



# CITY OF SARATOGA SPRINGS

## PLANNING BOARD

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September 20, 2016

Steve Rowland, Chair  
Design Review Commission  
City Hall  
474 Broadway  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

**RE: PB# 16.027 and 16.028- 246 West Avenue request for DRC input on proposed 16 unit Multi-family residential project**

Dear Steve:

At its September 8, 2016 meeting, the Planning Board continued review of a special use permit and site plan application for 16 multi-family residential units at 246 West Avenue. Two sets of former special use permit and site plan approvals were issued, most recently as of January 22, 2014. While the current application continues to propose 16 multi-family residential units, the Board notes that the application now proposes changes such as the removal of the carriage house structure to the rear of the site. From the proposed elevations supplied, it also appears architectural changes have been made that call into question some of the original elements of the project.

We recognize that the proposed project is within the West Avenue corridor in an area experiencing change and new focus. The context of the site includes the active YMCA site with recent expansion approved, continued single story motel and adjacent residential homes. Directly across West Avenue, Pitney Community Farm plans are moving ahead which would preserve a large percentage of property as permanent open space, and introduce additional farm related activities to the corridor.

Upon initial review, the Planning Board voiced concerns and identified additional information they would like to request DRC input related to:

1. Consistency with current and evolving neighborhood. Existing includes adjacent low-rise motel, single-family residential and YMCA. Across Ballston Ave, the Pitney Farm proposes conservation of open space and community farming activities.
2. Consistency with community character. Is currently proposed single multi-story structure appropriate with existing community character? Is the loss of the carriage house as a visual transition a concern?
3. Mass and scale of proposed structure. Density of proposed units within context of surrounding lower intensity. The proposed 16 units can be considered within the Transect-4 District, however

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the surrounding properties are largely lower in intensity per the City's Comprehensive Plan land use designations as well as current land uses. Consideration of mass and scale of the project.

4. Architecture. It was noted that the original project design started with a strong agrarian theme to complement the adjacent Pitney Farm; is current proposal strong architecturally and consistent throughout? Are there opportunities for improvement that should be considered within the site plan review?

The Planning Board values the experience and input of the DRC. We look forward to comments that you are able to provide in assistance of the consideration of SEQR negative declaration affirmation, and project review. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mad. R. Vorp". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "M" and a distinct "V" and "P".

Chair