MINUTES

VILLAGE OF CHESTER PLANNING BOARD

AUGUST 27, 2019

REGULAR MEETING

PRESENT: Richard RAMSDELL, Chairman

Anthony LASPINA, Member Vincent RAPPA, Co-Chairman

Gene WINTERS, Member (arrived 7:05 PM)
Robert JANKELUNAS, Member (arrived 7:30 PM)

ALSO PRESENT: Mark EDSALL, Planning Board Engineer

NOT PRESENT: John ORR, Code Enforcement Officer

Harold PRESSBERG, Planning Board Attorney

**** REGULAR MEETING ****

Chairman Ramsdell opened the Regular Meeting at 7:00 PM.

MINUTES

Review Draft June 2019 Planning Board Minutes. *MOTION made by Member Rappa, second by Member LaSpina, to ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS DRAFTED. Motion passed 3–0 (Rappa, LaSpina, Ramsdell)

CORRESPONDENCE

- Letter from Kenneth Lifshitz re: 13-08 Elmwood Park Apts read into the record by Chairman Ramsdell
- Email from Clif Patrick re: 13-08 Elmwood Park Apartments read into the record by Chairman Ramsdell
- Letter from Leslie Smith re: 13-08 Elmwood Park Apts read into the record by Chairman Ramsdell
- Orange County Department of Planning response to 13-08 Elmwood Park Apartments referral not read into the record, however will be discussed at their next appearance before the Board.

CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER REPORT

As Code Enforcement Officer John Orr was not present, no report was provided.

WORK SESSION REVIEW

- Holiday Inn re: Proposed expansion including additional rooms, parking and landscaping
- The Castle re: Proposed phasing / extension
- Lewis Donnelly re: Proposed commercial / residential project at 7 Greycourt Avenue

PROJECTS FOR REVIEW

1. Project # 19-05 Project Name: Holiday Inn Site Plan Amendment

Applicant/Owner: Joe Buglino / Ashok Bhojwani Location: 2 Bryle Place (110-2-5 / B2 Zone)

Re: Proposed hotel addition, including additional parking and landscaping revisions.

Gabrielle Lanfrit, Project Manager, Alfandre Architecture, provided an overview of the project:

- Expand the hotel to include 18 additional rooms, a total of 103 parking spaces and landscaping.
- Proposed building with expansion will be approximately 20,330 square feet.

Mark Edsall's comments were reviewed (copy attached) and general discussion held regarding:

- Square footage is a footprint of 20,330 square feet, including this project additions.
- The proposed project is a 3-story addition on each end of the existing 3-story building for a total of 18 new rooms.
- The proposed plan needs additional information required by the Code to move forward.

- Some of the items a full site plan would need to include are:
 - Boundary lines including encroachments and Orange and Rockland easement.
 - Exactly what is being proposed in the easement.
 - Approval from Orange and Rockland to allow the proposed items in the easement.
 - Additional parking might be an issue with back out and fire apparatus clearances.
 - Applicant submitted a good concept plan, but the Board would need a more accurate site plan to make determinations.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Chairman Ramsdell asked if anyone had anything else to discuss and there were no other comments.

ADJOURNMENT

*MOTION was made by Member Rappa, second by Member LaSpina, to ADJOURN THE MEETING. Motion passed 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra VanRiper

Planning Board Secretary

July 21^x, 2019 448 Glen Wild Road Glen Wild, New York 12738

Village of Chester Planning Board Richard Ramsdell, Planning Board Chairman 47 Main Street Chester, New York 10918

