

# Lange Planning and Consulting

Land Use, Environment, & Sustainability Planning



Date: 12-14-2020

Re: Additional response to Planning Board

**To: Mr. Salvatore Corallo, Chairman**  
Town of Haverstraw Planning Board

Chairman,

At the last public hearing, the Town's Planning and Engineering Consultants requested that several more issues be discussed by the applicant to assist the Town in its review of the project. These included addressing:

- Address the economic benefits of redevelopment as they relate to this project
- Further establish the need for small units using Census housing data as a base
- Amend the surrounding multifamily Crystal Hill to represent The Henry
- Discuss impacts of developing the entire site as R-15
- Compare a 3 and 4 BR development on a 6 Dwelling Unit per acre basis
- Provide revised calculations of water and sewer usage to insure consistency between planning and engineering estimates

In preparation for the December 9<sup>th</sup> continuation of the public hearing, this office has prepared the requested responses and will be consolidating all revised information in a single formal submission.

## 1. Oak Tree Lane Development Economic Benefits of Redeveloping Residential Construction

The current development at Oak Tree Lane has a mix of homes totaling 55 units which originated as a Coralloid bungalow colony development, not meeting current zoning standards or current building standards. The present condition of the site is not conducive to attract redevelopment in the area. The applicant seeks to replace these 55 deteriorating units with new apartments which will meet the present energy standards, insulation requirements, and energy efficiency in the appliances and HVAC units. The replacement of these units is one benefit of the proposed redevelopment. However, the economic benefits go far beyond the replacement of these units.

The elimination of substandard housing to be replaced with new attractive residential units has a positive impact on investments by others in the area. It represents a progressive investment approach and fosters further investments both in upgrading homes in the area and attracting additional residents and

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businesses to the area.

The Community Impact of New Construction was detailed in an April 2016 article in Construction Management which outlines several ways in which development/redevelopment fosters an economic boom. The National Association of Home Builders, "In a recent report stated that the one-year economic impact of building 100 single family homes... generated an estimated \$28.7 million in local income and \$3.6 million in revenue for local government and 394 jobs for the local community." The study noted that while the study was based on 100 single-family homes, the benefits are also true for apartments.

A similar 2003 Study by the Nevada Rural Housing Authority, noted the positive economic impact of residential development noting that "Housing construction is its own economic engine that simultaneously enhances a communities' ability to attract new business" *before, during and after construction.*

Prior to construction, "Planning Professionals, attorneys, engineers, architects and designers are commissioned to develop designs. Financial models are prepared and land is acquired. Redevelopment plans are presented and local businesses strategize for their position in a growing economy." In addition, local fees, impact fees, utility fees and transfer taxes are paid. Related infrastructure projects are planned to support the project.

During construction, a portion of the local income generated by construction will be spent generating more income and spending as this investment ripples through the economy. Construction spending for materials and paying workers generates spending in the local economy for food, entertainment and services. A sample one-year economic impact of a development of 100 housing units is shown below detailing jobs supported, wages, income and taxes.

**ONE-YEAR ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF 100 HOUSING UNITS**  
*Based on an average metropolitan statistical area, and homes with an average construction value of \$145,372.<sup>4</sup>*

Type of Units	Jobs Supported	Wage and Salaries	Business Owner's Income	Local Taxes
Single Family	253	\$7,388,000	\$2,670,000	\$854,000
Multifamily	121	\$3,543,000	\$1,280,000	\$409,000

<sup>4</sup>National Association of Home Builders, "The Local Impact of a Typical Tax Credit Housing Project", September 2007

The projected after construction benefits to the Town of Haverstraw were identified in a study by Beckmann Appraisals which noted the tax benefits as:

Economic Impacts of the Project:

- Benefit to the tax base
  - a projected increase from the present tax of \$90,379.68 to \$568,468.
- Benefit to the school district
  - a projected increase from the present \$91,372, to \$613,323.

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Long term (post construction) impacts of housing development were identified in the same study which provided the following details.

**ONGOING, ANNUAL ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF 100 NEW HOUSING UNITS**  
*Based on an average metropolitan statistical area, and homes with an average construction value of \$145,372.<sup>6</sup>*

Type of Units	Jobs Supported	Wage and Salaries	Business Owner's Income	Local Taxes
Single Family	76	\$1,983,000	\$416,000	\$393,000
Multifamily	36	\$945,000	\$238,000	\$243,000

<sup>3</sup> Association of Oregon Community Development Organization, "Economic Impact of Affordable Housing Development," April, 2003  
<sup>6</sup> National Association of Home Builders, "The Local Impact of Home Building in Average City, USA: Income, Jobs, and Taxes Generated by Single Family Construction", and "The Local Impact of Home Building in Average City, USA: Income, Jobs, and Taxes Generated by Multifamily Construction", March 1997

Copies of both studies cited accompany this report under separate cover.

