



PLANNING CONSULTANTS, INC.

December 19, 2022

Michael Dupree, Chairman
Town of Hyde Park Planning Board & Members
4283 Albany Post Rd.
Hyde Park, NY 12528

RE: Bellefield Phase II
Response to County Planning Recommendations

Dear Chairman Dupree,

As you are aware, the Town of Hyde Park Planning Board received correspondence from Dutchess County Planning and Development dated December 1, 2022 in response to this Planning Boards request for a General Municipal Law (GML) 239(m) review of the above noted project.

The purpose of the referral of municipal zoning and planning actions to the County Planning Departments under GML 239-(m) is to provide a mechanism for the County to: **bring pertinent inter-community and county-wide ...considerations to the attention of neighboring municipalities...**" GML 239-l (2) provides an illustrative list of the type of issues intended by the state law. If a project does not raise significant county-wide or inter-community impacts, the County is directed to respond to the local Board that this is the case. (GML 239-m (4) (a)

The County's letter does not assert that the Site Plan raises any inter-community or county-wide impacts and it is our collective professional opinion that there are no such impacts. The County response letter, however, recommends that approval of the site plan be denied, unless the changes preferred by the County are made. This action places the Town Planning Board in the position of having to support its own view of the matter by a majority-plus-one vote .

A significant amount time has been devoted over the past months by the Project Team and the Town of Hyde Park Planning Board and it's Consultants on addressing all the design and environmental issues relating to the site plan. These considerations have resulted in project modifications to the site layout and architectural design in the past several months. In view of the extensive analysis that has taken place over this time period which has led to the project in its present form, the Bellefield team believes it would be a good practice to provide our response to each of the recommendations listed at the conclusion of the County response letter:

COUNTY RECOMMENDATION NO. 1 – Building connectors are removed in favor of standalone buildings as shown in the adopted Concept Plan

Dutchess County Planning suggested that the connectors be removed in favor of standalone buildings as shown on the adopted concept plan. The connectors perform an important function, by providing elevator, stairs and common mechanical rooms and mail rooms for each of the respective buildings. They also add continuity and an integrated design element to the streetscape. Further, it is the interpretation of the Town's Code Enforcement officer that the connector buildings are standalone buildings, which are permitted, and therefore as of right. The Applicant has ensured that there exists an East West connection through the connector buildings so that pedestrians, including visitors to the site, are able to freely travel through each building to move east and west across the property. The applicant has provided information relative to other Main Street buildings throughout Dutchess County where you have buildings that are of similar length, such as in the cities of Poughkeepsie and Beacon. This type of design is very often found on Main Street corridors. We feel that the Board and the Applicant, as a collaborative team, have gone to significant lengths to develop an optimal streetscape design which is congruent with the Concept Plan and Design Guidelines. In working with the Planning Board, the applicant has made substantial modifications in the architecture and created aesthetically positive building connectors.

COUNTY RECOMMENDATION NO. 2 - Architecture throughout the village is modified to reflect the requirements and guidelines included in the Bellefield Design Guidelines

We are confident that the project confirms with the adopted Design guidelines. These guidelines formed the basis of the Planning Board's review over the last several months. The project includes design variation, varying colors, different types of architecture, modifications to roof lines, varying window sizes, varying roof types, etc., which reflects the type of streetscape and community that the Bellefield design guidelines intended.

COUNTY RECOMMENDATION NO. 3 - Parking along the main street between buildings 700/800 and 900/1000 is re-oriented as parallel on-street parking, not angled, and the overall building-to-building width is reduced accordingly

As a collaborative team, both the Applicant' design professionals as well as the Town Planning Board and Consultants agree that parking within a project is very critical and a direct contributor to the success of a project. If a project is under parked, that situation creates a major obstacle to a site's success and growth, by discouraging visitors from coming to the site. In order for the project to provide sufficient parking, for the specific buildings and improvements shown on the project plan as well as parking for open



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space/ancillary uses (Village Green and Agricultural Educational Areas) and importantly along Main Street, angled parking is critical.

There has been a tremendous effort working on creating sidewalks that allow pedestrian free flow movement, as well as landscaping and various types of plantings along that sidewalks and pedestrian space in this area. The sidewalks will encourage outdoor seating or outdoor event areas and certainly will allow for free flow of people walking through this specific location.

