

Appendix A

Public Hearing Transcript

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TOWN OF LaGRANGE
PLANNING BOARD

-----X
PUBLIC HEARING FOR
LaGRANGE TOWN CENTER
-----X

July 9, 2009
7:10 p.m.

Vail Farm Elementary School
1659 E. Noxon Road
LaGrangeville, New York

B E F O R E :

ALAN BELL, Chairman
JOHN GUNN, Board Member
ROBERT STRAUB, Board Member
STACY S. OLYHA, Board Member
DENNIS ROSENFELD, Board Member
ANTHONY BRENNER, Board Member
EILEEN MANG, Board Secretary
RONALD C. BLASS, Town Attorney,
Van de Water & Van de Water
WALTER ARTIS, Town Consultant
WANDA LIVIGNI, Town Director of Public Works
KRYSTAL ROSE, Intern

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For The Applicant:

CUDDY & FEDER, LLP
300 Westage Business Center
Suite 380
Fishkill, New York 12524
BY: JENNIFER VAN TUYL, ESQ.

ALSO PRESENT:

PHILIP GREALY, PE,
John Collins Engineers
JIM CONSTANTINE, Looney Ricks Kiss
JOHN CLARKE, Dutchess County
Planning Department
STEVEN RIEGER, Applicant
IAN RIEGER, Applicant
KEVIN MARRINAN, Ginsburg
Development Companies

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PUBLIC SPEAKERS

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MS. D'ARANZA:
MR. SCHELL:

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PROCEEDINGS

THE CHAIRMAN: I call the Planning Board meeting for July 9th to order. The only thing on the agenda tonight is the public hearing for Town Center.

Before we start, I'll give a kind of a brief outline of where we are in this, because this is kind of a complicated project, so any of you who have been to these

10 things for other projects may not understand
11 exactly where we are at this point and for
12 anybody who's never been to any project like
13 this, it will be very complicated.

14 This one's a little bit different
15 than the average project that the Planning
16 Board reviews in that it really began with
17 Town Board actions rather than the Applicant
18 action.

19 Some number of years ago, the Town
20 Board updated the Master Plan and in that
21 Master Plan made references to a desire to
22 establish a Town Center for the town of
23 LaGrange. That was followed by a rezoning in
24 which a particular portion of the town, which
25 is located, roughly, between the Taconic

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 State Parkway and Freedom Road on the north
3 and south sides of the Route 55 border, and
4 established it as a new zone called Town
5 Center, and in the -- it has two pieces, one
6 is called Town Center Residential and the
7 other Town Center Business.

8 And associated with that rezoning
9 were the establishment of a number of
10 regulations which governed the development
11 within that region. The kind of things that
12 it governs is everything from the kinds of

13 buildings and architecture that could be put
14 in there to the density of housing and
15 businesses and to the kinds of uses for the
16 various kinds of buildings, and that could be
17 either community or government or retail or
18 residential.

19 Both the Master Plan and the zoning
20 of that area had their own process that's
21 somewhat similar to what we're going through
22 now in that the Town Board, which is the
23 board that has elected officials that makes
24 and passes Town laws and the folks that you
25 vote for in November, they went through a

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PROCEEDINGS

2 similar process to this in that they held
3 public hearings, solicited public input, I
4 believe even in some cases held some
5 workshops and worked with people on
6 suggestions and the like, but ultimately did
7 an Environmental Impact Statement similar, or
8 in a similar fashion to the one that we have
9 prepared for this project and passed the
10 associated zoning and accepted the Master
11 Plan.

12 Following that, the next stage was
13 the preparation of a more detailed proposal
14 and a specific plan for development within
15 the Town Center, and that is what we are in
16 the process of evaluating now. This proposal

17 already had public hearings in which we
18 solicited public input prior to preparing an
19 Environmental Impact Statement. The purpose
20 of that is pretty simple and straightforward
21 and that is that we wanted public input on
22 what areas of concern there were so that the
23 Environmental Impact Statement could address
24 those concerns and make sure that there isn't
25 anything missing.

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 The purpose of tonight's meeting is
3 to solicit public comments on the advocacy
4 and the completeness of that Environmental
5 Impact Statement, which is a rather large
6 report that has been available at the Town
7 Hall for some time and has been available on
8 the Internet as well and pointed to from the
9 Town on its website.

10 Now, if people want to talk tonight
11 and they haven't read the Environmental
12 Impact Statement, that's fine, but I wanted
13 to stress that the purpose of this is to kind
14 of address the completeness of that document
15 as opposed to discussing whether the Town
16 Center is a good idea or things along those
17 lines. Again, I'm not going to tell people
18 to stop talking, they can say whatever they
19 want, but I wanted to kind of make people

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aware of what the purpose of the meeting is
21 so that they don't have different
22 expectations about what the results of this
23 evening might be.

24 From a procedural standpoint, we're
25 going to start by allowing the Applicant to

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1 PROCEEDINGS
2 give a summary of the history of the project,
3 as well as an overview and a scope for people
4 who may be not be familiar with it, and then
5 I will open it up for public comments. I'm
6 going to walk down through the sign-up list
7 that we have placed in the back, and when I
8 call your name, please come up and go to that
9 microphone right there, give me your name and
10 address, and speak into the microphone.

11 The reason we ask you to speak into
12 the microphone is because we are taping all
13 the comments so that we have a permanent
14 record of it and so that no one has to
15 scribble notes and miss what may be captured
16 by it.

17 Following the public hearing, any
18 questions, comments, concerns, and so forth,
19 the Applicant will be required to answer
20 every question, every concern, that was
21 addressed here in writing. So, that doesn't
22 mean they'll be required to answer every
23 question and concern verbally this evening,

24 but they are required to respond to all of
25 those concerns and questions in writing, and

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 we will review those to ensure that that's
3 been done to our satisfaction.

4 With that, I think I'm going to turn
5 it over to the Applicant to give their
6 overview and summary of the project.

7 MS. VAN TUYL: Thank you very much,
8 Mr. Chairman.

9 I just add one more comment, and
10 that is that anyone is free, whether they
11 speak tonight or don't speak tonight, to also
12 submit further written comments through
13 August 18th at 3 p.m.

14 I hope everyone has gotten a copy of
15 the handout which is in the back of the room
16 and over on the side here. It contains a
17 location map on one side to show you exactly
18 where the Town Center is, and on the other
19 side it contains all the key facts about the
20 Town Center and the key environmental issues
21 that are addressed in the EIS.

22 We're going to try to give you the
23 maximum amount of information in the minimum
24 amount of time tonight because we know that
25 the purpose of tonight's hearing is really to

3 office.

4 To give you a little background on
5 the planning process that led us up to this
6 point and to strongly support and endorse the
7 concept of a Town Center in LaGrange, which
8 is really consistent with our planning
9 principles and the Greenway planning
10 principles that we helped to produce, over
11 it's lifetime, if you boil it down to
12 essentials, up until the 1950s we built
13 traditional town centers in villages, hamlets
14 and rural countryside, lots of farmland.
15 That's the way Dutchess looked on the 1930
16 aerial maps. Since the 1950s and '60s we've
17 reversed that, we've built in what I call a
18 strip and sprawl pattern, standing commercial
19 development along highways and spreading out
20 residential development into the countryside.

21 And everybody wants a piece of the
22 countryside and we have to respect that, but
23 the end result of it, the accumulation of it
24 over 40 years, has created something that is
25 entirely autodependent and increasingly

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1 PROCEEDINGS
2 dysfunctional. It's always been a bit of a
3 disaster from an environmental land
4 preservation perspective, but now we're
5 finding out it's increasingly detrimental

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6 from an economic point of view and an energy
7 point of view in particular. All those
8 commuting costs are driving up everybody's
9 family budget inordinately.

10 And from an economic perspective,
11 servicing all those spread-out lots, all
12 those roads, plowing and school bus driving
13 and all the rest of it, is driving up local
14 taxes to a point where it's unsustainable, so
15 people are starting to relook at the old
16 patterns and saying, what do we love about
17 Dutchess County, why can't we build like that
18 again, and that is what the Town Center is
19 about. It's about designing something that
20 produces less pollution, less traffic, and
21 more community in place of that sort of strip
22 mall pattern that we see all over southwest
23 Dutchess in particular.

24 Do you really want 55 in LaGrange to
25 end up looking like Route 9 South in

□

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 Poughkeepsie? Because that's where you're
3 heading. Look at Manchester Bridge. It's a
4 premonition of what you can expect in Freedom
5 Plains in five, ten, fifteen years.

6 So, going back to the process,
7 actually, the Town recognized this problem
8 all the way back as far as 1966 in its Town
9 Planning Study. It proposed at that point --

10 it called for a heart -- the heart of the
11 community to be built in Freedom Plains.
12 That's the phrase that was used, "The Heart
13 of the Community," to act as a civic center
14 in the highest concentration for residential
15 development. That's a long time ago.

16 In the 1987 plan, the plan that
17 lasted a long time, it called for a Town
18 Center right where it's being proposed here
19 at six to twelve units per acre, which is
20 what was being proposed now, as the
21 commercial and social hub of the community
22 with a diversity of housing types served by
23 central water and sewer, but the zoning was
24 never really changed to adapt to that plan
25 and as a result what you see out in Freedom

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 Plains is primarily growing suburban strip
3 development, front yard parking,
4 autodependent, no sidewalks, no crosswalks,
5 all the things you see down the line in other
6 strip communities.

