

# Ulster County Planning Board



Dennis Doyle, Director

Rory Lee  
Town of Ulster Planning Board  
584 East Chester Ext.  
Kingston, N.Y. 12401

## RECOMMENDATION

REFERRAL NO: 2025-006

2025-007

DATE REVIEWED: 1/8/2025

### Re: Route 9W Multifamily Development

#### Summary

The applicant proposes to demolish existing historic structures and construct (18) eighteen new buildings to develop a multifamily community with 298 units, consisting of (2) four-story buildings with seventy-four units each, (15) two-story "townhouse style" apartment buildings with ten units each, and a 7,850 sq. ft. clubhouse. The project is at 1530 Route 9W in the Regional Commercial Zoning District.

#### Materials Submitted for Review:

- Referral Form
- Town Application
- FEA, including Exhibits A through G
- Traffic Impact Study
- SWPPP
- Site Plan Set
- Architectural Plans
- Letter of Intent
- Engineer's Report



FIGURE 3.14: ADAMS FAIRACRE FARMS/GRANT AVENUE CONNECTOR CONCEPT

#### Recommendations

#### Transportation

#### Access Management and Traffic

The design as proposed exacerbates an existing problematic intersection with already long queues at the lighted intersection by adding 87 additional trips at the AM peak, 93 at the PM, and 61 at the Saturday peak. The Board notes that the issue here is not the intersection's capacity or road network but rather the access through Adams Fairacre Farms' site. Absent a substantial redesign of this access point, it is doubtful that adequate access can be achieved without a traffic safety problem and long delays.

One alternative would be implementing the Ulster County Transportation Council's recently completed final Route 9W Mobility Plan draft. The plan includes specific ideas that address these goals for the proposed development area, as shown in Figure 3.14, which is an

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example of access management “to connect the Grant Avenue and Adams Fairacre Farms signals via a connector road that runs behind the Aqua Jet Pools and Jolly Cow properties. This proposed connector road would allow customers to utilize the existing signals, eliminating the need for left turns at mid-block locations. Likewise, the new connector road could serve as the primary access for these businesses, enabling driveways along Route 9W to be removed or restricted to right-in/right-out without limiting access. This would provide a benefit to pedestrians in the corridor and also allow for streetscape improvements. Further, the new connector road would help shape future development patterns and limit traffic impacts by allowing for a denser road network.” This may have some difficulties due to grades.

We note the lack of sidewalks on either access road and the difficulty associated with pedestrian access to the facility. This brings into question the need for school buses and transit vehicles to access the site. In the end, the redesign of the access will need to incorporate a transit/school bus stop in some fashion.

**Required Modifications**

The UCPB finds the current proposed access plan problematic at best. Alternative access routes per the Route 9W Mobility Study or changes to the existing access point that can reduce queues and turning movement conflicts are recommended to be developed. Any alternative will require coordination with adjacent property owners, whether via the connector road as shown or via a linkage of access to the proposed solar farm to the North with Tutyenbridge Road or a redesign of the existing access. Without an effective access point(s), the UCPB cannot support this project’s development. Should an alternative be developed, we recommend that the project be submitted to the Board for consideration. Approval from NYSDOT for this proposed change is required, and transit/school bus access needs to be addressed.

**Fire Safety**

Appendix D of the New York State Fire Code D106.1 requires residential projects with more than 100 dwelling units to “be equipped throughout with two separate and approved fire apparatus access roads.” Projects like this with “...more than 200 dwelling units are required to have two separate and approved fire access roads regardless of whether they are equipped with an approved automatic sprinkler system.” Furthermore, fire access road width with hydrants are required to be 26 ft wide. The plans show a 20 ft. width for both access points in the project. The proposed emergency access drive appears to connect into and become a gravel road as it approaches Route 9W of an unknown width.

**Required Modifications**

The proposal will require review by the building inspector to ensure the design meets the standards found in the New York State Fire Code. In addition to the width question, we note that the surface of fire apparatus roads per 503.2.3 “shall be designed and maintained to support the imposed loads of fire apparatus and shall be surfaced so as to provide all-weather driving capabilities.” Stormwater design should be amended accordingly to accommodate any changes.

