

Dutchess County Department of Planning and Development

FAX INFO ONLY	To: Salvatore	Date: 12-2	# pgs: 4
	Co./Dept: Town Board	From: B. Yelwe	
	Fax #: 485-8583	Phone #: 486-3600	

SEQRA Circulation Form

Please Fill Out This Entire Portion of the Form

Municipality: Town Board

Referring Agency: Town Board

Tax Parcel Number(s): 6163-03-01149

Project Name: Hudson Heritage

Applicant: DRA

Address of Property: US9

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 US9

County Road _____

State Property (with public building or recreation area)

County Property (with public building or recreation area)

Municipal Boundary

Farm operation in an Agricultural District

Date Response Requested (if less than 30 days): Dec 7th

If subject of a previous SEQRA Circulation or Zoning Referral, please note County SQ/Referral number(s): SQ15-293
SQ08-393, -503, -604, -621, -631, SQ09-025, SQ15-239

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 also be submitted, as per General Municipal Law sections 239-l and 239-m, under separate cover to the County for the Zoning Referral process.

<p>No Comments:</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 Project Withdrawn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>Comments Attached:</p> <p><input 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 Submitted: <u>11/04/2016</u>	Notes:	<input type="checkbox"/> Major Project
Date Received: <u>11/04/2016</u>		
Date Requested: <u>12/07/2016</u>	SQ#: <u>16-435</u>	
Date Required: _____		
Date Response Faxed: <u>12-21-2016</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Also mailed hard copy	Reviewer: <u>[Signature]</u>

Print Form

Reset Form

MARCUS J. MOLINARO
COUNTY EXECUTIVE



EWIN WRAFTER, AICP
COMMISSIONER

COUNTY OF DUTCHESS
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

December 21, 2016

To: Town of Poughkeepsie Town Board
Re: 16-435, Hudson Heritage Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Parcel: 6163-03-011149, US 9

Our Department is in receipt of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed Hudson Heritage project, which was prepared for the Town Board in its capacity as lead agency. The "Preferred Alternative" (e.g., the proposed project) consists of commercial and residential development in two phases upon 156 acres at the former Hudson Psychiatric Center (HRPC) site. The Project's first phase is planned for the site's southern portion and would include 350,000 sf of commercial space consisting of an approximately 165,000 sf retail building and several smaller retail buildings. The second phase on the site's northern portion would include 750 residential units (500 apartments, 225 townhouses & 25 single family units). The second phase could potentially include adaptive re-use of historical structures, including the 80,000 sf main wing of the Administrative Building. The 18-acre Great Lawn is to be rehabilitated as well.

For purposes of the DEIS, the proposed action consists of 1) proposed amendments to the Town's Zoning Law, 2) approval by the Town Board of the Development Master Plan, 3) approval by the Planning Board of the site plan and subdivision for the Project, and 4) potential area variances from the ZBA.

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

From a County perspective, safe and reliable transportation is of special concern. Long delays and congestion affect safety hamper the economy (the movement of goods and services) and pose quality of life issues for residents and visitors. Therefore, options that minimize traffic congestion and delay are preferred.

Project Alternatives

As part of the scoping for this document, we suggested an alternative be studied that included the construction of a Route 9-9G connector road, as well as building scenarios that employed true mixed-use tenancies (residential and commercial uses in the same building). There was no alternative that incorporated these two scenarios together, rather these suggestions were studied across various alternatives. Given existing traffic conditions and the magnitude of proposed development, we believe the Route 9-9G connector road is worthy of further study and consideration as a way to ensure that area transportation resources are not negatively impacted now, or in the future.