7 In 2001, a new Master Plan update
8 was started, and also in 2001 the Town joined
9 the Dutchess County Greenway Compact, which
10 our office helped coordinate. In there,
11 there was a lot of planning guides about how
12 to change development patterns to better fit

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Dutchess County's historic patterns.

13
14 Our office started working with the
15 Master Plan Committee back in 2002, early
16 2002, and what we were asked to do
17 essentially was to create a visual of what a
18 Town Center should look like. Because before
19 that, the zoning, it's always good to know
20 what we want to make it look like instead of
21 just making up numbers, so we did what was
22 called an Illustrative Plan that was attached
23 to the Comprehensive Plan that was being
24 developed, and it went through various
25 iterations, a lot of public meetings at the

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1 PROCEEDINGS
2 time, I have articles going back to 2002,
3 2003, when we did a lot of public meetings
4 involving the Town Center, and after a long
5 process, which included a generic
6 Environmental Impact Statement that weighed
7 the traffic impacts and the school impacts
8 and the environmental impacts of doing a Town
9 Center, the Comprehensive Plan was adopted
10 with the Illustrative Plan attached and a
11 zoning law was enacted and adopted by the
12 Town Board to allow this sort of development
13 to happen.

14 That was all done consistent with
15 the Greenway Compact, and I would suggest
16 that what's being proposed, from what I've

17 seen so far, and I'm eager to hear all the
18 details, is generally consistent with the
19 Greenway Compact, with the Comprehensive Plan
20 that was adopted, and with the zoning law
21 that was adopted back in 2003.

22 Now, I'm open to the details, I want
23 to see the details, I want to see the fine
24 points, and I'm skeptical, but I still have
25 an open mind about such things, and what I'm

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 asking essentially is that you do the same
3 thing, keep an open mind at this point.

4 Finally, I want to say the big issue
5 is traffic on most people's minds that I've
6 talked to. I want to talk about three points
7 about traffic. I know there's gonna be a
8 traffic expert to talk about public traffic
9 levels and changes, but I want to talk about
10 traffic in addition.

11 When the Illustrative Plan, which is
12 shown on the cover of this book, which was a
13 SmartBook manual provided by the Pace
14 University Law School on how to do this sort
15 of development, it included two roundabouts
16 at the gateway locations both east and west
17 of the site. And we did that for a couple of
18 reasons. One is to act as a gateway and a
19 slowdown element so as you come into the Town

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20 Center you do not come in at 40, 50 miles per
21 hour, but also there's a growing realization
22 that roundabouts really are the most
23 efficient way to move traffic through an
24 intersection with the fewest amount of
25 crashes.

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1 PROCEEDINGS
2 Just today on the Planners -- the
3 National Planners website that I look at
4 every day, there was an article about two
5 roundabout studies, one that investigated a
6 before and after roundabout in Kansas, and
7 they found that traffic delays were reduced
8 by 20 percent after the roundabouts were put
9 in, and crashes nationally on these studies
10 have shown that crashes are reduced by 75
11 percent. So, not only do they save you but
12 they actually help route traffic.

13 The second point I want to make is
14 that driving slower doesn't necessarily
15 inhibit capacity, it doesn't back up traffic.
16 In fact, it's a little known fact that at 30
17 miles an hour you move more people, more
18 cars, through a traffic segment, on a highway
19 segment, than at 40 or 50 miles an hour,
20 because as people drive closer together, so
21 even though they're moving slowly, more cars
22 circulate through the area quicker, you know,
23 over a given period of time than at the

24 higher speeds, so slowing down traffic can
25 actually help improve your traffic delays.

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 And I think that's almost counterintuitive,
3 but you have to understand how building
4 traffic works, it can work.

5 And then finally, I've heard it said
6 too many times that Route 55 is a major
7 artery and you can't block the artery between
8 Poughkeepsie and the Taconic State Parkway,
9 but this is a thru road, we have to handle it
10 like a highway, and it's crazy to put a Town
11 Center on a major artery.

12 And what I'll say is, sort of
13 repeating what was said in the 1966 plan and
14 the '87 plan, is that what's the good of
15 having an artery if you don't have a heart?
16 Does LaGrange want to be a pass-through town
17 for people getting from here to the Taconic
18 or does it want to be someplace in which you
19 have a community center, a Village Green,
20 local shops, you don't have to drive to Route
21 9 to get everything, and you have a place
22 that you can be proud of? And I think that
23 was the intent of the Town Center. And what
24 I'm expecting and I'm hoping for is that what
25 we see here sort of lives up to those

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1 PROCEEDINGS
2 standards. Now, I'm not sure that it will,
3 but I think -- I have an open mind, and I ask
4 you to have an open mind as well.

5 Thank you.

6 MS. VAN TUYL: Thanks very much,
7 John.

8 And now we'll get into the
9 Applicant's presentation. First of all, I'd
10 like to introduce the proponents of this
11 project. Many of you may know them.

12 Steven Rieger and Ian Rieger of
13 Rieger Homes are here in the front row, if
14 you want to stand up. And Ginsburg
15 Development Companies are the other sponsors
16 of the project. Kevin Marrinan has been
17 actively involved in that. Kevin had a
18 family emergency tonight and is not able to
19 be here.

20 Now, if you'll turn for a moment to
21 the side of the handout that you have that
22 lists the facts about the project and the
23 impacts, you'll see about halfway down we
24 start listing the major impacts that were
25 discussed in the Environmental Impact

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1 PROCEEDINGS
2 Statement.

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3 Now, as many of you know who have
4 looked at it, this is a five-volume work,
5 it's posted on the website, it's available at
6 the Planning Board office, the Town Clerk's
7 office, and the library, and we're not going
8 to certainly attempt to summarize that entire
9 document for you tonight but what we are
10 going to do is focus on the key issues as
11 represented in the comments made by all of
12 you who were at the Scoping Session.

13 And as John Clarke said, the key
14 issue, the issue most of the neighbors
15 commented on at the Scoping Session, was
16 traffic. So, we are going to have our
17 traffic engineer, Philip Grealy, describe to
18 you the analysis and the scope of the
19 analysis that was done in the EIS.

20 MR. GREALY: Good evening, everyone.
21 I'm Philip Grealy, John Collins Engineers.
22 I'm going to be relatively brief so that we
23 can get your comments tonight, but
24 essentially the traffic and transportation
25 studies which are a part of the DEIS were --

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1 PROCEEDINGS
2 the scope was defined by a scoping document
3 that was part of the DEIS process, and what
4 that scoping document does is identify the
5 study area, which is kind of the key

6 Town of LaGrange Transcript 7-9-09
component of, you know, what goes into the
7 study.

8 For the Town Center DEIS, we studied
9 in excess of 30 intersections in the area,
10 and just to kind of give you a feel for the
11 extent of the area, this aerial here, this is
12 the Taconic, Route 55, and we have, like, 30
13 intersections in the area basically extending
14 from the Manchester Bridge area, with Noxon
15 Road, Titusville Road, and then as we come
16 east, Lauer Road, Bushwick Road, Todd Hill
17 Road, back down along Lauer Road to Noxon,
18 down near the Taconic, back around out to
19 where we are in the school, and extending all
20 the way over to, you know, past Route 82 and
21 out to Route 55 and E. Noxon Road, and then
22 continuing along the 55 corridor and near the
23 high school and, you know, the primary area
24 of the Town Center. We also evaluated north
25 of Route 55 along Freedom Road, Mountain

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1 PROCEEDINGS
2 Road, Skidmore Road. So, it's a pretty
3 extensive list of locations that were
4 required as part of the scope.

5 But very briefly, what goes into a
6 traffic study and to kind of leave with what
7 John talked about, modern roundabouts are
8 something that are here, they seem to be the
9 wave of the future in terms of providing

10 increased capacity and safety.

11 The studies that John referenced are
12 true, so, as part of our urban analysis we
13 did consider roundabouts but we also
14 considered more conventional intersection
15 improvements.

16 But getting back to the meat of the
17 traffic study, we have a study area, and
18 basically the traffic study has about eight
19 or ten steps that have to be followed which
20 are required by the Department of
21 Transportation, the Town, the County, pretty
22 much the same requirements.

23 The first thing you do is you look
24 at existing conditions, both traffic volumes,
25 accidents. In terms of traffic volume, we do

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 have a database that the state DOT keeps, but
3 we also collected our own traffic data at
4 those intersections to identify vehicle mix,
5 school buses, and to really get a picture of
6 what's going on at each and every one of
7 those locations in terms of the various
8 steps.

9 So, the first step is to kind of
10 identify what existing conditions are. You
11 look at mornings, the peak hour, especially
12 with the high school here, you know, what

13 kind of traffic flow there is, what is the
14 makeup of that traffic flow, what is traffic
15 during commuter hours, you know, in the
16 morning also, in the late afternoon, when
17 commuters are coming home, and then also
18 consideration of, you know, when the schools
19 are letting out, whether it be at the high
20 school or the other schools in the area.