## 2. Establish need for small units

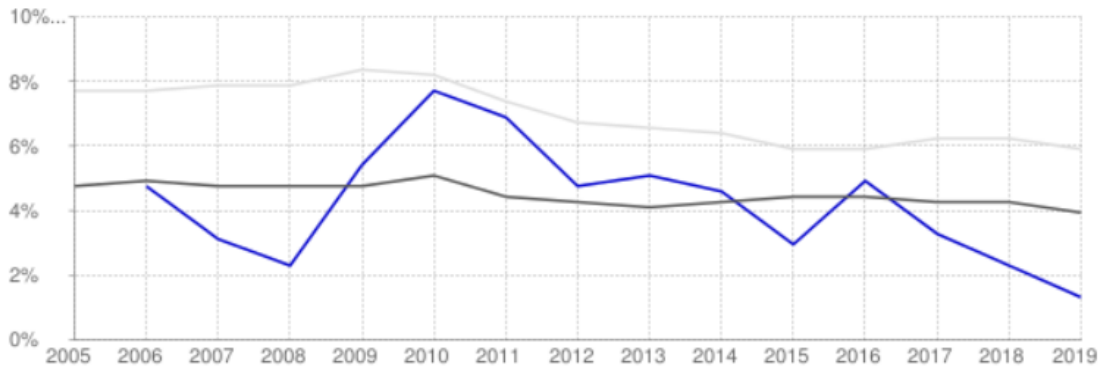
According to Census data, the number of occupants per room in Haverstraw is substantially below 1.5 with 438 households with 1 or less, 452 households with 1.01 to 1.5, and 185 households with 1.51 or more occupants. Smaller rental units total 4,571, with 67.3 percent of renter households having 3 persons per household or less. In 2010, the rental vacancy rate for Haverstraw was 4.3%. With a current rental vacancy rate of 1.6%, this leaves a very narrow opportunity for the majority of the small households to secure housing. In 2010, the vacancy rate for the County was 7.75%. In 2017, the rental vacancy rate for Rockland County was 3.25%. The current rental vacancy rate has dropped to 1.37%. The numbers demonstrate that the vacancy rate for rentals in Rockland County has declined every year since 2016. With the impact of Covid, suburbs are experiencing increasing pressure as people are leaving NYC and higher density surrounding areas for less congested neighborhoods such as Haverstraw.

A good vacancy rate varies depending on the rental market in the city where you are. As a general rule, though, **five to eight percent** vacancy is an average. Reference: [www.rentalpropertyreporter.com/what-is-a-vacancy-rate-why-you-should-care-and-how-it-can-save-you-...](http://www.rentalpropertyreporter.com/what-is-a-vacancy-rate-why-you-should-care-and-how-it-can-save-you-...)

## Trends in Rockland County NY Rental Vacancy Rate

The rental vacancy rate in Rockland County peaked in 2010 at 7.75%. Since then it has fallen by 6.38% to 1.37%. Data records for this series originated in 2005.

### Rental Vacancy Rate: Rockland County NY, New York, US



### Historical Rental Vacancy Rate data for Rockland County

Date	US	New York	Rockland County NY
2019	5.97%	4.00%	1.37%
2018	6.15%	4.20%	2.31%
2017	6.18%	4.19%	3.25%
2016	5.89%	4.42%	4.90%
2015	5.85%	4.41%	3.00%
2014	6.32%	4.34%	4.54%
2013	6.49%	4.17%	5.10%
2012	6.77%	4.34%	4.68%
2011	7.40%	4.48%	6.96%
2010	8.17%	5.03%	7.75%
2009	8.43%	4.78%	5.45%

### 3. Amend Crystal Hill as The Henry provides smaller units.

The Henry, located at 1 Crystal Hill Dr, in Haverstraw provides as their website states, *luxury* small apartments with fewer bedrooms compared to other apartment and condominium developments along Route 202. The Henry apartments featuring 1-2 Bedroom units with 1-2.5 baths. The square footage of these units varies from 1,072-1,876 sq. ft. with rents ranging from \$2,140 - \$3,175. The Henry was built in 2000 and was constructed as 4 story structures totaling 170 units. Although these are one and two-bedroom units, they are significantly larger than the units proposed for Oak Lane, and not directly comparable. They do offer a *higher* end small rental alternative. The Oak Tree Lane development has units ranging from studios at approximately 450 SF; one-bedroom units at approximately 700 SF; and two-bedroom units approximately 1200 SF.

#### 4. Discuss Impacts of Developing the Entire site as R-15

Developing the entire site as an R-15 density would permit a theoretical maximum of 39 single family homes based upon a net lot area of 13.547 acres. It is not possible to achieve the theoretical number. First, land is required for roadways to reach individual homes. Second, land would be required for drainage detention and treatment. Calculations show that the maximum number of homes would be 28, not 39. This would be less than the existing substandard 55 residential units on site today.

