



TOWN OF NORTH CASTLE

Town Hall - 15 Bedford Road

Armonk, New York 10504

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Established 1736

ALISON SIMON

Town Clerk

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On a motion made by Councilman José Berra and seconded by Councilman Saleem Hussain, the following resolution was adopted:

RESOLUTION

Action:	Amended Special Use Permit Approval for a Religious or Charitable Institution
Application Name:	St Nersess Armenian Seminary
Applicant:	St. Nersess Armenian Seminary, Inc.
Owner:	St. Nersess Armenian Seminary, Inc.
Zone:	R-2A Zoning District
Location:	486 Bedford Road
Original Date of Approval:	July 11, 2012
Amended Date of Approval:	January 24, 2024
Expiration Date:	January 24, 2025 (1 year)

WHEREAS, the Town of North Castle Town Board previously approved, in 2012, a special use permit for the renovation and adaptive reuse of the existing buildings and the construction of a new 8,400 square foot, one-story theological center which includes a library and private chapel on the 5.55 acre property known as Promise Farm and located within the R-2A Zoning District; and

WHEREAS, in 2015 the Town Board amended the special use permit to permit the construction of one additional one-bedroom apartment; and

WHEREAS, activities associated with the Seminary include academic instruction and residence of seminarians, religious workshops, religious lectures, fundraising events and summer religious conferences; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, a religious or charitable institution use requires the issuance of a special use permit by the Town Board; and

WHEREAS, in connection with the proposed development, the Applicant has submitted the following plans:

- Plan labeled "A-01.00," entitled "Site Plan," dated June 19, 2023, prepared by Robert Stanziale Architect, P.C.
- Plan labeled "A-01.01," entitled "Site Plan," dated June 19, 2023, prepared by Robert Stanziale Architect, P.C.
- Plan labeled "A-01.02," entitled "Part Site Plan," dated January 12, 2024, prepared by Robert Stanziale Architect, P.C.
- Plan labeled "A-01.03," entitled "Floor Plans," dated October 12, 2024, prepared by Robert Stanziale Architect, P.C.
- Plan labeled "A-01.04," entitled "Proposed Residence Plan Elevations," dated June 19, 2023, prepared by Robert Stanziale Architect, P.C.

WHEREAS, on October 13, 2023, the Planning Board reviewed and discussed the project and positively recommended that the Town Board consider the proposed special use permit (3-0 vote); and

WHEREAS, the application for special use permit was referred 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 on September 13, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the County Planning Board noted that the project is a matter for local determination; and

WHEREAS, § 355-57 of the North Castle Code establishes certain general standards for all special permit uses; and

WHEREAS, in order for the Town Board to approve a special use permit, the Town Board must find that all of the conditions and standards have been met; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to § 355-37(A) of the Town Code, in order to grant a special permit, the Town Board must find that “the location and size of the use, the nature and intensity of the operations involved in it or conducted in connection with it, the size of the site in relation to it and the location of the site with respect to streets giving access to it are such that it will be in harmony with the appropriate and orderly development of the district in which it is located and that it complies with all special requirements for such use established in” the Town Code; and

WHEREAS, the subject property is located within the R-2A Zoning District; and

WHEREAS, within close proximity are several institutional uses also located within the R-2A Zoning District including a church, a temple, the historical society campus as well as a High School; and

WHEREAS, the proposed use would be compatible with surrounding residential uses as well as other permitted uses in the R-2A Zoning District; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board, based upon its review of the entire record, finds that the location and size of the use, the nature and intensity of the operations involved in it or conducted in connection with it, the size of the site in relation to it and the location of the site with respect to streets giving access to it are such that it will be in harmony with the appropriate and orderly development of the district in which it is located and that it complies with all requirements for such use established in the Town Code; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to § 355-37(B) of the Town Code, the second criteria for the issuance of a special permit is that “the location, nature and height of buildings, walls, fences and the nature and extent of existing or proposed plantings on the site are such that the use will not hinder or discourage the appropriate development and use of the adjacent land and buildings;” and

WHEREAS, the proposed building height complies with the requirements of the zoning code and the Planning Board will require the implementation of a landscaping plan during site plan review; and

WHEREAS, the location, nature and height of buildings, walls, fences and the nature and extent of existing or proposed plantings on the site are such that the use will not hinder or discourage the appropriate development and use of adjacent land and buildings since the proposed buildings comply with the R-2A district height and setback requirements and a previously approved extensive landscaping plan and six (6') foot tall forest green vinyl privacy fence have been constructed, and that the construction of this project will promote appropriate development and use of adjacent land and buildings; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board, based upon its review of the entire record finds that the location, nature and height of buildings, walls, fences and the nature and extent of existing or proposed

plantings on the site are such that the use will not hinder or discourage the appropriate development and use of the adjacent land and buildings; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to § 355-37(C), the third requirement for the issuance of a special permit is that “operations in connection with any special permit use will not be more objectionable to nearby properties by reason of noise, fumes, vibration or other characteristics than would be the operations of any permitted uses not requiring a special permit;” and

WHEREAS, the seminary will not generate any noise, fumes or vibrations; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board, based upon its review of the entire record finds that the operations in connection with any special permit use will not be more objectionable to nearby properties by reason of noise, fumes, vibration or other characteristics than would be the operations of any permitted uses not requiring a special permit; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to § 355-37(D) of the Town Code, the Town Board, in order to grant a special permit, must find that “parking areas will be of adequate size for the particular use, properly located and suitably screened from adjoining residential uses, and the entrance and exit drives shall be laid out so as to achieve maximum convenience and safety;” and