Dear Sir:			
<u> </u>	0.0- 111000 F	 	

I recently learned of the issue before the Planning Board to develop the site of the former Townsend house in the Village of Chester. As you no doubt are aware, Peter Townsend, who built the house, was the owner of the Sterling Iron Works during the Revolutionary War, which was the facility that produced the great chain across the Hudson. The chain produced by Sterling was not only essential to the security of the Hudson Valley during the war, but was central to the ultimate success of the Continental forces. Thirteen of its original links are preserved at West Point and a portion of the floating boom is preserved at the Washington historic site in Newburgh. During research I conducted into the history of the chain for a book and journal articles, it became evident that the Townsend house was the site where a great deal of the business surrounding the chain was conducted and in fact was not only where the contract for the chain was negotiated and signed, but that it also served as a way-stop or depot for the chain itself and other Sterling produced items sent by oxcart to the Continental forces at New Windsor. This fact was evidenced by contemporary cartage receipts and other historical accounts, (notably found in Ruttenbur). The Townsend house now is unfortunately gone. Its destruction, which occurred relatively recently, was short-sighted and a great loss not only to Chester but to the national memory. It is in your hands now to prevent a further loss. Failing to insure a proper archaeological study of the site before allowing this new construction to proceed would be to willfully compound that original short-sightedness. I urge you not to proceed with your approval for construction on the site until a proper archaeological excavation has been conducted and whatever possibly invaluable historical artifacts for our country that may remain, be uncovered, retrieved and preserved for posterity.

Yours trul

Kenneth B. Lifshitz

author, 'Donderburg's Pumpkin Vine'

cc. Clifton Patrick

Village Planning Board Secretary Sandy VanRiper

From:

Clifton Patrick <historian@thetownofchester.org>

Sent:

Tuesday, July 23, 2019 9:07 AM

To:

Richard Ramsdell

Cc:

Village Planning Board Secretary Sandy VanRiper; Mark W. Siemers

Subject:

Re: 13-08 - Elmwood Park Apartments Site Plan

Attachments:

Untitled copy.pdf

Dear Chairman Ramsdell and Village of Chester Planning Board members:

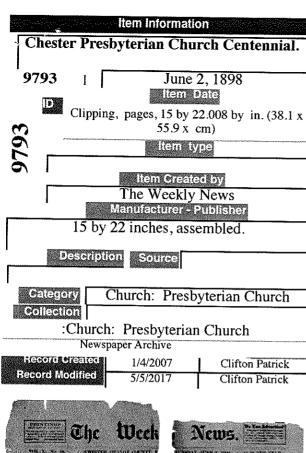
In researching another topic, I came across this "Presbyterian Church Centennial," article published in The Weekly News, Chester, Orange County, issue Vol. X., No. 48. Dated Thursday, June 2, 1898, which indicates that the portion of the Elmwood Park Apartments Site Plan set aside as Conservation Easement No. 1 and identified as "Pauper's Graveyard" may in fact be the first cemetery of the Chester Presbyterian Church. (Highlighted in attached Chester Historical Society database record #9793.)

Assuming Abijah Yelverton's gift to the Church was formally documented, a deed recording this should exist in the Orange County Clerk's office. Perhaps this and subsequent deeds and/or surveys to this property could further define, and perhaps delineate the boundaries of this burial ground.

If the project owner has a full and complete title report, that could possibly expedite the research to confirm or not the above.

Respectfully submitted, Clifton Patrick Town of Chester Historian 119 Brookside Ave. Chester, County of Orange New York 10918

direct phone/fax 845-469-7645 chester-ny.gov/town-departments/historian/





Stories of the first one hundred years of the Chester Presbyterian Church and its ministers. Clipping also includes other short unrelated articles of local interest. Chester Historical Society



The Weekly News Chester, Orange County, ~ Vol. X., No. 48. Thursday, June 2, 1898.

Presbyterian Church Centennial.

First Church Built in 1798.

The Chester Presbyterian Church has been making history under a church roof in Orange county for a hundred years. For almost it, half century previous to that she had been holding her serves from house to house and in the school house.