21 The next step is to look at, let's
22 say this project was never even, you know, on
23 the table, what would happen to traffic in
24 the area in terms of background growth and
25 due to other projects that are either in the

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1 PROCEEDINGS
2 planning stages or just starting construction
3 or would come along, so you can't just look
4 at traffic just today, you want to look out
5 into the future and see what is going to
6 develop in terms of background traffic. So,
7 that's kind of the -- the second step is to
8 go into the projections.

9 For a project like this -- and one
10 of the benefits of a Town Center where you
11 have your residential, you have commercial,
12 and other uses, it cuts down on the number of
13 vehicle trips. And in terms of localized
14 trips from the neighborhood, okay, from a
15 residential unit to a commercial use, when
16 they're in the proximity, you don't have to

17 travel as far and it cuts down on the
18 external trips, so that's the benefit of a
19 plan like this.

20 But in terms of looking at the
21 traffic generation, there are standards that
22 we have to follow that the DOT requires, you
23 know, it's by land use, what types of trips
24 will be generated during, you know, peak
25 hours -- a one-hour period is used in the

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 analysis -- so we've identified that for the
3 project.

4 And then we look at where would that
5 traffic generate to, you know, where would it
6 arrive from, and where would people that are
7 living in the project that are not, let's
8 say, working in the Town Center, where else
9 would they go, you know, for their commuting
10 trip, so we have to look at that as an
11 area-wide basis. And you can see it in the
12 existing patterns, where people are going
13 today. The hope is that we'll keep some more
14 of those people, you know, closer to home,
15 but that's really -- the next step is to look
16 at where people are going to and from and
17 being able to assign that traffic to the road
18 system.

19 So, now we've looked at existing,

20 we've look at projected without the project,
21 and then we've look at traffic conditions
22 with the add-on of the project traffic, and
23 what does that allow us to do? It allows us
24 to evaluate conditions. And there's a set of
25 standards which are called the Highway

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 Capacity Manual, which basically rates
3 intersections in terms of operation, and many
4 intersections in the area, regardless of this
5 project, would need certain things to be done
6 for either safety improvements, upgrading of
7 signals, coordination of signals.

8 One of the problems when you have
9 multiple traffic signals is that they are not
10 coordinated, the technology is there but it
11 has to be implemented.

12 And then in terms of that analysis,
13 if you get your results and you look at
14 intersections, you come up with a list of
15 recommendations. So, that's kind of the next
16 step, is what can be done to either improve a
17 condition, take care of a safety condition,
18 for example, the lack of a turning lane; if
19 you don't have a turning lane and you have
20 high turning volumes, that is something that
21 needs to be addressed.

22 Sight distance issues, making sure
23 intersections have good visibility.

24 And then we get into the need for
25 signalization, and there are locations that

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 need signals in addition to what's already
3 out in the system today. And associated with
4 the signalized intersections you look at
5 adding turning lanes and making it more
6 capacity, you know, producing type of
7 intersections.

8 In terms of the study, we looked at
9 35 intersections. We have a list of
10 improvements that are in the report, most of
11 which are required regardless of the project.
12 When we get down to the localized area, which
13 is this overall plan, this is the
14 Illustrative Site Plan, we get into the need
15 for improvements that are access points, and
16 on this plan you will see a modern
17 roundabout. That's at the intersection of
18 Route 55, Freedom Road, and an entrance into
19 the project. The project has been designed
20 to accommodate that, although alternatively
21 we looked at a standard intersection design
22 for that same intersection.

23 The other area that John had
24 mentioned where a roundabout was looked at is
25 further east near the Taconic State Parkway.

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 Now, separate and apart from this
3 project, the State Department of
4 Transportation has improvements planned for
5 the corridor, it's on what's called the TIP,
6 the Transportation Improvement Program, to
7 address this section of Route 55, including
8 the ramps to the Taconic Parkway. One of the
9 alternatives that they will be looking at in
10 detail is the idea of the roundabouts, and
11 while our study addresses it and kind of
12 provides information, that's something we
13 will confer with and that will be furthered
14 as part of the DOT review.

15 So, you know, in terms of the DEIS,
16 you have, you know, the various sections, but
17 the traffic study and the sections that are
18 in the traffic study are basically those
19 steps, and each intersection is looked at
20 that way, safety accident records are looked
21 at, and basically we've come up with a series
22 of recommendations.

23 But, you know, the people that are
24 here tonight, you know the roads, you know
25 your area, I think we're here to listen to

□

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 your comments and then we'll respond to them,
Page 25

3 but that's the basic components of what's in
4 the document, and, you know, we're not here
5 to necessarily answer questions tonight but
6 we want to hear your questions so that they
7 can be addressed in the FEIS.

8 So, that's pretty much it, you know,
9 the types of things that were done as parts
10 of the study, and we're here to listen to
11 your comments.

12 Thank you.

13 MS. VAN TUYL: Thanks, Phil.

14 We just have one other substantive
15 presenter for you tonight.

16 If you look at your handout sheet
17 again on the list of impacts, I'm just going
18 to say a few words about the second bulleted
19 item, which is impact on taxes, fiscal
20 impact.

21 You might have read in the newspaper
22 article today that the taxes generated by
23 this project overall are in the range of \$6
24 million per year. Well, just to give you a
25 little bit more specific information

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1 PROCEEDINGS
2 particularly about schools, since some of you
3 had commented about that and asked that it be
4 looked into in the Scoping session,
5 approximately 4.3 million of that 6 million

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6 would be going to the school district.

7 And we were asked to analyze and do
8 studies which are in the EIS to analyze how
9 much of that would actually be expended in
10 educating students, and the result of our
11 study was that \$2.4 million of that per year
12 is net income to the district above and
13 beyond any costs associated with the project.

14 And generally, the DEIS concluded
15 that the project was tax positive across all
16 taxing jurisdictions. But again, that's
17 technical information that's in the EIS that
18 you can review.

19 The next issue that we thought was
20 the most important to talk about tonight is
21 just what John Clarke said, and I didn't know
22 that those words were in the 1966 Master
23 Plan, "The Heart of the Community."

24 What is this Town Center going to
25 look like? What is it going to be -- there

□

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 were questions that many of you asked at the
3 scoping of -- is this size going to be
4 overwhelming for our community? What is it
5 going to seem like?

6 And a picture's worth a thousand
7 words, so we have Jim Constantine of Looney
8 Ricks Kiss tonight, which is a firm that
9 probably leads the country in design of

10 projects like this, who is going to show you
11 some real live Town Center projects and what
12 they look like and what they feel like, and
13 then we'll open it up for your comments.

14 MR. CONSTANTINE: If you don't mind,
15 I'm going to stand back here with the images.

16 And it's certainly terrific to be
17 back here in LaGrange. We did a major
18 presentation, I was counting this, three
19 years ago May, and it really speaks to the
20 long time that these projects take to emerge.

21 But just as a point of orientation,
22 that's the Taconic Parkway, Route 55, Todd
23 Hill, and Bushwick there -- this
24 microphone's -- Springville, Lauer Road,
25 Freedom, Dr. Fink, and there's, of course,

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1 PROCEEDINGS
2 your existing Town Hall, the high school,
3 and, really, the heart of the Town Center
4 along Route 55 in this location if we
5 actually look at the half-mile radius, and
6 that generally equates to about a ten-minute
7 walk, almost all of the area that we're
8 talking about tonight, 200 acres, right there
9 is basically within that ten-minute walk of
10 this stretch of Route 55.

11 This is the McDonald's -- easy
12 landmark for everybody to note -- and this is

13 Town of LaGrange Transcript 7-9-09
14 the strip highway, strip commercial pattern,
15 that John Clarke referred to, where you
16 basically have a highway which is treated
17 separately from the individual parking lots
18 and buildings, no sidewalks, no ability to
19 really walk, and that, certainly, is a
20 pattern that many American communities have
21 said, we have too much of and we want
22 something different.

23 And we have worked extensively with
24 a lot of suburban and rural communities that
25 have looked to try to grapple with the fact
that once you build this out, at the end of

□

1 PROCEEDINGS
2 the day in many places there is no there
3 there at the heart of town, you have the
4 drive-thru strip.

5 So, I want to start by flipping this
6 around and actually looking at the properties
7 we're talking about right in here. The
8 McDonald's would be right under us here. I
9 want to start perhaps by everybody just to
10 take a couple of seconds and imagine what if
11 this actually became your Town Center with a
12 Town Square, with a highway that became a
13 Main Street with walkable neighborhoods that
14 surrounded it.

15 And some people may be sitting there
16 thinking -- saying, but is that really

17 possible?

18 I come from a community, Princeton,
19 and this is our Town Square on a state
20 highway, seventy-five years old.
21 Seventy-five years ago, this was built --
22 envisioned and built in a very similar way to
23 what's being proposed in this particular
24 community, and at the heart of this, a half a
25 block in from a very busy, much busier than

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 Route 55, state highway, is the Town Green,
3 the heart of the Square, the heart of the
4 town, where community events happen, where
5 children play, where seniors stroll safely,
6 where people don't realize, you know, you're
7 right there in the middle of everything yet
8 you have this wonderful green space.

9 Our firm has been involved in
10 helping part of the new wave of building Town
11 Centers and Town Squares in many places
12 across the nation.

