

MARCUS J. MOLINARO  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE



EOIN WRAPPER, AICP  
COMMISSIONER

**COUNTY OF DUTCHESS**  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

NOV 08 2017

November 1, 2017

**To: Town of Poughkeepsie Planning Board**  
**Re: Referral SQ17-350, MacDonnell Heights Town Center project, DEIS**  
Parcels: 6262-04-723342, 761394, 754298, 749282, 758301, 864243, 892195; US 44

Our Department is in receipt of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed MacDonnell Heights Town Center project, which was prepared for the Planning Board in its capacity as lead agency. The proposed project consists of commercial and residential development in five phases on 60.87 acres at the former Frank Brothers Farm. The residential component includes 32 townhomes and 358 apartments, 54 of which are over commercial space. The commercial component includes 36,500 square feet of office space, 42,000 square feet of service retail space, and 15,000 square feet of restaurant space. The project reserves 21 acres of recreation and open space for residents and the public.

**We have reviewed the submitted DEIS and submit the following comments for your consideration:**

The MacDonnell Heights Center has been identified in the Poughkeepsie Town Plan as a priority location for growth appropriate for mixed residential and commercial development. To that end, we are pleased to see that the applicant is proposing a mixed-use, village-scale center surrounded by compact residential development. This will provide people with the opportunity to "park once and walk around" within a compact downtown and surrounding neighborhood, and will broaden the available housing options within the town.

**Site Access, Circulation and Traffic:** We suggest the Town question the need for the westernmost, right-in/right-out curb cut on the east side of Route 44, adjacent to commercial building L. The site has a main access point to the east and Victory Lane already provides a signalized access point to Route 44, and is proposed to connect to the rear of the project site. In addition, the additional egress could create an unnecessary point of conflict along the state road. Internal to the site, we are concerned that it could result in a safety issue with some drivers attempting to quickly cut through that portion of the site, which is not primarily designed for through-traffic.

At the main, signalized intersection to the project, the boulevard medians appear to be too close to Route 44 and could create vehicular conflicts. Also, the median U-turn lanes could cause a traffic hazard between vehicles attempting a U-turn, and vehicles entering the site because of their proximity to the intersection. We suggest discussing the possibility of moving them further away from the intersection.

Various elements of the site circulation as shown on the plan are somewhat awkward. For example, on both the east and west sides of Route 44, the boulevard design creates awkward intersections with the blocks further in, requiring traffic heading straight to dodge a funny angle before proceeding down the second block. This odd traffic pattern could cause confusion and result in a safety hazard. Another issue, on the west side of Route 44, is the right-angle parking shown along the entire length of the first parallel road that connects from the main entrance boulevard north to Concord Village Drive (and runs along the rear of the bank and daycare pads). It appears to be a main internal connector road, but reads more as an aisle in a parking lot. A shift to parallel parking along this

Referral SQ17-350, MacDonnell Heights Town Center DEIS, pg., 2

roadway could improve both the efficiency and safety of the route. Overall, the Board should work with the applicant to ensure that the traffic circulation patterns provide safe and adequate access and maneuverability throughout the site.

The DEIS indicates the Route 44/CR 43 DeGarmo Rd intersection will have a degraded level of service as a result of this project, with no mitigation measures immediately apparent. We encourage the Town to continue to work with the applicant, NYSDOT and Dutchess County Department of Public Works to identify potential solutions.

**Parking:** The site appears to be over-parked, and the parking table provided on sheet OP-1 does not appear to reflect the parking requirements outlined in the zoning regulations. Section 210-92 (O)(1) of the code states, "Minimum off-street parking requirements are as follows (the most restrictive requirements shall apply)" and lists the following for all center and hamlet districts, which would include the MacDonnell Heights Center District:

- 4 spaces for each 2,000 square feet of building area for a nonresidential use;
- 1.5 spaces for each residential unit.

Given these requirements, it appears that the minimum number of required spaces for the site is approximately 770, versus the over 1,100 spaces provided. We encourage the applicant to reduce the number of spaces to the minimum necessary. This would reduce the amount of asphalt on site and allow for more pockets of greenspace for residents' enjoyment. If concerns remain about long-term parking issues, areas could be designated on the site plan and land-banked for future parking use.

It is also worth noting that section 210-27(i)(3) encourages shared parking facilities within the MacDonnell Heights Center District.

**Site Plan:** Although our office will provide formal site plan comments under future GML-239 referral review, we note that the proposed boulevard configuration along the main entrance road may unintentionally serve to reduce the interplay between businesses on both sides of the street. The applicant may want to consider removing the boulevard median in favor of wider sidewalks and a more activated pedestrian realm along the first block (on both sides of Route 44).

**Miscellaneous:** The building labels on the site plan should be clarified. Buildings A, E, I, and L are labeled as commercial only, but the phasing plan indicates that these buildings include ground floor commercial with residential above.

Sincerely,  
Eoin Wrafter, AICP, Commissioner

By  
  
Janet Tissiere, Junior Planner

C: Stephen E. Gill, Dutchess County Department of Public Works - Engineering Division (via email)

**Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development**

FACTSHEET ONLY	To: <u>Carole Barone</u>	Date: <u>11/1/17</u>	# pgs: <u>3</u>
	Co./Dept: <u>Planning Board</u>	From: <u>John Tiscione</u>	
	Fax #: <u>486-7888</u>	Phone #: <u>486-3600</u>	

**SEQRA Circulation Form**

Please Fill Out This Entire Portion of the Form

Municipality: Town of Poughkeepsie

Referring Agency: Planning Board 749252

Tax Parcel Number(s): 6262-04-723342, 761394, 754299, 758301, 864243, 89210

Project Name: MacDonnell Heights Town Center DEIS

Applicant: Meadow View Properties LLC

Address of Property: US 44

2017 OCT 10 2:10 PM  
DUTCHESS COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

**Type of Action:**

Lead Agency

Scoping

DEIS Review

FEIS Review

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Location:** Please indicate if this project is located within 500 feet of (check all that apply):

State Road US 44

County Road \_\_\_\_\_

State Property

County Property

Municipal Boundary

Agricultural District

Date Response Requested (if less than 30 days):

If subject of a previous SEQRA Circulation or Zoning Referral, please note County SQ/Referral number(s): SO16-294, SO16-374

ZR11-429, ZR14-127, -128, GN16-147, ZR06-197

FOR COUNTY OFFICE USE ONLY

**Response from Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development**

*Disclaimer: Any response regarding SEQRA Issues does not constitute a Zoning Referral response from the County. Projects must be resubmitted, as per General Municipal Law sections 239-f and 239-m, under separate cover to the County for the Zoning Referral process.*

<p><b>No Comments:</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Project Withdrawn</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> County Takes No Position on Lead Agency</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No Comment</p>	<p><b>Comments Attached:</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Comments</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Incomplete</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Incomplete with Comments</p>
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Date of Submittal: <u>10/4/17</u>	Notes: <u>10/4 Submitted incl. data CD only. 10/17 - Paper copies received, JT</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Major Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Archive
Date Submittal Received: <u>10/5/17</u>		<input type="checkbox"/> Discard after 2 yrs	<input type="checkbox"/> Discard after 7 yrs
Date Report Requested: <u>10/19/17</u>		SQ# <u>17-350</u>	
Date Report Required: <u>11/01/17</u>		Reviewer: <u>John Tiscione</u>	
Date of Transmittal faxed: <u>11/1/2017</u> mailed: <u>JT</u>			

Print Form      Reset Form