The timber for a church has been cut when the Revolutionary war broke out the logs were left to rot where they had fallen while the men went to build the greatest Republic of all times. The war of Independence ended and the people again settled to their daily task, began to talk of building a church. Abijah Yelverton contributed a large lot opposite the store of J. Durland & Son. In 1797 a little log church was erected a little to the rear of Dr. Carpenter's present spacious residence, a part of the lot was also used as a cemetery, some of the old stones erected still remaining to show the last resting place of some of the saints of those early days. The church was easily distinguished by the passing stranger as a place of worship. In 1798 the church has opened for worship.

For thirty years several ministers Revs. S. R. Jones, (1798-1805) Daniel Crane, (1805-1808) Noah Coe, 1811-1814) James H. Thomas, (1814-1837), preached in the little log church and the Lord blessed their labors. There was a little uncertainty as to the character of the denomination at first. The trend seemed to be toward Presbyterianism from the first and slowly as the congregation became stronger and more able to direct its affairs it swung into line with the General Assembly Presbyterian church in 1818.

About 1825 the little church began to fell its limitations and crude surroundings. The people also felt that the drift of the population was toward East Chester and that it would be a great advantage to have the church located in that vicinity. A lot was secured where the Chester cemetery is now located and in 1829 a church erected a little more in keeping with the thrift and progress of the people.

During the next ten years great numbers were added to the church and the building was found too small. Mr. Geo. F. Banker, who is still living in Chester, and was then the popular builder, was secured to build an addition on the rear and put in a number of additional pews.

Still the building proved to be unadapted to the circumstances and growth of the people. The Erie Railroad having come within a half mile of East Chester started the settlement of the people in an other direction.

The Methodist church having erected a neat structure in this new part of the village it stirred up the Presbyterians to talk of a better church and a new location. Rev. Dr. James Wood was the pastor at the time and showed great wisdom in both the location and place of the new church. The present edifice erected in 1853 and dedicated Jan. 4th 1854, to which thirty years later a handsome chapel was added under the pastorate of Rev. T. C. Beattie.

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Dear Chairman Ramsdell and Planning Board Members,

The Village of Chester has been in the process of creating its first Comprehensive Plan for just over two years. The Village Board created a Comprehensive Plan Committee on June 12th 2017 to create the plan and has since held regular meetings. The Committee's outreach group has held a series of workshops which have included input from speakers such as:

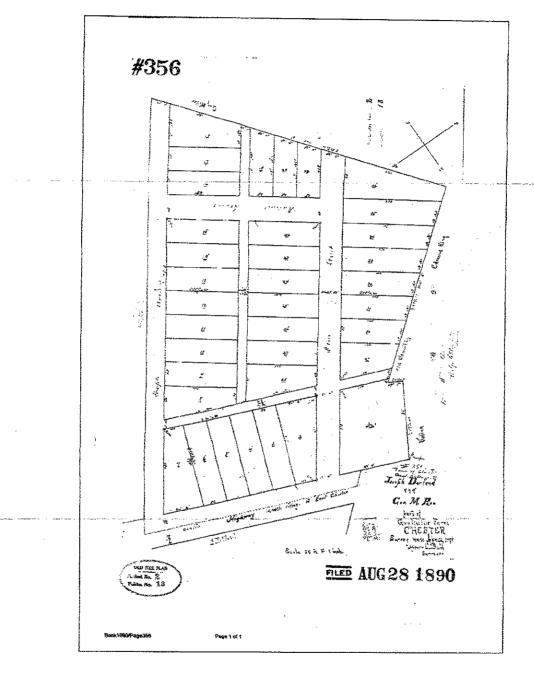
- David Church, Executive Director and Megan Tennermann, Planner from Orange County Department of Planning
- Eric Fuentes of Orange and Rockland
- Nancy Proyect, President of Orange County Citizens Foundation
- 🔀 Bill Fioravanti, Director of Orange County Economic Development
- 🔀 Daniel Coots, Transportation Analyst for NYS DOT
- Matt Decker, Director of Conservation and Stewardship Orange County Land Trust
- 🔀 Lynn Cione, President, Orange County Chamber of Commerce
- Frank Sambets, Chester School Board President, and School Board Vice President, Sandy Nagler among others.