13 This is Baldwin Park, which was the
14 redevelopment of a formal naval center in
15 Orlando, and Orlando holds this out as their
16 example of Smart Growth and what they're
17 looking for, and for some of you that are
18 sitting there saying, yeah, but, you know,
19 how do you deal with a highway in the center

Town of LaGrange Transcript 7-9-09
20 of town, this is an example of another
21 community in New Jersey, along a very busy
22 state highway and new mixed-use buildings, in
23 fact, this is somebody sitting at a sidewalk
24 cafe, 30,000 cars a day, people walking,
25 people living, working, playing, and across

□

1 PROCEEDINGS
2 the street buildings up front, parking
3 behind, and in this particular community you
4 have incredible public support to take back
5 five blocks of state highway and make it the
6 Town Center that the state gutted 30 years
7 ago.

8 And some of you are also possibly
9 sitting there saying, but can you create
10 terrific walkable neighborhoods?

11 And this is an example. We worked
12 with the Village of Warwick in Orange County,
13 the lower part of the Hudson valley, just
14 north of the New Jersey State line, in
15 creating the plan and the zoning for this new
16 neighborhood called Warwick Row, which is a
17 walkable neighborhood integrated into an
18 existing Town Center. So, we know that it's
19 possible to actually make the visions we're
20 going to talk about tonight happen in
21 reality. And so this brings us back to
22 reality.

23 A quick overview in terms of the
Page 31

24 orientation of the plan. This is Route 55,
25 the roundabout that was referred to earlier.

□

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 By the way, this was labeled "Cramer
3 Road," this is actually Freedom Road, this is
4 Dr. Fink Road, this is the high school, the
5 McDonald's.

6 And I want to first walk through --
7 these are the back neighborhoods that extend
8 back out to the south, we'll talk about those
9 in a couple of minutes.

10 I want to start by talking about the
11 Town Center, and in order to get something
12 that's got the appropriate scale, and during
13 the past few years we've had a lot of
14 meetings up in Town Hall talking about how to
15 achieve the right area, how to get the right
16 scale, how to make it walkable, how to make
17 it feel like LaGrange, and it's come to a mix
18 of different heights, different-scaled
19 buildings, so that it's not all the same, and
20 part of that that's critical is how we treat
21 the edge of Route 55, how we treat the
22 highway. And I think it was said earlier
23 where you'll have the same volume of cars
24 coming through but at a slightly slower speed
25 in these couple of blocks at the heart of

3 should be less commercial and more
4 residential in scale like we find here, that
5 sense of greater variety overall in terms of
6 the streetscapes and what it will feel like.

7 Corners need to be treated
8 specially, they are very, very important in
9 Town Centers because it's where streets come
10 together, you want lots of them.

11 And this is an example of Baldwin
12 Park. I put it up here because there was
13 discussion over the years about whether a CVS
14 Pharmacy could fit in a Town Center. This is
15 a CVS Pharmacy, apartments above, in a
16 mixed-use lot. You may not have any examples
17 here in the Hudson River Valley, you may not
18 have any examples in the Metropolitan New
19 York area. It's possible, it's real. This
20 is brand new.

21 The Town Green, the living room for
22 the community, and this is a wonderful
23 historic example from Woodstock, Vermont.
24 And we are really talking about a space about
25 the same size and scale surrounded by a

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1 PROCEEDINGS
2 variety of different building types, but it
3 is important to note that the way that this
4 becomes an outdoor room is to have it
5 surrounded by buildings that are designed to

6 be integrated with it. That means some of
7 them will have balconies and verandas that
8 overlook the space. And French doors, for
9 instance, here, so that there's a real
10 connection between the buildings and the
11 space and the space and the buildings that
12 surround it and enclose it.

13 There may be a special feature or
14 two at locations on the square and we
15 envision up at the top at the head perhaps a
16 little higher vertical focal point that calls
17 attention back to the tip of the square all
18 the way to the back of the space, and those
19 are important design elements to bring it
20 together.

21 And also, what happens within the
22 square? We see part of it become a grassy
23 lawn space so that things like this can
24 happen, an Easter Egg Hunt, a place for a
25 Santa Clause visit at holiday time, for

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 culinary events, for community fairs, you
3 know, arts and crafts.

4 We also see up near the front,
5 particularly where we need building at the
6 street to partially block out McDonald's and
7 block out a little bit of the noise of the
8 highway, we see on the back side of that and
9 front side some dining plazas that would be

10 anchored against that building, and this is
11 an example of what we call an anchored
12 square, it's actually outdoor dining that is
13 a part of a public space, so there's terrific
14 ways to do that.

15 And then, of course, there may be
16 other special developments, pavilions and
17 other things that may allow for this space to
18 feel like a public space, to feel like a
19 community space. It needs to be your space,
20 and I say this not kidding, the community
21 needs to adopt and own this and want to come
22 here and make it their living room.

23 There may also be some opportunities
24 to create some civic uses in here. And we've
25 talked about possible -- a new Town Hall or

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 the library as being some of the things that
3 might help anchor this so that it's not just
4 places to work and shop and live but there's
5 also a reason for everybody in town to come
6 to this community space, and so there may be
7 elements of civic design.

8 By the way, this is the
9 redevelopment of a strip shopping center on
10 Cape Cod, it's about 15 years old, it's one
11 of those leading examples of taking old
12 shopping centers and making them into

Town of LaGrange Transcript 7-9-09
mixed-use Town Centers, called Master

13
14 Commons, and so the specific element that we
15 think is also important which will help the
16 space be something that belongs to the entire
17 community, so that could occur in a couple of
18 ways.

19 Parking, there's going to be a mix
20 of different ways to park here, from
21 on-street parallel parking, angle parking,
22 lots of ability to get into off-street
23 parking lots. And because we're using a
24 traditional block system, there's also
25 different access points into these off-street

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1 PROCEEDINGS
2 parking lots and different corners and
3 connections and turning movements that
4 vehicles can make so you'll never get trapped
5 here, there's always a corner to come to and
6 turn and come back and come back into the
7 lot, there's always lots of ways to move
8 around. You won't end up with any trap
9 situation, there's always blends of on-street
10 parking, so there will be an angle parking
11 proposed along the buildings on the side of
12 the Green, something like this.

13 This is a new Town Center in
14 Southlake, Texas, in the Dallas-Fort Worth
15 Metroplex. It's one of the most elegant,
16 award-winning Town Centers. The Town built

17 their Town Hall right in the middle of this
18 place.

19 The backs of the buildings are also
20 important where they interface with parking
21 lots, and we know from real experience that
22 we need to make sure that the rear of
23 buildings are treated equally to the front or
24 at least better than just treating it like a
25 plain back, and that's because part of our

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 parking lots actually back up to streets.

3 And in other cases we have some
4 smaller carriage homes lining the edge of
5 them. The reason we've done that is we don't
6 want the heart of the heart of town to have
7 parking lots that appear in scale and size to
8 be too large, so this is a way of actually
9 scaling them down and humanizing them. And
10 you see examples of those carriage homes
11 right here at the edge of the parking lot,
12 some more back at this location here.

13 We've incorporated a very important
14 historic element, Beekman Patent Hall, to the
15 design of the Town tenure, and then as we
16 start to move out into the surrounding
17 neighborhoods we have a series of little
18 neighborhood squares and greens, and,
19 actually, Beekman Patent Hall will be

20 Town of LaGrange Transcript 7-9-09
celebrated in the landscape design feature in
21 the middle of this square and other edge
22 conditions. And then we start to bring in a
23 mix of the walkable neighborhoods that need
24 to also be part of this being a complete
25 community place, because some people may

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1 PROCEEDINGS
2 choose to move from the house that they're in
3 today and say, you know, this offers me
4 convenience, a chance to use my car less, get
5 stuck in traffic less. So, the edge where
6 the Beekman Patent Hall is, a sidewalk will
7 be designed as walkable, there will be places
8 where we have townhomes like this with upper
9 floor balconies that really make the space
10 very dynamic and different, and of course,
11 some of these green spaces are terrific
12 because they really become the community
13 pocket parks, even though this one here in a
14 place called Cherry Hill, Michigan, which I
15 will show you a little bit about later, is a
16 half a block from the Town Center, right in
17 the middle of everything, you can still have
18 a quiet, wonderful neighborhood pocket.

19 we also have locations right in the
20 center of town where you'll be able to live
21 at the edge and have more of a relationship
22 from your home to open space. And for some
23 people, that's the appeal. You can have

24 green yet still be pretty close to the heart
25 of the action. And there will also be a mix

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1 PROCEEDINGS
2 of different-sized homes, a mix of different
3 cottages and a mix of different prices,
4 different family types, different ages. To
5 make a Town Center happen, it has to be a
6 place for everyone in town. And these are
7 examples of, again, some smaller, little
8 cottage homes.

9 And we also need the people to be
10 living here, because one thing you don't find
11 in a commercial strip pattern, strip centers,
12 nobody's home, so when the shops close, it's
13 dead, the parking lot's empty, you know it,
14 but this place will be alive in the morning
15 when people come out to walk their dogs at 6
16 a.m. or 11 p.m. at night, going for -- going
17 out for ice cream cones at eight o'clock at
18 night, so it really needs that
19 around-the-clock life that you can only have
20 if you have a mix of uses and people are
21 actually there.