WHEREAS, the Town Code does not provide an off-street parking requirement for the proposed seminary use; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 355-57.B of the Town Code, the Planning Board is required to determine reasonable and appropriate off-street parking requirements for uses which do not fall within the categories listed in the Town Code based upon consideration of all factors entering into the parking needs of each such use; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Board previously discussed setting the off-street parking requirement for the seminary use as one off-street parking space for each 1,000 square feet of floor area; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Board will review the adequacy of off-street parking during site plan review; and

WHEREAS, the Applicant previously agreed to enter into a reciprocal agreement with Congregation B’Nai Yisrael to provide overflow parking at each other’s property when vehicular parking demand exceeds the number of spaces at the seminary or temple; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board, based upon its review of the entire record finds that the proposed parking areas are of adequate size for the proposed use, properly located and suitably screened from adjoining residential uses, and the entrance and exit driveways are laid out so as to achieve maximum convenience and safety; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to § 355-37(E) of the Town Code, the fourth criteria for the issuance of a special permit is compliance “where required, [with] the provisions of the Town Flood Hazard Ordinance;” and

WHEREAS, no development is proposed within the floodplain; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board, based upon its review of the entire record finds that development is not proposed within the floodplain; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to § 355-37(F), it is required that “the Town Board finds that the proposed special permit use will not have a significant adverse effect on the environment;” and

WHEREAS, the Town Board has found that the proposed action is an Unlisted Action pursuant to SEQRA; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that based upon its review of the full environmental record the Town Board finds that the proposed action will not result in any significant adverse environmental impacts and hereby adopts a Negative Declaration pursuant to the requirements of Article 8 of the New York State Environmental Quality Review Law and 6 NYCRR Part 617; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this special permit shall be deemed to authorize only the particular use of uses specified in the permit and shall expire if work is not initiated within one year from the date of issue, or if said use or uses shall cease for more than one year for any reason or if all required improvements are not completed within two years from the date of issue or if all such required improvements are not maintained and all conditions and standards complied with throughout the duration of the use; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the special permit be, and it hereby is, approved, subject to the conditions set forth below:

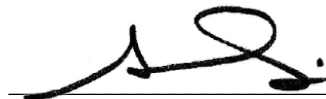
Conditions:

1. The site shall be utilized only as follows:
 - During the normal academic year (late August through late May, or approximately 300 days per year), operation of a seminary to include the academic instruction and residence of seminarians limited to a maximum resident occupancy of 18 people, plus the Dean and his immediate family as well as the retired Dean. The resident occupancy would consist of:
 - (i) residences for approximately 9 single residents in separate rooms (in the renovated and expanded main house);
 - (ii) 4 one bedroom small apartments (for married residents) in the renovated main barn;
 - (iii) 4 studios for resident and visiting faculty (in the rear of the renovated barn);
 - (iv) an on-site retired Dean's residence (in the renovated secondary house) for the retired Dean and his immediate family.
 - (v) an on-site Dean's residence for the Dean and his immediate family
 - A maximum of six summer religious conferences per year, held between late June and mid-August, limited to 10 additional residents (exclusive of the Dean and his immediate family) and a maximum daytime occupancy of 50 people. The Town Board has been informed by the Applicant that the summer conferences range from approximately 4-8 days each (with one conference lasting 10 days), are closely supervised by clergy and adult volunteers, and that the attendance varies by session for young people who are interested in bible study and learning more about their faith, and possibly pursuing a career in the clergy.
 - A variety of events such as religious lectures and four-day religious workshops, not to exceed 10 events per year, limited to a maximum daily on-site occupancy of 50 people.
 - A maximum of two fundraising events per year that exceed a maximum daily on-site occupancy of 50 people, with overflow parking provided at Congregation B'Nai Yisrael.
 - A maximum of one graduation event per year that exceeds a maximum daily on-site occupancy of 50 people, with overflow parking provided at Congregation B'Nai Yisrael.
 - One-time events, such as a groundbreaking ceremony and a dedication event for the seminary, that exceed a maximum daily on-site occupancy of 50 people, with overflow parking provided at Congregation B'Nai Yisrael.

- Any increase in the foregoing limits shall require amended special use permit approval from the Town.
2. The Applicant shall be required to receive Planning Board site plan approval. The Applicant shall address:
 - weather the Westchester County Department of Health will require improvements to the existing septic system and/or well.
 - 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.
 - whether the proposed addition and new structure comply with the Town Code. It appears that a variance will be required.
 3. Screening and landscaping shall be provided to the satisfaction of the Planning Board.
 4. All delivery vehicles and other vehicles (including staff vehicles and seminarian vehicles/vans) shall not enter or leave the site between 7:15-8:15AM on weekdays during the regular school year.
 5. The Applicant shall be required to comply with all requirements of the May 14, 2012 letter to the Town of North Castle from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation – Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau.
 6. The Applicant shall enter into a reciprocal agreement with Congregation B'Nai Yisrael to provide overflow parking at each other's property when vehicular parking demand exceeds the number of spaces at the seminary or temple to the satisfaction of the Town Attorney.
 7. Compliance with all applicable local laws and ordinances of the Town of North Castle.

COUNCILMAN DiGIACINTO	VOTING	AYE
COUNCILMAN BERRA	VOTING	AYE
COUNCILMAN HUSSAIN	VOTING	AYE
COUNCILMAN MILIM	VOTING	AYE
SUPERVISOR RENDE	VOTING	AYE

I, Alison Simon, Town Clerk of the Town of North Castle, do hereby certify that the above resolution was duly adopted at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Town Board of the Town of North Castle held on January 24, 2024 and that the above resolution is a true and correct transcript thereof.



Alison Simon, Town Clerk

Dated: January 25, 2024
Armonk, New York