To develop this site, the entire 13.547 acres would have to be subject to development, edge to edge and up and down the sloped portions of the site. It would be nearly impossible to preserve existing trees as clearing requirements for roads and buildings would leave minimal spaces. The entire site is likely to be cleared/disturbed. Few if any trees could be preserved as any trees within 20 feet of proposed building construction would not likely survive damage to the root systems of mature trees. The rear yard dimension of 35 feet would allow only 15 feet of potential tree preservation at best, depending upon the location of utilities. The permitted development pattern would provide only 20 feet as side yards compared to the proposed 66.2 feet of the applicant's proposal. The appearance would be very much a "cookie cutter" development with limited opportunity to provide a more modern design with curved streets for closure. Building design articulation is severely limited as maximized development to the limits of the bulk table require bulk clearing. A 15,000 square foot lot would generally consist of a 100x150 foot lot dimension. Adding for roads, each typical lot would have an additional 25 feet to the street centerline to compensate for roadways with a new lot total of 17,500 per lot.

Storm water ponds and accessways to the ponds will take up a minimum of 2 acres – further reducing lot area. Deducting two acres for the ponds would leave 11.547 acres divided by the 17,500 square feet per lot permitting the development of only 28 lots. This might be further reduced by slope limitations, cul-de-sac limitations or by street restrictions. This would reduce the housing stock from the original 55 homes to just 28 homes just 51% of what previously existed.

#### Comparative Impacts:

- Almost 100 percent of the site would be disturbed with most trees removed.
  - The applicant's proposed project offered only 48 percent development coverage (half the disturbance)
- The project would be highly visible to surrounding neighbors
  - Individual homes would be located within 35 feet of the peripheral lot lines instead of 100+ feet
- The tax implications would be severe; with a maximum of 28 new homes, it is estimated that \$10,000 total taxes per home could be expected with a total of \$280,000 as compared to \$568,468 for the proposed development
- No common open spaces would be available
- No community center or pool would exist unless the number of lots was again reduced
- No space exists for dog parks
- No space exists for walking trails
- Fewer residents than the existing 55 homes would not increase support for local businesses

- In terms of sustainability, the project would be significantly more impactful as:
  - Individual structures without shared walls and ceilings will be far less efficient requiring additional *forever* HVAC costs.
  - Increased roadway length would create additional runoff and use additional raw materials
  - Increased water and sewer line lengths create additional construction costs and potential for higher long-term maintenance costs
  - Pump stations for sewage would probably be required to service lower lying areas with commensurate additional energy and chemical costs and maintenance
  - Larger roof areas cause larger heat and cooling losses contributing to climate change
  - Greater loss of trees will increase carbon impacts
  - No EV charging would be provided
  - Greater emissions would result for increases in driving length to reach homes

5. Compare 6 DU's Per Acre of 3 and 4-Bedroom Units Alternate

The development of the site at a density of 6 dwelling units per acre, would reduce the developable acreage from 13.547 acres to 10.16 acres allowing for road and detention facilities. Dividing the developable acreage by 6 dwelling units per acre would permit 60 dwelling units. Assuming an equal distribution of 3 and 4-bedroom units, 30 units of each would be constructed.

The estimated water consumption/sewage generation for this alternate is provided below:

<b>6 DU/ACRE ALTERNATIVE B _ Three and four bedroom units</b>							
	<b>No. of units</b>	<b>No BR</b>	<b>Water</b>	<b>Sewer</b>		<b>Clubhouse Existing</b>	<b>Change</b>
3 Bedroom	30	90	9900	9900			
4 Bedroom	30	120	13200	13200			
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>		<b>23100</b>			<b>1900</b>	<b>14140</b>
							<b>10860</b>

For comparison, the applicant's proposal is provided below:

<b>APPLICANT PROPOSAL</b>							
<b>UNIT SIZE</b>	<b>No. of units</b>	<b>No of BR</b>	<b>Water</b>	<b>Sewer</b>		<b>Clubhouse Existing</b>	<b>Change</b>
Studio	69	69	7590	7590			
1 Bedroom	87	87	9570	9570			
2 Bedroom	72	144	15840	15840			
<b>Total*</b>	<b>228</b>		<b>33000</b>	<b>33000</b>		<b>1900</b>	<b>14140</b>
							<b>20760</b>

The Alternative for all three Bedroom or all four Bedroom is presented below:

UNIT SIZE	No. of units	No of BR	Water	Sewer		Clubhouse	Existing	Change
3 Bedroom	228	684	75240	75240		1900	14140	63000
4 Bedroom	228	912	100320	100320		1900	14140	88080

Summary:

The applicant's proposal for 228 units shows a net increase of 20,760 gallons per day. (91/ DU)

The alternative for 228 all 3 BR units or all 4 BR units shows and increase of 63,000 or 88,080 gpd. (276 or 385/DU)

The alternative for a 6 dwelling units per acre for a reduced 60 units alternative shows an increase of 10,860 gpd. (181/du)

The applicant's proposal would generate a much smaller increase in water consumption and sewer generation than the other alternatives with a significant increase in the number of dwelling units provided.

I trust that this response will assist the Board in its environmental determinations.

Kind regards,

John F. Lange