Main Street is a focal area and sufficient parking is, as we have stated, certainly critical to the success of the retail businesses along that area.

We have provided the Planning Board with a rendering illustrating what this specific location would look like with the angled parking. The renderings have been selected showing the view from the ends of each of the building roadways. These renderings show that the Main Street corridor is an appropriate size to encourage community events, and fully support street fairs and community events. Angled parking is often used in successful Main Streets across the country. The applicant has supplied a lane width that will allow safe backing out of spaces. Angled spaces are also much more convenient for visitors to enter and exit.

With regards to comments relative to the site being over parked, we again acknowledge that parking certainly can be the success or the failure of a commercial facility. We intend to make it very accessible for people to visit this site and use this site. This site was heralded as being very programmatic and offering a variety of different events, which the Applicant would like to encourage.

The parking requirements in the Bellefield code and the findings do indicate that for restaurants and retail, the design requirement is to park at 5/1000 (five cars per 1000 sq. ft. of building), which is what exactly what is being proposed by the development. It is also noted that the parking standards do not take into consideration the additional parking that is required to accommodate special events of the type that will be expected at Bellefield. In addition, the project needs to adequately address accommodating restaurant uses which typically utilize 10 per 1000 parking requirements. We believe that the parking levels being provided are appropriate, and the applicant believes that even more parking would be appropriate, as it could support additional restaurants. The site is not overparked; in fact, it actually meets the requirements of the Bellefield design guidelines and bulk requirements. It is also noted that the Village Neighborhood is the commercial core and central gathering place of the entire project. This is the area of the site that would be most expected to require assurance of sufficient parking.

COUNTY RECOMMENDATION NO. 4 - The parking structure is better screened from view, either via true liner buildings, improved landscaping, or other similar technique.

The Board is fully aware of the extensive discussions that have taken place concerning design of the parking structure. The design of the parking structure incorporates innovative and beautiful materials that will be

attractive to visitors. The parking structure will be further screened by landscaping. The applicant remains willing to discuss any additional landscaping that the Town Planning Board finds necessary for such purpose, while also taking into account concerns of the fire department for safe access around and to the structure.

COUNTY RECOMMENDATION NO. 5 – Non-compliant building materials are replaced with compliant building materials

Upon review of the materials board that we provided to you, there were two items on that board that we believe may be non-compliant. The first material was proposed for the trim around the windows and on the building corners. This material was PVC. We have eliminated that material as it is a prohibited material in the design guidelines. We are now proposing to use a similar Hardi material, which is a cement fibrous product. LMV will amend the materials board with a sample of the Hardi material white color.

The second item is that in the design guidelines is aluminum siding which is a prohibited material. The project proposes using a metal panel on the building connectors. The choice of this material was mutually arrived at, after extensive discussion of the role of the connectors and their design function. This building material is innovative, of excellent quality, and will add attractive design to the streetscape. We do not believe that this material -- “metal panel” --falls in the same category as the prohibited “aluminum siding.” If this board disagrees, we can provide an alternative, which is again a cement fibrous product.

CONCLUSION:

For all of these reasons, we believe that a majority-plus-one vote to support the Town Planning Board’s design decisions is warranted.

OTHER DESIGN ISSUES MENTIONED IN THE COUNTY LETTER:

In addition to the recommendations above, we also wanted to address some of the “soft-scape” concerns referred to in the County letter.

- **BUS STOPS** – we will inquire with local bus entities to see if one or more stops can be made within the Bellefield development, or at other points along the frontage. We acknowledge that a bus stop currently exists on Route 9 at the southern end of the site, and the hotel has made provision for a trail throughout the Sub-phase I-A site plan to offer a connection to the bus stop.

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- NATURAL WALKING NETWORKS – interconnected walking paths have always been a part of the Bellefield project. The connecting points at the outer limits of the Village that link to the trail system will be shown on the plans.
- BIKE RACKS – We agree that bike racks have always been intended for the site plan, and locations and specifications will be noted on the plans.
- ELECTRIC CHARGING STATIONS – locations and specifications will be noted on the plans.

Please include this letter in the record as a formal response to the GML-239 review and kindly advise if there is anything further we can provide for this discussion.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Kelly Libolt, Agent for Applicant