an existing seminary approved by the Town in 2012. The Applicant is requesting to expand the seminary to include two additional married student apartments as well as a new two bedroom residence for a new dean.



PENDING ACTION:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Plan Review	<input type="checkbox"/> Town Board Referral	<input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Discussion
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EXISTING ZONING	EXISTING LAND USE	SURROUNDING ZONING & LAND USE	SITE IMPROVEMENTS	SIZE OF PROPERTY
R-2A	Existing Seminary	Residential and Institutional	New addition and new structure	5.55 acres

<p><b>PROPERTY HISTORY</b></p> <p>2012 – Town Board approved a seminary on the property that repurposed the existing structures on the site and included a new 8,400 s.f. theological center. The number of seminarians was limited to 14 students, a dean and family members.</p>	<p><b>COMPATIBILITY with the COMPREHENSIVE PLAN</b></p> <p>The Comprehensive Plan is relatively silent with respect to institutional uses but states the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institutional (nonprofit or municipal) uses make up 2.4% of the total land area. The largest of this type of use is Fordham University’s Louis Calder Center, a 113-acre biological field station located in a forested preserve next to Cedar Lake. Public school facilities also account for a large portion of the Town’s community resources land area. Smaller community uses include houses of worship, fire stations, libraries and government buildings.</li> </ul>
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**STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Given the low impact of existing operations upon the community, the Planning Department does not anticipate any additional negative impacts associated with the expansion request.
- The Applicant should be directed to address all staff and consultant’s comments.

<p><u>Procedural Comments</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Proposed Action would be classified as an Unlisted Action pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA).</li> <li>2. The Planning Board will need to provide a recommendation with respect to the requested special use permit to the Town Board.</li> <li>3. Pursuant to Section 12-18.A of the Town Code, all site development plans submitted to the Planning Board are required to be referred to the Architectural Review Board (ARB) for review and comment.</li> <li>4. The application for special use permit approval requires referral to the Westchester County Planning Board pursuant to Section 239 L, M and N of the New York State General Municipal Law and Section 277.61 of the County Administrative Code.</li> <li>5. The Planning Board is required to conduct a public hearing regarding the proposed site plan.</li> </ol>	<p><u>Staff Notes</u></p> <p>The Town Board declared their intent to act as Lead Agency. The Town Board adopted a Negative Declaration on January 24, 2024.</p> <p>The Planning Board provided a positive recommendation to the Town Board on October 13, 2023. The Town Board adopted an updated special use permit on January 24, 2024.</p> <p>The Applicant should indicate the status of the ARB review.</p> <p>The Town Board referred the project to the County on September 13, 2023.</p> <p>The County Planning Board noted that the project is a matter for local determination</p>
<p><u>General Comments</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Applicant should indicate whether the Westchester County Department of Health will require improvements to the existing septic system and/or well.</li> <li>2. The Applicant should demonstrate that Building Coverage does not exceed 20% of the Lot area and that gross land coverage does not exceed 50% of the lot area.</li> <li>3. All new buildings are required to be set back from adjoining properties in residence districts, and street lines directly opposite properties in residence districts, a distance equal to at least twice the normally applicable front yard setback requirement for detached one-family dwellings in the zoning district in which they are located, but in no case less than 50 feet.</li> </ol> <p>The proposed buildings do not appear to meet the 100 foot setback requirement to each property line required in Section 355-40.H(3) of the Town Code. The plan shall be revised to depict proposed setback to the front, side and rear property lines.</p> <p>Based upon the plan, the proposed 30 foot side yard setback would require a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals.</p>	<p>It appears that a variance will be required.</p>