

# VENEZIANO & ASSOCIATES

COUNSELLORS-AT-LAW

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December 8, 2016

Adam Kaufman, Town Planner  
North Castle Planning Department  
Town Hall Annex  
17 Bedford Road  
Armonk, NY 10504

**Re: The Vue**  
**1700 Old Orchard Street, North Castle, NY**

Dear Mr. Kaufman:

The purpose of this letter is to address the comments made in the July 26, 2016 letter to you from the Westchester County Planning Board. The County letter was submitted to you in response to the Town Board's Notice of Intent to assume Lead Agency status for review of the project.

In addition to voicing no objection to the Town Board acting as Lead Agency, the letter from the County Planning Board raised several other issues that we would like to address. The principal concern expressed by the County was associated with the development of a multi-family residential project at a location which the County believes to be contrary to the County Planning Board's long-range planning policies in that the site is not in an existing downtown center.

Admittedly, our zoning petition, at paragraph 22, states that the property "...is surrounded by hundreds of acres of undeveloped land...." That statement is accurate. However, it is important to understand not only the context in which that statement is made but also the unique characteristics of this site that distinguish it from most other similarly situated properties. While nestled on a plateau with few, if any, neighboring uses, the site fronts on Route 22 with direct access to two (2) train stations and a number of major arterial roadways.

The reference in the zoning petition to the fact that the property is surrounded by undeveloped land is intended to show, correctly, that the development of the project on this property will have little, if any, impact on the surrounding area. Just as importantly, while we understand the County's general goal to direct growth toward existing downtown centers, this property has several attributes that remove it from those general considerations.

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The benefit of locating multi-family residential developments in existing downtown centers is based upon a number of factors. These factors include the availability of municipal water and sewer service, as well as the proximity to existing shopping, services, and transit. In this case, the property is in fact served by municipal water and sewer. Indeed, if the project is approved, the few adjacent single-family residences near the subject property would also be able to be connected to those municipal services. The project site is located only 2 miles from the services in North White Plains, including the Stop & Shop shopping center. Further, the project site is located only 2.7 miles from the North White Plains train station, 4.3 miles from the Armonk Hamlet, and only 4.2 miles from the White Plains train station. Based upon these factors, it is appropriate to reconsider this site and its development potential under the Town's Comprehensive Plan as well as the County Planning documents.

In response to the County's concerns with respect to traffic trips to public transit, our client hereby commits, subject to demand, to providing appropriate shuttle service to and from the North White Plains train station and the North White Plains business area including Stop & Shop. Additionally, in order to reduce potential traffic impacts, our client has agreed to amend the proposed unit mix from 60% two-bedroom units and 40% one-bedroom units to 60% one-bedroom units and 40% two-bedroom units. In addition to reducing traffic impacts, this change in the unit mix will also likely result in a reduction in the number of school age children to be generated by the project.

It should also be noted that the proposed project includes numerous amenities/services/community spaces which will reduce the need for residents to drive off site for all their needs. These amenities will include a club room, fitness center, virtual fitness area, yoga/meditation center, business center, and theater.

Finally, we would like to emphasize the other benefits of this project, which include providing housing choices not available in North Castle. Not everyone wants to live in a downtown area and the proximity of the County's Cranberry Preserve may be a factor in choosing this location to live. The property is also close to the County's Kensico Dam Plaza, which is the site of numerous big public events and activities, factors which may also make the location attractive to prospective residents. In addition, the project will result in significant tax revenues to the relevant taxing authorities (the property is currently exempt from taxes), and the ability to preserve a significant portion of the site as open space, compared with the as-of-right single-family subdivision that could be developed under the current zoning.

We trust that the changes to the project and the information provided herein address the issues raised by the County Planning Board.

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Thank you for your courtesy and cooperation.

Very truly yours,

ANTHONY F. VENEZIANO, JR.

AFV/kj

cc: Edward Buroughs, AICP, Commissioner  
JMF Properties, LLC  
Bonnie von Ohlsen, JMC