22 So, as we move from the core of the
23 Town Center, we talked about some of the
24 neighborhoods to the south, these are really
25 also envisioned to be linked in through a

Town of LaGrange Transcript 7-9-09

3 If you don't want to know your neighbors, you
4 don't want to live in the Town Center. If
5 you want to be truly part of the neighborhood
6 and go to places near you and walk into town
7 and be part of all of that, and you find that
8 increasingly as we're aging throughout the
9 northeast and our communities are getting
10 grayer, more and more people will choose this
11 for a lot -- for a variety of reasons. And
12 so these little door yard gardens and stoops
13 really do promote that interaction along
14 sidewalks so you will know your neighbors, as
15 you're getting older, you'll feel safer, they
16 know you, you're looking out for one another,
17 classic American tradition.

18 The mix of different house types,
19 this is actually an attached home, a loose
20 link, but it looks like a single-family.
21 This is my little tale of blue houses. Some
22 of them will be a little more modest in size,
23 some of them may be a little larger, some of
24 them may be in positions where they're larger
25 and they have open space, so you'll get a

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1 PROCEEDINGS
2 variety of different price ranges based on
3 size and based on location, and we want that
4 variety built into the Town Center and you'll
5 find that throughout.

6 There's also a whole series of
7 smaller neighborhood greens, pocket parks,
8 and commons that will be used throughout the
9 neighborhoods to, again, create that sense of
10 social interaction so that these greens
11 become gathering places, people relate to
12 them, they look at them from their homes,
13 they're surrounded by streets and house
14 fronts, you're not backing onto them, you're
15 actually fronting onto them in a very formal
16 traditional neighborhood pattern, and at the
17 edges of the community there are
18 opportunities to live where things loosen up,
19 they become a little bit green, we want to
20 see a little bit of the wilds come into the
21 edge of the neighborhood.

22 The edges are very important. They
23 need to be designed and treated differently
24 than what you would find right at the heart
25 of town, because the edge is different, and

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 so it's going to be softer and greener and
3 start to integrate with the landscape in a
4 different way.

5 And by the way, most of the
6 examples, literally everything that I'm
7 showing you, are places that we have designed
8 and helped guide through implementation and
9 seen built in the past ten years, so I'm

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10 using real examples of real Town Centers from
11 throughout the nation to illustrate what's
12 possible here.

13 So, we wanted to show you a couple
14 of views of some of the edge conditions, and
15 I'm going to take us from the west and then
16 wrap us over here to Lauer Road.

17 So, this is a view along Todd Hill
18 Road looking southeast. So, this is you
19 right here, there's a little green with some
20 homes flanking that.

21 This is the view today, and if you
22 watch the screen you'll see what this will
23 look like afterwards, and again that whole
24 notion of leaving the wilds of that little
25 rural edge like it is and integrating with

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 it.

3 This is near Lauer looking
4 northeast. Again, if you watch the view,
5 you'll see what it will look like afterwards,
6 and again, we're leaving some open space and
7 more of a rural state here and you start to
8 get the community behind it, and further up
9 Lauer Road, this view looking north, again at
10 the edge.

11 So, we think what happens at the
12 south side where these neighborhoods

Town of LaGrange Transcript 7-9-09
13 integrate with, really, the rural edge needs
14 to be treated very differently than what
15 happens along Route 55 in the heart of town.

16 And one last for -- in conclusion, I
17 just wanted to show a couple of comparison
18 studies that, again, really address the issue
19 of, you know, is this real, can these pretty
20 pictures become reality, so, first, I'll take
21 us down to Warwick down in Orange County,
22 where I mentioned where we worked with the
23 Village of Warwick in planning for -- they
24 have a wonderful Town Center, but this was
25 really creating a new walkable neighborhood

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1 PROCEEDINGS
2 that reflected the character of historic
3 Warwick, had a mix of single-family homes,
4 town homes, you see beautiful views out to
5 the mountains at that point, and you might
6 have some of this feeling in places in the
7 Town Center as well, but this does not
8 include commercial.

9 And one of the chances you have to
10 be the first in this part of New York State,
11 maybe the entire state, is really building a
12 mixed-use Town Center that has everything.
13 These are just residential neighborhoods.

14 This is a community outside of
15 Ann Arbor, Michigan, which had had a historic
16 crossroads hamlet with a church, cemetery,

17 school, some homes, and they really wanted to
18 create -- see this evolve into the center of
19 the town for their community. And this is
20 the division, there's the historic
21 schoolhouse, and this is what it looked like
22 ten years ago, there's the schoolhouse.

23 It wasn't much there and it wasn't a
24 great village by, maybe, northeast standards,
25 and so the first thing to happen was the Town

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PROCEEDINGS

2 square was built to establish that public
3 space, a gathering place, and this is used
4 for every major community event in Canton
5 Township. Then the township actually built a
6 municipal building, private schools, got
7 funding for a community theater which was
8 built, integrated with downstairs
9 restaurants, upper floor lofts, we used to
10 joke we were creating the theatre district.
11 People that live there now joke, you know,
12 they say, "I live in the theater district,"
13 because that's what they've created. This is
14 the rendering that we did ten years ago and I
15 just wanted to show you that sometimes what's
16 built can actually, I think, look better than
17 that the drawing, so it's possible.

18 These are the neighborhoods that
19 surround it. If I sound passionate, it's

20 Town of LaGrange Transcript 7-9-09
because I put my heart and my career into
21 making these places happen and I know it's
22 possible.

23 And then near our office in
24 Princeton there's a suburban township that
25 their mayor led an effort to build a Town

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1 PROCEEDINGS
2 Center that they were looking for. There was
3 a dead shopping center here near a historic
4 village that Washington had marched through
5 with the continental army, and what should
6 have been just a strip center here, you know,
7 for people to walk, it's just the highway,
8 just a strip center, was envisioned to become
9 the Town Center that the community never had,
10 with a mix of restaurants, office space,
11 parking, town homes, walkable streets, places
12 for the community to gather, and it happened,
13 it works, it's a terrific place. It's
14 modest, it's not super fancy, it's not super
15 high end, it works for middle America.

16 And I wanted to close by showing you
17 there's a little coffeehouse that opened
18 there that has WiFi access, it's not right
19 across the street like you have, but there's
20 a regional high school about a mile and a
21 half away, and the coffee shop has become
22 sort of the great hangout, the legitimate
23 place for some of the kids to go after high

24 school, so they can have that sense of
25 independence, but you might argue that that's

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 a better place to hang out than McDonald's
3 perhaps.

4 And lastly, this brings us back to
5 the overall plan that I've described.

6 Thank you.

7 MS. VAN TUYL: All right, I just
8 have one final comment before we open it
9 up -- turn it back over to the Chairman and
10 open it up for your comments.

11 Just to reiterate what the Chairman
12 said earlier, this is a public hearing on an
13 EIS, there is no application for a Site Plan
14 pending, so, as this EIS process goes
15 forward, ultimately there will be future
16 public hearings on any actual Site Plan
17 Approval, so all of you will have another
18 opportunity to comment on that.

19 And while it is a hearing on the
20 environmental impacts that are discussed in
21 the study, we certainly understand that the
22 environmental impacts that were analyzed were
23 analyzed in the context of the development
24 that's being discussed, so I think that we
25 will certainly interpret your comments

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PROCEEDINGS

broadly and understand that you have the ability to comment both on specific items in the EIS as they relate to the proposed development.

Phil Grealy mentioned the DOT and the DOT's program on the TIP for a direct action improvement of Route 55. The DOT certainly has jurisdiction over the state highway, but the DOT is also an involved agency in this Environmental Impact Statement and will be considering all of the issues discussed in your comments and in the FEIS as a basis for making its decisions on the permits, for access to this project, so again, don't feel constrained, you're welcome to comment on any issues relating to traffic or any other issues relating to the project.

And now, Mr. Chairman, we thank you for this time to make a brief presentation, and turn it back over to you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

One little bit of procedural stuff before we get started. I wanted to make a note that we have an affidavit indicating

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PROCEEDINGS

that the public hearing was advertised in the
Page 49

3 paper as required, and a couple of other
4 notes.

5 They have used a couple of acronyms
6 which you may or may not be familiar with.
7 They used an acronym EIS, which is an
8 Environmental Impact Statement, and they have
9 used the term DEIS and FEIS. The DEIS is
10 what we have now, and that's a Draft
11 Environmental Impact Statement, and that is
12 what we're reviewing tonight. That, combined
13 with some comments and the Board's views, are
14 used to create a Final Environmental Impact
15 Statement. I just wanted to make sure people
16 understood what those things were.

17 And with that, I'll open it up for
18 public comments, and I'll start going down
19 the list of people that signed in. Given the
20 number of people that are here, my
21 inclination is after we get done with this,
22 to open it up, I think it might be a larger
23 group than this, so I will probably let
24 anybody speak if they want.

25 The first person on the list is

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 Kelly Lappan?

3 MS. LAPPAN: Hi. Is this on?

4 THE CHAIRMAN: Start with your name
5 and address, please.

Town of LaGrange Transcript 7-9-09
Oh, we have it.

6
7 MS. LAPPAN: My name's Kelly Lappan.
8 I actually live in the Town of Poughkeepsie,
9 but I'm here representing the Arlington
10 School Board. I'm the president of Arlington
11 School Board this year, and I am here to
12 represent the board and also Mr. Pepe, who is
13 not able to be here tonight.

