

Summary of Articles 24 and 25
Zoning Bylaw Amendment for Active Adult Residential Cluster (“AARC”)
and Concept Plan for AARC at 255 Merriam/11 Hallett Hill

Articles 24 and 25 reflect a compromise that will allow the construction of an eight-unit development for active adults age 55+ on the 2.9 acres at 255 Merriam/11 Hallett Hill, instead of the ten-unit 40B project that will be built there if these articles do not pass. These articles also help achieve two needs of the Town broadly, for more senior housing and affordable housing.

These articles result from extensive negotiations with the developer by the neighbors, Select Board, Planning Board, and other stakeholders, all of whom recognize that the eight-unit project is much better for the Silver Hill neighborhood and the Town than the ten-unit 40B project.

The new AARC provisions improve upon a prior proposal that was presented at the November 2019 town meeting. That prior proposal received almost 60% support but did not meet the 2/3 threshold required for passage. Two particular concerns with the prior proposal were cited by some: first, that the eight-unit development under that proposal did not have any affordable units, and second, that the Planning Board was not sufficiently involved or supportive. *The new proposal under Articles 24 and 25 resolves both of those concerns.*

- The eight-unit AARC proposal for 255 Merriam/11 Hallett Hill includes an affordable unit, which will count towards Weston’s subsidized housing inventory (SHI) under Chapter 40B.
- The Planning Board was involved (both directly and through its liaison and former chair, Al Aydelott) in conceiving and drafting the AARC bylaw amendment, in reviewing the Concept Plan for the AARC development at 255 Merriam/11 Hallett Hill, and in providing key provisions of the Development Agreement between the Town and developer. In turn, at its April 22 meeting, the Planning Board voted to recommend passage of Articles 24 and 25.

An AARC is restricted to single-family, owner-occupied housing for adults aged 55+ and must be within 500 feet of a railway station or platform, providing the opportunity to walk to public transit. An AARC will be a condominium and is geared toward a mature population that no longer wants to be responsible for snow plowing and clearing, yard upkeep, common areas, etc. And, at least one-eighth of the units in an AARC must be affordable and qualify for the SHI.

An AARC is also restricted to a maximum density of three units per acre and must be at least 2.5 acres but not more than 4 acres. Front and sideline setbacks are the same as the underlying zoning district, and the maximum height for AARC homes is 35 feet, two feet less than what is currently allowed under zoning.

The AARC bylaw also includes provisions for review and approval by both the Planning Board and Town Meeting. These are just two of the backstops addressing any concerns about AARCs proliferating or being imposed on the Town involuntarily.

Compared to the ten-unit 40B project that will otherwise be built there, the eight-unit AARC proposal for 255 Merriam/11 Hallett Hill will achieve lower density more suitable to this historic neighborhood, greater vegetation and buffering, and more conservative stormwater and septic engineering. The ten-unit 40B would entail compressed setbacks, greater density, clear cutting and other potential loss of trees and vegetation, and stormwater/septic engineering to the limit.

For more details, please [see the informational video](#) by Weston Media Center