

# Experts testify on supportive housing included in 300 Chestnut Ridge Road redevelopment

40-BED FACILITY CONTRIBUTES TO BOROUGH'S AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN; HEARING CONTINUES DEC. 2



300 Chestnut Ridge Road Redevelopment Plan, Block 602 Lot 1.

WOODCLIFF LAKE — A top official from **New Concepts for Living**, a leading provider of supportive housing for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, testified in favor of a planned 40-bed supportive housing component within the 300 Chestnut Ridge Road redevelopment at the Nov. 13 Land Use Board hearing.

Over nearly two hours of testimony, officials and residents raised questions about preferential placement for local residents, staffing levels, and how the supportive housing units will help the borough meet its affordable housing obligations.

The hearing is scheduled to continue Dec. 2 at 7 p.m., with traffic expert testimony expected.

## Redevelopment plan overview

The mixed-use plan for the 21-acre site—previously designated an area in need of redevelopment—was prepared by Planner Francis Reiner and approved by the Borough Council in September. The proposal includes:

- 370 total housing units, including
  - 47 townhomes
  - 297 multifamily units, with 34 affordable units
  - 26 supportive housing apartments (40 beds)
- 9,000 square feet of retail space

Applicant attorney Marc Leibman of Chiesa Shahinian & Giantomasi PC, representing RW Woodcliff Lake Urban Renewal LLC (Russo Development/Woodmont Properties), said the application requires no variances. The Land Use Board is tasked with ensuring the redevelopment plan’s consistency with the Master Plan, and may recommend changes but cannot reject the plan outright.

## Supportive housing testimony: ‘The need is huge’

Steve Setteducati, CEO of New Concepts for Living (NCFL), described the planned 26 supportive housing units as a vital addition to the region. The facility will serve adults with Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury, and similar disabilities.

“There’s a waiting list of thousands of people,” Setteducati said, noting strong demand in Bergen County. NCFL will staff the building 24/7, with most residents attending jobs or day programs during daytime hours.

## Local preference?

When asked whether Woodcliff Lake residents would receive priority placement, Setteducati said NCFL would “certainly give them preferential treatment,” while emphasizing that state and agency rules—and resident compatibility—guide placement decisions.

## Daily life and logistics

- Units include full kitchens; “each apartment will be a family,” Setteducati said.
- No school-age children will reside in supportive housing.
- Residents will be transported in white unmarked transit vans.
- Staff shifts run 3–11 p.m. and 11 p.m.–9 a.m.

Councilwoman Nicole Marsh noted from her own tours of NCFL facilities that resident matching considers dietary needs, support levels, and personal compatibility.

Founded by parents in 1981, NCFL operates supportive housing in Hillsdale, Teaneck, Park Ridge, River Vale, River Edge, Haledon, Northvale, and Mahwah.

## Breakdown of units and acreage

Leibman outlined parcel allocations:

- 26 supportive housing units → 0.839 acres
- 47 townhomes → 5.2388 acres
- 297 multifamily units → 11.346 acres
- Two retail buildings → 2.508 acres

The supportive housing beds count one-for-one toward the borough’s Fourth Round affordable housing obligation (2025–2035).

## Architecture, landscape, and resident questions

Architect Michael Lawson reviewed building materials, phasing, and floor plans. He said all building heights comply with the redevelopment plan. Residents questioned density, emergency access, soil removal, architectural scale, and traffic—topics to be addressed further on Dec. 2.

## Gateway fountain proposed

Landscape architect Tom Carman presented plans for a plaza at the Glen Road/Chestnut Ridge Road intersection, featuring:

- A fountain with “Woodcliff Lake” branding
- Shaded seating areas and trellises
- Lush plantings and an open lawn
- Preservation of certain existing trees

“The deer are going to love this,” quipped Board Chair Corrado Belgiovine, who praised the design as a “gateway” to the community.

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