14 First of all, I wanted to thank all
15 of you for your willingness to consider the
16 impacts on the school in the whole process of
17 this. It's actually very rare and we are
18 very, very appreciative of the fact that
19 you've been as involved with us and have
20 listened to our input all along the way.

21 I want you to know that we feel very
22 comfortable that the impact of this project,
23 it will be able to be absorbed very easily by
24 the schools.

25 we've done a lot of expansion

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1 PROCEEDINGS

2 lately. As you know, this school is one of
3 the schools that we used to expand, we are in
4 the process of expanding the high school. I
5 honestly think that the tax impact to us will
6 probably be a little bit better than what
7 your proposal is, because we do believe that
8 we can absorb the growth and students with
9 probably less cost than in your -- in your

10 independent study, so we're very happy about
11 that.

12 We are especially happy about the
13 tax impact to the schools. Arlington has a
14 real problem with our taxes. We have no
15 commercial -- we have fundamentally no
16 commercial property within the district
17 compared to our neighbors so that our taxes
18 are much, much higher than Wappingers and
19 Spackenkill up there. We have over nine
20 shopping centers, and I know that you don't
21 want to have one of those, but this is a way
22 that will help spread the tax burden out away
23 from our residents and help alleviate some of
24 that, and we're very, very happy about that.
25 So, I just wanted to say -- tell you that

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1 PROCEEDINGS
2 that's something that we consider a huge
3 positive.

4 We also are very intrigued at the
5 idea of the possibility of moving our central
6 offices to one of the buildings in this
7 project. We're renting right now, it's kind
8 of a stupid thing to do, but that's what
9 we've been doing for years, it costs us a lot
10 of money every year in rent, so we'd be very
11 interested at least in pursuing that and the
12 possibility of being one of the commercial

A21

13 Town of LaGrange Transcript 7-9-09
properties here as opposed to residential.

14 So, I just wanted to say that we're
15 very supportive of this and, you know, you've
16 been very good at keeping us apprised of the
17 progress all along the way, and we'd like
18 to -- hope that you'll continue to do that,
19 and we're looking forward to continue working
20 with you to make the project move ahead.

21 Thank you.

22 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

23 Ed Meyer?

24 Name and address, please.

25 MR. MEYER: My name is Ed Meyer. I

□

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 live at 90 Cramer Road.

3 I'm concerned somewhat about the
4 traffic. There's four traffic lights within
5 a half a mile from Stringham Road down to
6 Freedom Road. Now, at this time, there's a
7 lot of congestion on 55 where it backs up
8 from Route -- to Route 82 by Paige's. By
9 putting what you call turnabouts, two of
10 them, in there, it would make more
11 congestion, in my opinion, than leaving them
12 alone.

13 How are you gonna get a --
14 tractor-trailers to come off of Freedom Road,
15 going around those tractors -- turnarounds, I
16 should say -- and snowplows, also emergency

17 vehicles, like fire trucks? You should try
18 life-saving support units.

19 Years back, down in Westchester
20 County, they had a place called Hawthorne
21 Circle. The state did away with that because
22 it was a turnaround and there was more
23 accidents, or maybe years back before it was
24 called turna -- turna -- rotary circle, now
25 they call it a roundabout. I think it's the

□

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 silliest idea to put in there. If you want
3 to do something decent, put a service road
4 off of 55, start by regular homes, and go in
5 there and have -- get rid of the traffic
6 lights, and have one coming westbound where
7 they can pull into the thing, as your
8 buildings in the background, like right now,
9 your bank, the Madagascar thing there, make
10 them go around that thing there. Leave 55
11 alone.

119

12 And there's also, I don't know if
13 you people ever heard of Annapolis,
14 North Carolina. They have beautiful stores
15 down there. There's -- it's the beautifulist
16 ghost town on the state of North Carolina.
17 Just think about that.

18 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

19 Just one note on this, because I

Town of LaGrange Transcript 7-9-09
20 suspect this will be a recurring theme: The
21 Environmental Impact Statement that we're
22 reviewing has a substantial appendix in it
23 that has a detailed traffic study. The way
24 that these Environmental Impact Analyses work
25 is the Applicant is obliged to discuss the

□

1 PROCEEDINGS
2 potential impacts of the development and then
3 to discuss possible mitigation measures, and
4 that's what was done here. Needless to say,
5 the addition of that number of buildings and
6 homes is gonna have an impact on traffic and
7 so the Applicant presented a couple of
8 different alternatives, one of which was
9 possibly putting in roundabouts. It also
10 considered putting in additional signals in
11 various places in the town as well. The
12 actual determination of which of those things
13 will be used is something that will probably
14 be -- that will definitely be done farther on
15 in the project, and because Route 55 is a
16 state highway, the state department of
17 transportation will be directly and
18 intimately involved in that determination.

19 That process will also have its own
20 set of Environmental Impact Statements and
21 public hearings regarding the specific
22 projects done by the DOT. We are working in
23 conjunction with them, they will probably

24 borrow information from our Environmental
25 Impact Statement, but I wanted it to be clear

□

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 to you folks that the ultimate technical
3 solution that may be employed on the Route 55
4 corridor is something that the department of
5 transportation ultimately is gonna make the
6 decision on, and they will have their own
7 proceedings regarding that.

8 AS I said, we were working together
9 with each other to make sure it integrates
10 with and works with the rest of the project,
11 but I wanted to make clear that people
12 understood that that specific solution is not
13 going to be determined by this Board.

14 The next name I have is Rosealice
15 D'Aranza. Actually, I think that might have
16 been -- I'm trying to read the handwriting.
17 It's better than mine, but still a little bit
18 hard.

19 Start with your name and address,
20 please.

21 MS. D'ARANZA: Okay.

22 Is this on?

23 THE CHAIRMAN: It is.

24 MS. D'ARANZA: Rosealice D'Aranza,
25 140 Cramer Road, town of LaGrange.

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PROCEEDINGS

Okay, I'm not here to address the EIS statement, I read enough of them when I was on the Planning Board of Beekman, and I didn't know that was the focus today.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay.

MS. D'ARANZA: What I am here to say is that I am in favor of this Town Center for several reasons: Possible employment and internship for our students at Arlington High School.

A26

When my five children went to the school, there was no place for them to get employment or to do internships unless I drove them into Poughkeepsie. I think this is a positive thing for them.

Especially the new library you're planning to put in would give the high school students a chance to volunteer, to do more reference work where they can walk. I think those are very important things.

The Town Center is a concept of community, and I -- I hope I live long enough to see it developed. After 52 years of living in Dutchess County, I have to say I

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PROCEEDINGS

can now walk to the grocery store. It is a
Page 57

3 mile away, but I can walk to it. And I think
4 this concept will do that for everyone.

5 Thank you.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

7 Okay, I'm not sure about this. The
8 address is 125 Stringham Road and it looks
9 like the last name is Schnell?

10 MR. SCHELL: Schell.

11 THE CHAIRMAN: Sorry.

12 MR. SCHELL: Good evening. My
13 name's Brian Schell. I reside at 125
14 Stringham Road. I've just recently moved
15 here about two years ago.

16 I just wanted to say that I did
17 decide to move to this county for a couple of
18 reasons, it fit where I was living with my
19 income level and things like that, but I have
20 some concerns.

21 I grew up in Yorktown and one of the
22 reasons my parents had to move out of
23 Yorktown was the taxes went higher than our
24 income level can support. So, those are some
25 of my concerns.

J2

□

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 Also, traffic is a concern, but more
3 importantly, infrastructure, the plowing of
4 the roads, sewers, fire department, parking,
5 water mains. This is swampland we're looking

K14

6 at. What if it all backfires, who's going to
7 pay for it in the beginning and who's going
8 to pay for it in the end if it doesn't work
9 out? why isn't it built up already with
10 sidewalks? And, I mean, is it possible we're
11 biting off more than we can chew? Because
12 usually towns like I see up on the Board have
13 evolved and this is something that we want to
14 just develop.

J3

K15

15 And those are just my concerns,
16 again, who is financing it and what -- how
17 much of it the taxes are gonna go up after
18 it's all built and paid for, am I gonna have
19 to move out because I can no longer afford to
20 live here.

J3

J2

21 I -- as you know, I live very close
22 to where you're building and it's gonna
23 affect my view from my window, so is that
24 gonna affect the value of my home that I just
25 purchased?

B2

□

1 PROCEEDINGS
2 So, those are my questions, and
3 that's all.
4 Thank you.
5 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
6 Maureen Harvey?
7 Name and address, please.
8 MS. HARVEY: Hi. Maureen Harvey, 23
9 Todd Hill Road, Town of LaGrange.

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I first want to say that I am in favor of this project. I like it. I look forward to the day that I can walk down to the Town Green. But just make sure it's done responsibly.

A27

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Regarding the land use and the zoning, I question the buildings along Lauer and Todd Hill.
Section -- Code Section 240-35(h)(2)(b)(5) states: "Residential units should be located to Route 55 to preserve the more rural qualities and open fields facing Lauer and Todd Hill Road as shown on the Illustrative Plan."
I understand the Illustrative Plan is conceptual, but if you need some help in

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PROCEEDINGS
clarification of what the possible intent of that plan was, I ask you to look at the June 26th, '02, minutes, where then Supervisor Wade states: "Concerning the demise of the fields on Lauer Road, Todd Hill, that they are being protected."
This was then followed by Councilman Luna, stating that: "There will be a buffer zone between the Town Center and existing residential properties."