All of the Comprehensive Plan meetings and workshops have been open to everyone (including developers) and have been publicized with flyers, in the newspapers and using social media.

As chairperson of the 10 person Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee on Historic Preservation, Community Character, Aesthetics and Design Guidelines I am advocating for the creation of three, and possibly four, Historic overlay districts in the village. A large map demonstrating the three proposed districts created by Megan Tennermann of the Orange County Planning Department and myself was presented at our first Comprehensive Plan Meeting on July 17th, 2017, along with lists of the parcels to be included. (see map)

In July of 2018, the Village engaged a professional planner, Alan Sorensen AICP, to work with us. Our draft plan contains a vision statement which includes a statement regarding the importance of preserving the integrity of our residential neighborhoods. (p. 15)

Our neighborhoods represent the historical documentation of the incremental settlement patterns of our community.



Please look at the (attached) copy of the original Joseph Durland, George M. Roe subdivision map filed August 28th 1890. You can easily see this map is a

layout of small lots for single family homes. Below are the addresses and ages of the existing homes in the Elm Street neighborhood shown on that map:

3 Elm 1900

5 Elm 1920

6 Elm 1900

8 Elm 1912

9 Elm 1947

10 Elm 1919

11 Elm 2018 (replaced home destroyed by fire)

12 Elm 1912

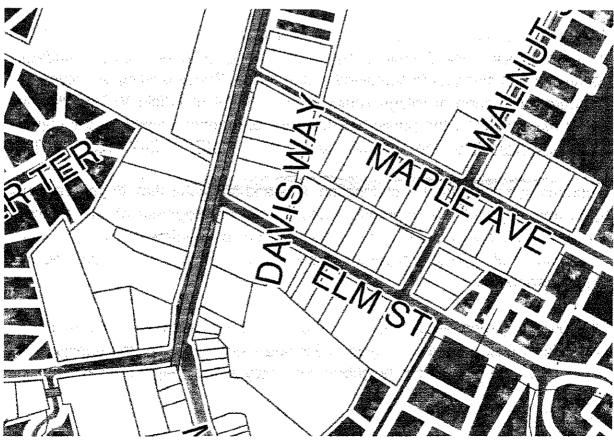
13 Elm 1900

16 Elm 1864

109 Main St. 1890

111 Main St. 1894

All of the properties listed above are also included on the map of the proposed historic overlay districts. The location of the proposed Elmwood Park Senior Apartments Project is also in the proposed "Uptown" historic overlay district.



Each of our subcommittee's proposed Historic Districts attempts to preserve the integrity of its area or neighborhood as a cohesive whole, rather than "spotlighting" a specific property throughout an historic area. However, in the case of the "Uptown Overlay" the district contains the only two sites in the village listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It is also the oldest area of our village.

The Elm Street block is a relatively intact residential neighborhood of single family homes which largely respects the development pattern and design period of the modest 100+ year old residential properties. The existing setting of the homes with their similar scale, height, mass, building material, rhythm and setbacks along with the adjacent section of Maple Avenue represents an example of the village's incremental development over time resulting in a distinct area of the village.

While technically true, the developer's answers to questions C. 2 a. and 2 b.on their Full Environmental Assessment form page 2., Part 1: Planning and Zoning totally ignores the process and direction of goals included in our draft comprehensive plan in process, in which public input demonstrated that historic preservation is one of the top priorities of the residents of Chester.

Also of note, according to Article V of our zoning, the power of the Planning Board to grant Special Use Permit is subject to the guiding principles, standards, conditions and safeguards contained in that article. Those guiding principles and standards are found at village zoning section 98-24 of Article V. The Planning Board must consider the public health, safety and general welfare, the comfort and convenience of the general public but THE RESIDENTS OF THE IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORHOOD IN PARTICULAR. And, at letter D. "The proposed use shall be of such location, size and character that, in general it will be in harmony with the appropriate and orderly development of the district in which it is proposed to be situated and will not be detrimental to the orderly development of adjacent properties in accordance with the zoning classification of such properties."