**Visual Impacts**

A visual impact analysis has not been provided as part of the review of this development. It is unclear what visual impacts the site will have, particularly the proposed four-story buildings, from the ridge line in all directions, whether from the Catskills to the West or the Hudson River and across to the East.

**Required Modifications**

A visual impact analysis is required as a condition of approval. The use of photo simulations so that the reviewing bodies understand how the proposal will fit into the ridgeline and the hillside behind Adams Fairacre Farms is an important community character issue for the surrounding area. As noted in other reviews for proposals in this Town, this project is particularly notable given its topographical features. Visual simulations are pivotal in understanding how developments integrate into the current environment. They serve as effective communication tools, conveying intricate design ideas

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and intentions and minimizing misunderstandings. Moreover, they facilitate better stakeholder feedback, potentially leading to constructive refinements.

**Stormwater/SWPPP – Required Modifications**

A review of the SWPPP notes that the site design shown in the project's post-construction diagram does not match the latest site plan set and will require revision. The UCPB also recommends that clearing and grubbing operations be monitored daily, with the inspection results not only filed at the site but also available at the town hall and posted online for public viewing.

**Sustainability**

The Town Planning Board should incorporate responsiveness to climate change as part of each proposal. From the materials provided, it is unclear what heating and energy resources the project will utilize or what standard of efficiency/sustainability the project will be constructed. The applicant's use of LED lighting, now common practice countywide, should be considered a starting point. Electric vehicle charging stations are a further focus of the County Planning Board. Finally, moving away from fossil fuels as a heat source and increasing insulation is also recommended.

**Required Modification**

The Town and the applicant should look at how the proposal meets the NYS Stretch Energy code and actively seek to reduce the facility's carbon footprint through alternatives to fossil fuels, such as passive solar and geothermal heating use of heat pumps. Opportunities for solar or connecting to the proposed adjacent large-scale solar farm to the north should be considered. The UCPB also recommends providing the infrastructure necessary to develop electric vehicle charging stations, given the growing trend and goals of NYS and the Country to reduce automotive emissions. If not already completed, the location of EV charging stations will need to be noted on the final site plans as a condition of approval.

**Affordability**

Affordable housing units are not proposed as part of this development. The Town of Ulster now has at least 1,100 new housing units proposed. Still, it has yet to propose a single affordable housing unit or seek to update its zoning statute to meet the demand for housing at a price point affordable to renters living at income of 60% of average median income (AMI) for the County, let alone 80% of AMI. The Town of Ulster seems to believe that "filtering up" is an effective policy for creating affordable units. Still, it would require developers to accept rents well under market value (sub \$1200 for 2-bedroom units) for that to occur.

**Advisory Comment**

The UCPB strongly encourages the Town to join the Ulster County Housing Smart Communities Initiative, become certified, develop a housing action plan, and regulate affordable housing set-asides in its zoning statute to meet the needs of its community members, particularly those who work the lower-wage service jobs of the very corridor in which this project is proposed.

**Historic Impacts**

The project has been identified as being in a historically sensitive area and requiring review from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). No correspondence or letter of no impact has been submitted as part of this review package. The UCPB notes that the applicant proposes demolishing a former hotel/mansion over 100 years old and prominently placed as an aspect of this project's development.

**Required Modification**

The applicant will need to coordinate with the SHPO. Documentation of correspondence will be required for review, and a letter of "no impact" will also be necessary as a condition of approval. Any archaeological surveys completed or required must also be submitted for review.

**Advisory**

An alternative that integrates the historic structure into the project's scope is preferred as practicable.

**Habitats – Required Modifications**

The SEQR information references a habitat assessment but was not provided for review. All materials submitted as part of the SEQRA process must provide a full statement for County Review. Any correspondence regarding potential habitats with the NYS DEC that may have been conducted must be submitted for review.

Reviewing Officer



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