12

Visual resources, I was concerned

B1

13 Town of LaGrange Transcript 7-9-09
14 about the proximity of the houses on the
15 northern end of Lauer, how it would blend
16 with the old, although according to that
17 slideshow we just saw there was a picture and
18 it looked great, so I don't know if that
19 slideshow is in scope to what the actual
20 buffers are going to be, but it's something
21 that should be looked at to make sure that we
22 do have a proper blending, because we are
23 supposed to be going from dense to less
24 dense.

B1

24 And -- let's see -- under Flora and
25 Fauna in the DEIS, it states: "There will be

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 a loss of some individual mature trees on the
3 site that fall within the proposed
4 development area. This is an unavoidable
5 impact of the proposed project."

6 I ask that you look closely at that.
7 There is a majestic oak tree that's
8 absolutely beautiful and right now I think
9 there's a sidewalk where that oak tree
10 currently sits.

D12

11 And I just ask you to look at the
12 density of the rural portion of this site.

A3

13 The proposed plan, the clubhouse district
14 crosses an upland, I believe it has 371
15 houses. Now, I have a print that was done by
16 Dutchess County Planning back in June of '02,

17 and I know it's not to be relied on, but I
18 believe that that same area showed 166
19 houses. So, you know, we have issues with
20 traffic. It's not something that can be
21 avoided regardless of if this is built or
22 not. In Dutchess County we're growing, it's
23 gonna happen, but just look at the density
24 and see if you think it's appropriate for
25 what we want.

124

□

1 PROCEEDINGS
2 Thank you.
3 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.
4 Joseph Hines?
5 MR. HINES: Thank you very much.
6 Excuse me.
7 Good evening. I -- my name is
8 Joe Hines. I live on Rombout Road. I've
9 been a resident of the town of LaGrange for
10 approximately 35 years. I'm here tonight in
11 the capacity of Chairman of the Board of Fire
12 Commissioners of the LaGrange Fire District.
13 There are many concerns that I would
14 like to explore, some of which have already
15 been stated, but I'm gonna confine my remarks
16 this evening to the area of density, traffic,
17 and public safety.
18 I have not read your EIS. For those
19 of you who don't know, I have a visual

20 Town of LaGrange Transcript 7-9-09
21 impairment. I will read it. But I have a --
22 I have a concern from, again, a public
23 safety-orientation perspective in the ability
24 to respond with fire equipment into a Town
25 Center. I understand this conversation so

I17

K8

far this evening is conceptual, but I'd be

1 PROCEEDINGS
2 interested in the width of roadways, I'd be
3 interested if the volumes of water in the
4 proposed water district is an inadequate
5 supply for fire protection.

6 I have concerns about your mention
7 of stone walls, sidewalks, parallel street
8 parking, which preclude access to residences,
9 particularly upper stories. I have concerns
10 with cul de sacs, dead end streets; the
11 ability to get fire apparatus in is one
12 thing, it's another question to be able to
13 get it out under emergency situations.

K8

K8

14 The density, as I understand it, is
15 gonna add to the volume of work that the fire
16 district currently has. We have, for those
17 of you who don't know, a firehouse facility
18 on Route 82 north of Billings, one on 55,
19 west of the proposed Town Center, and the
20 other in southwest LaGrange.

K6

21 In order to respond, hypothetically,
22 for example, to the high school, your concept
23 of the roundabouts, 30 miles an hour, I

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believe you stated, at a reduced speed, you
can move more traffic through and you give a

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PROCEEDINGS

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location at a slower speed, I believe that is
3 with the exception of fire apparatus in an
4 emergency situation.

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I, as chairman of the board, have
not been consulted regarding this Town Center
project, to the best of my knowledge, nor
have the other fire commissioners. This is
Fire Commissioner Lansky, who's assisted me
up here this evening. None of us have had
the opportunity to review or discuss or, for
that matter, been invited to attend a
briefing on this particular subject, and I
think on one thing that we all agree, public
safety is at the heart of any community; if
we can't protect our citizens, I really don't
think we ought to invite them to live here.

k5

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So, I would ask you, with all due
respect, to consult with us, the fire
district, on an ongoing basis -- we'll make
ourselves available to you -- before these
concepts, quote-unquote, become reality.

23

Thank you very much.

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THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

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Tracy Johnson?

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PROCEEDINGS

MR. JOHNSON: Good evening,
Tracy Johnson, 144 Velie Road.

Looking at the proposed layout of the -- of the project, specifically at the commercial buildings fronting on Route 55, I note that basically they're gonna be looking across at a shopping mall and the proposal has a very large parking lot in the back, so I'm kind of curious as to what sort of tenants that are gonna be interested in doing that.

A4

There's no real discussion of signage on the front of the buildings on -- facing Route 55. I think that that signage has been a problem in the past and that should really be considered as part of the EIS.

A5

The Village Green is -- seems to be broken up into about three segments with two buildings indicated that will be dividing it. I'm not sure that this fragmented Village Green couldn't be consolidated a little bit more.

A6

The -- a number of the buildings are

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PROCEEDINGS

considered to have single-car garages. I
Page 65

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must say that in -- it's -- it's noble to think that people will just be walking, but in my experience, most families have more than one car, so that this might be an issue.

Given the current economic situations and the admitted long period of buildout for this project, I would encourage the Town to consider a sunset plan for the building permits that are granted, just in case our economic situation changes and people wish to come truly closer to cities rather than being in the country, as LaGrange is.

M29

There really is no discussion about waste disposal in the EIS that I could see, particularly in terms of actually locating where Dumpsters, whatever, might be. I know just on my road people have little -- you know, pretty big garbage cans out in front, and if you go to most buildings in

K16

Poughkeepsie, whatever, there's gonna be Dumpsters all over the place. I think this issue should really be considered as part of

PROCEEDINGS

the overall design of the project.

K16

There's been lots of discussion about the improvements on Route 55. I would encourage everyone to make sure that there is

I20

6 Town of LaGrange Transcript 7-9-09
sufficient right-of-way so that any
7 improvements the state might wish to make on
8 that road will not impact the buildings as
9 they have in other places.

10 Finally, as was pointed out, this
11 development is gonna be within half a mile of
12 the school, so if there is an issue with the
13 kids being bussed to the school, they may
14 have to walk. I'm curious as to making sure
15 that the project was designed with the
16 sidewalks so that children could move back
17 and forth. Some cross way over Route 55 and
18 I'm wondering how this will impact the
19 traffic going through the Town Center.

k3

20 Thank you.

21 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

22 Paul Doherty?

23 MR. DOHERTY: Good evening.

24 Paul Doherty, 120 velie Road.

25 I'm familiar with the Riegers and

M31

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 also Ginsburg Development, I'm familiar with
3 some of their projects, and I think they're
4 very capable of producing what this town
5 should have had 10 or 20 years ago.

6 I'm very familiar with the
7 Washington Town Center in New Jersey near
8 Princeton where they have over 800 homes in a
9 mixed-use development, and in the last 80

Town of LaGrange Transcript 7-9-09

10 years and throughout this recession the homes
11 are selling very well, obviously not as fast
12 as we had earlier in the couple -- a few
13 years ago, but there's very little slowdown
14 in their sales, and I think you'll see the
15 same thing here.

16 As far as the density goes, I think
17 the 600-and-some units are not only
18 appropriate but I think they're necessary in
19 order to make the whole project work.

A7

20 And again, I'd like to just say that
21 I wish and my wife wishes that this had taken
22 place ten years ago, so I hope it will get
23 started very quickly.

24 VOICE FROM THE AUDIENCE: We hope
25 so.

□

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

3 That ends our list. So, if someone
4 else would like to speak, if you raise your
5 hand, I'll call on you and you can come up
6 and give your name and address and, like I
7 said, say your piece.

8 Anyone else?

9

10 (NO RESPONSE.)

11

12 THE CHAIRMAN: Are you sure?

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MS. BRINKERHOFF: Well --

THE CHAIRMAN: I can't wait.

MS. BRINKERHOFF: -- I just wanted to know what relationship --

THE CHAIRMAN: If you could come up and speak into the mic so we could hear you, that would be helpful.

I'm not sure the --

MS. BRINKERHOFF: Actually, I think you can hear me from there.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay, I -- we can't record it from there, ma'am. We are recording everything so that we can make a

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PROCEEDINGS

permanent record.

MR. LENT: Nancy Brinkerhoff of Lauer Road asks if there will be a pond or a lake as part of the development.

E7

THE CHAIRMAN: I'm not sure what the answer to that is.

Would the Applicant like to answer that tonight, or not?

I don't recall us building any ponds or lakes.

MS. OLYHA: There was -- there will be no island or pond or lake, but the clubhouse would have a pool, but it was for the residents that lived in that development.

THE CHAIRMAN: Are you talking about

17 recreational-type matters?