This project, proposes an inappropriate use of the residential 8 Elm St. lot (111-2-3). If built according to plan, it will ride roughshod over the quality of life residents in the Elm Street neighborhood enjoy today, neighborhood cohesion

will be destroyed and more intense development of adjacent properties can be expected in the future.

It is unconscionable to allow a developer to plop a new and intense use into the midst of a well established (100+ year old) quiet neighborhood, some of whose residents have lived in their homes for decades. If built as designed, this project will certainly **not promote** the health, safety, comfort, general welfare and conservation of property values which is the stated purpose of our zoning, for the residents of Elm St.

Intact traditional neighborhoods such as Elm Street are a resource which preserve the historical evolution of the village. Traditional neighborhoods of older homes foster friendly, walkable areas with a sense of cultural identity and history and thus the "feel" of their era maintains a sense of permanence and heritage.

To destroy the 1912 home at 8 Elm Street and replace it with pavement (as proposed, that will cover most of the residential lot) and traffic, will impose a negative impact on the adjoining land uses and the entire neighborhood.

Demolition is forever. The destruction of 8 Elm Street will diminish our heritage and remove another piece of Village Character.

Sincerely,

Leslie Smith

Comprehensive Plan Committee Member

Lesui L. Smiles

Chairperson, Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee on Historic

Preservation, Community Character, Aesthetics and Design Guidelines



Orange County Department of Planning

124 Main Street Goshen, NY 10924-2124 Tel: (845) 615-3840. Fax: (845) 291-2533

David E. Church; Alce Commissioner

www.orangecountygov.com/planning planning@orangecountygov.com

County Reply – Mandatory Review of Local Planning Action as per NYS General Municipal Law §239-1, m, &n

Local Referring Board: Village of Chester Planning Board

Applicant: John Sorrentino

Project Name: Elmwood Park Apartments Site Plan

Referral ID #: CHV 03-19M Tax Map #: 111-2-3 and 7.1

Local File #: PB-13-08

Proposed Action: Site Plan and Special Use Permit for new construction of 20 age-restricted apartment units in two two-story buildings, one with eight units evenly split between one- and two-bedroom apartments, and one with twelve units evenly split between one- and two-bedroom apartments, and appurtenant development

Reason for County Review: Within 500 feet of NYS Route 94

Date of Full Statement: July 8, 2019

Comments:

The Department has received the above referenced site plan and has found no evidence that significant intermunicipal or countywide impacts would result from its approval. We would like to offer the following advisory comments:

<u>Pedestrian Safety</u>: The proposed site plan shows no crosswalks through the parking lot or across the entry road, and while sidewalks do exist on the project site and connect to Main Street, there are no curb cuts shown and the sidewalks do not continue along the northeastern edges of the parking lot or along the access road out to Elm Street, nor is there easy access for residents of the larger building to the community space attached to the smaller building. We advise the Village to require such measures to be included in the site plan prior to approval. We further advise the Village to ensure that the proposed site plan complies with the terms of the Americans with Disabilities Act to the greatest extent feasible, as the development is proposed to be age-restricted to seniors and physical challenges occur more frequently in senior populations.

<u>Conservation Easements</u>: The applicant has proposed two very small conservation easements on the property. This Department fully supports conservation of key elements of the site. As proposed filing of a note on the final map and a deed restriction with the County Clerk is acknowledged and can be an important short term action, but these tools have proven to be ineffective means of genuine land protection. They are also incomplete steps in establishing a conservation easement.

