Re: Waveny: 65 and 73 Oenoke Ridge Road – Landscape Narrative

Dear Chairman Goodwin:

In response to comments from the Commission at the public hearing on October 29, 2019, I would like to provide some additional background on the landscape design. Questions were raised, and interest was expressed, in the landscape plans, with particular reference to:

▪ The use of native plants.
▪ Whether any of the proposed plant material is friendly to pollinators.
▪ The appearance of the proposed plantings during all seasons.

While developing the landscape plans for this project, special emphasis, and care, was placed on fully understanding the needs and uses of the proposed facilities, as well as the proximity of surrounding properties and the context of this project within the entire New Canaan community. In addition, particular attention was paid to providing a diversity of plants to achieve a balance between traditional aesthetics and environmental responsibility.

Native Plants and Pollinators- There is a direct correlation between native species and “pollinators” - the two are interdependent. The majority of pollinator insects can reproduce only on native plants with which they have an evolutionary history, and with which they rely on that specific plant’s nectar to feed their larvae in the nest. Specialized food source relationships determine the stability and complexity of the local food webs that support animal and pollinator diversity. Traditional ornamental plants can sometimes benefit as “hosts” and shelter for pollinators, but incorporating a healthy quantity of native plants is preferable because it benefits the local ecosystem by providing diverse habitats and shelter, as well as, necessary food sources for the pollinators and wildlife within that area. Native plants also benefit the local and greater environment by reducing the need for excessive water, pesticides and fertilizers as well as increasing carbon capture from the air. Please refer to the attached “Appendix A” for more explanation of some of our native/adaptive/host plants selection for this project.

4 Season Landscapes- The plant selections include a diverse mix of deciduous and evergreen plantings, much in keeping with the fabric of Oenoke Ridge and the adjacencies. Deciduous plants add seasonal interest from spring flowers to seeds to seasonal texture and fall color that also complement the evergreens which are more consistent and impactful throughout the seasons. Plant varieties were also chosen for twig color and texture along with fruits and showy berries to add vibrancy and wildlife benefits. With the goal to create a “Front Yard” landscape for the Community, both evergreen trees and shrubs are used generously along the Oenoke frontage but are purposefully not proposed as a solid screen from the street. This approach is consistent with the open and closed vistas that exist throughout the length of Oenoke Ridge Road much like a traditional landscape that complements the front porch of the residence.

We are happy to discuss further or answer any questions that the Commission may have regarding the appropriateness of the proposed landscape design.

Sincerely,

L. Wesley Stout
FASLA / AICP / LEED AP
Appendix ‘A’

Some of our native/adaptive/host plant selections for this project include:

**Trees: Food and shelter**
- Arborvitae - Food for wildlife, nesting for birds.
- Birch - Food, cover and nesting for wildlife, birds and butterflies
- Dogwood trees - Supply nectar for bees and other pollinating insects.
- Elm - Food source for moths and caterpillars
- Oaks - are superior trees for suburban restoration projects because of their many ecological and aesthetic attributes. Pollen from catkins, and of course acorns (seeds) for squirrels.

**Shrubs: Food and shelter**
- Red Twig Dogwood- Seed and shelter for birds and butterflies
- Inkberry - Food Source for birds and honeybees
- Clethras- provides nectars and seeds for birds
- Hydrangeas species- Are best with non-sterile pollinating flowers as a food source for bees and caterpillars
- Viburnum species -Nesting cover and food source for birds

**Perennials– Nectar foods.**
- Agastache- Anise Hyssop - Food for Bees, butterflies and hummingbird
- Echinacea- Coneflower -Food for Bees, butterflies and birds
- Eutrochium- ‘Joe Pye Weed’- Attracts Butterflies, dragonflies and hummingbirds
- Liatris spicata -‘Blazing Star’- Food source for butterflies, bees, hummingbirds, caterpillars

**Grasses – Larval host plant and songbird seeds**
- Panicum- Provides seed food for birds and cover for wildlife

Sources:
- Doug Tallamy – Professor and Chair of the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware “The Living Landscape”
- University of Connecticut Native Shrubs: Guide to Landscape Uses
- Ct.Gov – Department of Environmental Protection Wildlife Division -Connecticut Native Tree and Shrub Availability List