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We note that the Route 9 Land Use & Transportation Study was undertaken in direct response to complaints about unacceptable levels of traffic congestion on US Route 9 in the Fairview corridor. The Study developed a shared strategy for specific land use and transportation improvements, taking into account the development plans and traffic demands of major stakeholders and nearby projects (specific recommendations can be found throughout the document and in Appendix B). In addition, the Town Plan envisioned the creation of the Route 9-9G connector road through the HRPC property as well as a new north-south street along the abandoned CSX right-of-way with crossings at Cedar and Fulton Streets. The Preferred Alternative does not conform with key goals established in the above plans and may overload the limited transportation network in the Fairview area. Route 9 is already heavily congested in this area and the DEIS states that at full build-out the Preferred Alternative would add an additional 1,718 new trips during the Saturday peak hour. Access to/from the site would be solely from Route 9 with nearly all traffic generated by Phase 1 commercial development passing through the Winslow Gate Road intersection. Critically, the Preferred Alternative contains neither a Route 9-9G connector road, nor meaningful connections between the Mid-Hudson Plaza and the project area (we note that alternatives 2, 3 and 4 separately contain important elements that would reduce projected transportation impacts).

Rather than the "Preferred Alternative" we suggest that Alternative 3 would provide the best mitigation to address the increased congestion resulting from the proposed development. Alternative 3 includes the construction of the Route 9-9G connector road. The DEIS states that the road, "would not be desirable in the future, developed site due to increased safety hazards and the resulting bifurcation of the two Town Centers, reducing any potential pedestrian-oriented mobility and general connections." We suggest that this statement be supported or clarified since the described result does not seem to be inevitable. The indirect and low-capacity roads forwarded as a cross site connecting route in the Preferred Alternative do not support the goal established by the Town, NYSDOT and other stakeholders. At the minimum, the reservation for a future road connection should be provided in the form of an easement.

In addition, we would recommend consideration of a range of site plan options that could mitigate the project's significant potential traffic impacts:

- Internal connector road between Hudson Heritage and Mid-Hudson Plaza to reduce turning movements on/off of Route 9.
- Provision of multi-modal options including pedestrians, bicycles, and public transit. Bus access into and along the site should be coordinated with Dutchess County Public Transit and complete sidewalk coverage should be ensured;
- The applicant should coordinate with Dutchess County regarding alignment/intersection changes to Hudson View Drive relative to access/egress into Quiet Cove Park.

Community Character

The DEIS states that true mixed use development of the project's southern portion is not economically feasible, but there is no information to support this assertion. Again, the Town Plan and the Route 9 Land Use and Transportation Study recommended that the HRPC be developed in a way that minimizes

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new, high-vehicle trip generators such as gas-stations and drive-through businesses, encourages mixed-uses in order to reduce vehicle trips and limits the square footage of commercial buildings to keep the area "neighborhood scale". The Preferred Alternative, on the other hand, would change zoning regulations from an emphasis on concentrated mixed-uses towards separate commercial and residential areas and from sidewalk connections to adjacent neighborhoods to connections only within the HRDD. Gas stations and drive through retail would be allowed. The DEIS also cites that mandated parking requirements are a constraint to development of a mixed-use neighborhood in the project's southern portion. The Preferred Alternative provides an overabundance of parking for proposed uses – 5.22 spaces per 1,000 sf for commercial uses and 2.3 spaces per dwelling unit, imposing unwanted visual, community character, and water management impacts. The proposed HRDD rezoning action provides the Town an opportunity to establish reduced flexible parking standards for complementary uses in the district.

Further, with regard to phasing and project completion, all Alternatives, show the construction of the project's Phase 1 commercial component to be completed within two years, and the Phase 2 residential component could be completed as late as 2025. As the development proposal appears to not require completion of all of Phase 1 or any of Phase 2, it is possible, therefore, that only a large box retail store and a few retail pads, with associated parking may be constructed. As there appears to be no mechanism to ensure construction of residential units, rehabilitation of the Great Lawn or salvageable historical buildings, we are concerned that if only the lower commercial portion of the site were to be constructed, it would be contrary to goals for this site and would add significant traffic impacts without fully realizing the tax, employment or remediation/rehabilitation benefits forwarded in the DEIS.

To mitigate the potential negative effects on community character as stated above, we recommend that the Town establish project benchmarks that will incentivize full and timely build-out of the project. For example, permission to construct 100,000 sf of commercial space would then require the completion of 100 residential units.

As always, if we can provide clarification to any of our comments, please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to the continued review of this important project.

Eoin Wrafter, AICP
Commissioner

By



Brian Kehoe
Planner

c: Greg Bentley, New York State Department of Transportation – Region 8