As per NYS Environmental Conservation Law 49-0303 and 0305 "conservation easement" requirements are defined and require a set of steps including "...shall be held only by a public body or not-for-profit conservation organization" - such organizations are also defined in statute. As such, without conveyance of the restricted property rights to a public body or conservation organization, the action proposed by the applicant is NOT a conservation easement. The site areas worthy of protection can certainly be restricted through a note on the final map, and/or the filing of restriction in the deed; however, in this context conservation easements are either not the proper land protection tool or are the wrong tool to protect the property due to the small size of the protected area and the challenges of longer term monitoring and enforcement through simple map notes or deed restriction.

We also caution that such conservation areas should not be allowed to become distinct lots – given past experiences that such lots are too often ignored or orphaned – resulting in property neglect or even tax foreclosure.

Shovel Testing: The applicant has stated that the area in proposed Conservation Easement No. 1 is the potential site of a large/mass grave, and shows five other potential burial sites on the project site, which are not proposed to have similar protection. The applicant has noted that they will do shovel testing of all the potential burial sites; we advise the Village that the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation should be consulted regarding this shovel testing and if they deem it necessary, an archeologist or other representative of their office should be present for the test.

Housing Affordability: There is no indication that the proposed apartments or any portion thereof will be reserved for people with restricted incomes. We advise the Village that a minimum of ten percent of the proposed apartment units, in this case two units, should be made affordable. Affordable typically means that a person earning 80% of the Area Median Income can afford to live in this housing unit without paying more than 30% of their gross income toward rent and utilities. The median household income for the Village of Chester, as of 2017, is \$68,500; 80% of that is \$54,800. A person earning this level of income can, in theory, afford to pay \$1,370 monthly to cover rent and utilities, together with other fees associated with residency such as maintenance or user fees for amenities. At least two units should, therefore, be limited so that the utilities and rent combined are below this level.

Stormwater Management: The land is currently forested, and in order to construct this project, most of the trees onsite will have to be removed. The Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan prepared for this project shows that all three stormwater basins onsite will have less runoff during and after storm events than is currently occurring. This is possible with well-designed stormwater facilities, as the proposed onsite facilities appear to be. We do advise the Village that with recent increases in rainfall volume and intensity, stormwater management facilities should be over-designed rather than under-designed. This is likely to be enough for weather in the area at this time, but the Village may wish to ensure that the catch basins proposed to handle the stormwater runoff from the site are sufficiently sized.

<u>Lighting and Landscaping</u>: We advise the Village that based on the applicant's lighting plan, there will be light visible offsite on the northeast side, adjacent to the residences on Elm Street. We advise the Village to require planting of larger evergreens along the northeast property line as a means of screening the light from the apartments. We further advise the Village that the proposed arborvitae are most likely going to be eaten by the deer in the area, and suggest that an alternate plant should be used instead or that a note is made on the final site plan requiring the landscaping to be maintained in good condition.

County Recommendation: Local Determination

Date: July 8, 2019

Prepared by: Megan Tennermann, AICP, Planner

David Church, AICP Commissioner of Planning

As per NYS General Municipal Law 239-m & n, within 30 days of municipal final action on the above referred project, the referring board must file a report of the final action taken with the County Planning Department. For such filing, please use the final action report form attached to this review or available online at www.orangecountygov.com/planning.



MARK J. EDSALL, P.E., P.P. (NY, NJ & PA)
MICHAEL W. WEEKS, P.E. (NY, NJ & PA)
MICHAEL J. LAMOREAUX, P.E. (NY, NJ, PA, VT & VA)
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Principal Emeritus: RICHARD D. McGOEY, P.E. (NY & PA) WILLIAM J. HAUSER, P.E. (NY, NJ & PA)

VILLAGE OF CHESTER PLANNING BOARD REVIEW COMMENTS

PROJECT NAME:

HOLIDAY INN SITE PLAN AMENDMENT

(HOTEL EXPANSION)

PROJECT LOCATION:

2 BRYLE PLACE

SECTION 110 - BLOCK 2 - LOT 5*

PROJECT NUMBER:

19-05

* application incorrectly notes lot 3.2

DATE:

27 AUGUST 2019

CONSULTANT:

ALFANDRE ARCHITECTURE

PLAN DATE:

08/15/2019

DESCRIPTION:

THE APPPLICATION PROPOSES A 3-STORY BUILDING ADDITION ON

EACH END OF THE EXISTING HOTEL BUILDING. THE PLAN WAS

REVIEWED ON A CONCEPT BASIS ONLY.