18 MS. BRINKERHOFF: No, it doesn't
19 have to be, but because of the wetlands and
20 all that and future development --

21 THE CHAIRMAN: All right, let me
22 answer it this way, and because this is an
23 environmental review a lot of the details and
24 stuff, the specific way that some of this
25 stuff is going to be accomplished, the work

□

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 simply hasn't been done yet, there's a lot of
3 details that will go into this, and one of
4 the major things that need to be completed in
5 detail is the way that the entire stormwater
6 for the region or for this area is managed,
7 and it would not be unusual in a project of
8 this scope if the result of that solution
9 involved creating some depressions in certain
10 parts of the area which would accumulate and
11 retain water so that it could seep back into
12 the ground rather than taking it and pumping
13 it all into the pipes and getting it out of
14 the way. But at this point I don't believe
15 there's any intention at this stage to create
16 anything specific. But it wouldn't surprise
17 me if those things end up in the ultimate
18 stormwater solution.

19 Does that answer your question?

Town of LaGrange Transcript 7-9-09
MS. BRINKERHOFF: Yes.

20

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay, thank you.

21

Anyone else?

22

Sir?

23

Name and address, please.

24

MR. PEARL: My name is Harold Pearl,

25

□

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PROCEEDINGS

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130 Miller Hill Drive, LaGrange.

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Well, a couple of comments or
concerns I have besides the traffic on 55,
which I do travel almost every day back and
forth. And I saw the roundabouts, but when I
spoke to one of the Mr. Riegers earlier
today, they said the light in front of the
high school would still be there.

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MR. IAN RIEGER: What are the other

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lights?

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MR. PEARL: That whole roundabout
between the one at Stringham and the one at
Freedom Plains and the entrance to the high
school right in the middle where that kind of
traffic flows, it's going to make a problem
no matter what the speed limit is, because
you have a problem with buses going in and
then the buses coming out, and which way do
they go crossing across 55 when they have to
go east, that's the question.

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The design concept shows the Town

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Center is a half-mile radius. Hopefully, the

24 EIS will address, if the state does rework
25 55, how people who live north of 55 can

I22

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 really walk to the Town Center, because right
3 now it's very difficult, if you're not at one
4 of the traffic lights, to walk across 55.

5 For those of us who live east of the
6 Taconic, if you want us to come to a Town
7 Center, to enjoy it, please make sure there's
8 enough parking, because I've got to drive,
9 Alan's gotta drive, the attorney's gotta
10 drive, and so do many people who are not
11 within the boundaries of the Town Center.

I23

12 Thank you.

13 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

14 MS. HARVEY: Maureen Harvey again,
15 23 Todd Hill Road.

16 I'm up speaking again and commenting
17 on what Paul Doherty said about the 600
18 houses that are needed for this project. I'm
19 not sure where he's coming from, but I'll
20 back up a little bit. When I saw this plan,
21 I was surprised to see all the buildings
22 along Todd Hill Road because I had been quite
23 involved and been at many meetings and it was
24 pretty clear to me that there wasn't to be
25 any building along Todd Hill Road, not until,

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PROCEEDINGS

you know, you got past where the stream comes out on Lauer was there to be buildings according to the Illustrative Plan, which again, is conceptual. So, I contacted one of my Town councilmen and I said, what's going on, were they given a nod, and basically I was told that the fields are -- well, are now a knoll versus a field and that in order for this to work they needed that housing, so, in my -- in our -- my husband and my --

October 3rd, 2006, letter, in regards to this draft document, I just want to read to you, and I want you to think about this, this is what we wrote: "The Town has clearly made it known in the past that all along Todd Hill is to be kept open as a buffer. The current proposal shows houses. The fields at Lauer and Todd Hill have been reduced to a knoll. To allow this area to be developed based on the argument that these residences are needed to support the commercial aspect of the project would be absolutely wrong. It does not consider current residents who would do their business there. As noted in the

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PROCEEDINGS

6/26/02 minutes, it's for accommodating the
Page 73

A22

entire town of LaGrange to concentrate development and growth into certain areas, conserving the town's open space."

So, it's not just for those people

living in the Town Center Residential and Town Center Business.

So, to suggest -- I'm not sure why 600 density is needed. If it's a financial need for the developers or if you're trying to make the argument, as was told to me, to support the commercial, just keep it in mind that that's -- in my opinion, that's an absolutely erroneous argument.

A8

Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

Anyone else?

Sir?

MR. LENT: Mr. Paul Lent.

THE CHAIRMAN: Name and address, please.

MR. LENT: Paul Lent, 24 Stone Hedge Drive, LaGrange, also standing up here as the pastor of the Freedom Plains Presbyterian Church.

□

PROCEEDINGS

Just a request that the Planning Board and the Town work with DOT and try to get the 55 corridor traffic plan with DOT established and the plan figured out as soon

I24

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as possible, because lots of other things

6
7 seem to weigh on that. So, if there's any
8 pressure that can be brought to bear,
9 priority, certainly, the church has some
10 plans of building of our own that we're
11 waiting on to see how some of the traffic and
12 what gets decided. And so that's my -- our
13 request.

14 THE CHAIRMAN: I'll respond to that
15 with kind of a positive and a less positive
16 comment.

17 First, the positive comment is that
18 the Town has been working in conjunction with
19 the DOT, they're fully aware of our plans,
20 and we have had meetings to discuss working
21 together, the timing and the sequence of how
22 to do all that. The less positive statement
23 is that my experience has been that trying to
24 influence the pace at which state government
25 works is not an easy thing to do.

□

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 Anyone else?

3 Ma'am?

4 MS. HINES: Karen Hines, 148 Rombout
5 Road.

6 My question is not really one
7 related to impact studies so much.
8 Unfortunately, this is my first opportunity
9 to attend one of these meetings, and while I

10 love the concept, it seems like a great idea
11 and everything, my concern is, who's gonna
12 populate it other than the residents in the
13 residential units?

A33

14 I've only lived in the town of
15 LaGrange for 12 years and in that 12 years

16 that I've been here a lot of the growth and
17 development has been housing for what I'm
18 gonna call upper middle class and upper
19 class, and most of those people, in order to
20 afford that type of housing, do not work
21 anywhere near the Town of LaGrange. I think
22 most of the people -- I just -- I'm wondering
23 if there's any study that I can look at or
24 that the Town has done to support this
25 concept of a Town Center, because I think

A32

□

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 most people who are living in LaGrange now
3 are commuting south of here for work to be
4 able to afford the large salaries that are
5 needed to pay our taxes and to pay for our
6 big homes.

7 So, that's just it. I don't know if
8 there's anything you could point to offhand.

9 THE CHAIRMAN: I think I'm going to
10 stick my neck out and attempt to answer that
11 against my better instincts.

12 I would say that your observation is

13 largely correct; however, the Town has been
14 aware for some time that there are residents
15 of the town that are not being serviced
16 specifically because of what you're
17 describing, and the two groups that
18 immediately come to mind are people who work
19 in the town of LaGrange and are relatively
20 young and people who are living in the town
21 of LaGrange on relatively large properties,
22 paying a lot of taxes, that are retiring, and
23 don't wish to move to some other location.
24 And I believe that smaller homes, apartments,
25 condominiums, and a mix of residential

□

1 PROCEEDINGS

2 options plays to those people who may not
3 currently live in the town of LaGrange but
4 may very well wish to.

5 MS. HINES: Yeah, okay, thanks.

6 THE CHAIRMAN: Sure.

7 MS. HINES: I just want to make sure
8 that we can populate it --

9 THE CHAIRMAN: And I believe --

10 MS. HINES: -- you know, because I
11 want to know --

12 THE CHAIRMAN: And I'm going to
13 further stick my neck out and guess that the
14 people who are investing the money and
15 building this thing have done some level of
16 market research to determine whether they're

17 going to be able to sell it when they're
18 done.

19 MS. HINES: Thank you.

20 THE CHAIRMAN: Anyone else?

21 MR. JOHNSON: Tracy Johnson, 144
22 Velie Road.

23 A large part of the beneficial tax
24 outcome that's predicted from this project I
25 presume comes from the commercial buildings

J4

1 PROCEEDINGS
2 and I -- I hope that the Final Environmental
3 Impact Statement in its staging discussion
4 will have a more complete breakdown of what
5 commercial and what residential will be built
6 in the initial stages.

7 Thank you.

8 THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

9 Anyone else?

10
11 (NO RESPONSE.)

12
13 THE CHAIRMAN: Going twice.

14 Last chance.

15 MS. OLYHA: Move to close the public
16 hearing.

17
18 (Whereupon, THE BOARD VOTED IN FAVOR
19 OF CLOSING THE PUBLIC HEARING.)

Town of LaGrange Transcript 7-9-09

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THE CHAIRMAN: I think we're done,
so do we have a motion to adjourn?

(WHEREUPON, THE BOARD VOTED IN FAVOR
OF ADJOURNING THE PUBLIC HEARING.)

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PROCEEDINGS

THE CHAIRMAN: Thanks everyone for
coming this evening and giving us your
thoughts. I appreciate it very much.

(Whereupon, THE PUBLIC HEARING WAS
ADJOURNED AT 8:43 P.M.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N

STATE OF NEW YORK)
) ss.
COUNTY OF PUTNAM)

I, DANA CHIPKIN, Court Reporter
and Notary Public within and for the County
of Putnam, State of New York, do hereby
certify:

That I reported the proceedings
that are hereinbefore set forth, and that
such transcript is a true and accurate record
of said proceedings.

AND, I further certify that I am
not related to any of the parties to this
action by blood or marriage, and that I am in
no way interested in the outcome of this
matter.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have
hereunto set my hand.

DANA CHIPKIN, RPR, CRI