- 1. The property is located in the B-2 Zoning District of the Village. The use is Permitted Use #3. The plan proposes an increase in the number of hotel rooms from 80 to 98, with a building area (footprint) increase from 17,330 sf to 20,330 sf.
- 2. The submitted plan appears to be a concept plan, rather than a complete/final site plan. The plan is only a partial depiction of the property, and is missing information required. We have reviewed the plan in concept only.
- 3. We have reviewed the plans submitted. We have the following comments:
 - Plan should have boundary survey information based on plan from licensed surveyor. (it is appropriate
 that a current "as-built" site survey be submitted to document the exact location of all site improvements
 relative to the site boundary. This is especially important given the "tight fit" for the proposed parking
 spaces on the plan. A copy of the actual survey should be submitted to the Village for record.
 - The property is encumbered by a significant O&R Utilities easement which is not clearly defined on the plan. Further, construction adjacent to or within the easement requires utility company approval.

- Plan should include a bulk table with required and provided data (also indicate setbacks on plan).
- Add Location Plan
- Add north arrow for reference
- Add area plan or information depicting adjacent lots and structures.
- The plan should clearly indicate that the "footprint" increase is to 20,330 sf, and provide the total additional floor area for all stories of the building.
- Parking Calculation (defining compliance with Village Code, see next bullet).
- The primary zoning code compliance issue is the required parking for the site. It is noted that the required parking for Hotels and Motels is 1 per guest room plus 1 for 2 employees. Based on a review of the plan, it appears that the site plan proposes the absolute minimum spaces; however, we are concerned that the proposed spaces don't "work" as depicted (see next numbered comment).
- The plan should verify that the additions do not conflict with any utilities or other site improvements. No utilities or such improvements are currently shown on the plan.
- A detail for the dumpster enclosure should be provided on the plan. Please note the standard of a masonry type dumpster enclosure, with exterior finish (or coating) to match the proposed building. These are generally required for a more aesthetic installation, which is more durable for long-term life. (also note comment about structures in utility easement).
- As part of this site plan amendment, the detail for the handicapped parking should be updated to reflect current code standards. Please add detail to the plans.
- Please add the Village PB project number (Chester PB 19-05) to the plan approval box.
- As per Section 98-30.2 of the Village Zoning Code, the Applicant should indicate a reasonable anticipated completion date for the project on the plan.
- 4. The plan as submitted depicts 12 additional parking spaces. We have significant concerns regarding the viability of the depicted spaces, specifically as follows:
 - The three spaces at northwest corner (bottom left on plan) have insufficient backout dimension to the nearby parking space (depicted as 1).
 - The two spaces at the west (bottom of plan) extend into the curbline and potentially conflict with the emergency vehicle movements driving thru the rear of the property.
 - The space at the southeast corner of the building truncates the curb island. The island needs to be modified or removed.
 - The space at the northeast corner eliminates the dumpster location. If O&R does not accept the relocation as depicted, the plan layout for the existing dumpster must remain and one or both of the spaces at the northeast may be eliminated.

- 5. The Planning Board should discuss, with the Attorney for the Planning Board, the appropriate steps to initiate SEQRA review of the application.
- 6. This project is within a 500-foot distance and is adjacent to State Highways. As such, it must be referred to the Orange County Planning Department as per New York State General Municipal Law (GML 239).
- 7. We will continue our plan review as more complete plans are received.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark J. Edsall, P.E., P.P. Engineer for the Village

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