Town of Stony Point Letchworth Village Zoning Study and Recommendations

KIRKBRIDE HALL is the center of activities for the men patients. In this hall they hold Church services, patriotic exercises, and indoor games. Genthe was much interested in the good training received by inmates of Letchworth.

July 25, 2014

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Background

The Town of Stony Point has retained the Turner Miller Group (TMG) to prepare an amendment to the Zoning Local Law of the Town of Stony Point and perform required Environmental Review in order to make the Letchworth Village Site more appealing to a range of appropriate uses thereby increasing its value for redevelopment. The following is the culmination of TMG's analysis of the project site and recommendations for amendments to the Zoning Chapter of the Town Code.

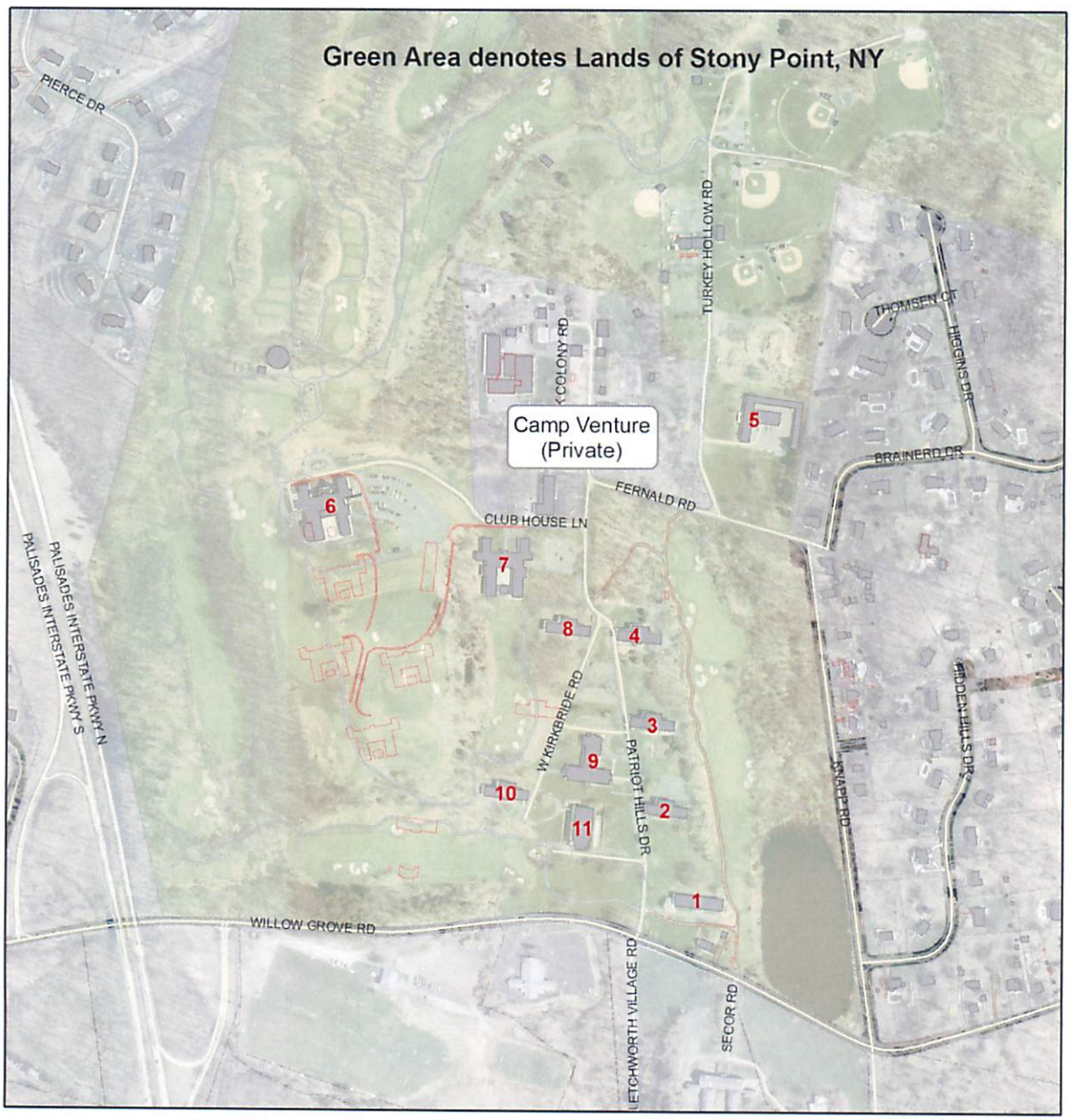
Existing Site (See Key Map)

The Town-owned Letchworth Village site currently contains twelve separate structures in various states of repair. Building numbers are as they appear on the accompanying key map.

Building 1 is known as Wilbur Hall and is currently vacant. Wilbur hall is vacant and boarded up.

Building 2 is currently being used for the Town Justice Court

Building 3 is currently being used for storage. The lot between buildings 2 and 3 is being used for a community garden



Letchworth Village Zoning Study
Key Map

600 300 0 600 Feet

July 2014
Basemap Data: Rockland County Planning Department, 2002
Aerial Photography: NYS GIS Clearinghouse, 2013

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Building 4 is currently being used as a regional office for Cornell Cooperative Extension

Building 5 is currently being used as part of a maintenance complex associated with the Little League fields and the Patriot Hills Golf Course

Building 6 is the existing Patriot Hills Golf Course Clubhouse, which includes a catering banquet hall.

Building 7 is referred to as Rho Building. It is currently being used for a range of recreational purposes as well as meeting rooms.

Building 8 is vacant and boarded up.

Building 9 is vacant and boarded up.

Building 10 is vacant and boarded up.

Building 11 is known as Kirkbride Hall. It currently houses a basketball court and is used for recreational purposes. Kirkbride Hall is highly visible from Willow Grove Road

Camp Venture, which is located just north of the eleven town owned buildings is a not-for-profit institution involved in providing recreation and pro-vocational services to the developmentally disabled. Venture Oaks, part of this private campus is housed within the twelfth former Letchworth Village building. The Stony Point Little League has recreational baseball and softball fields and tennis courts located to the northeast of Camp Venture and just north of building 5. The fairways and cartpaths surround the eleven Stony Point-owned Letchworth Village Buildings on four sides. Residential neighborhoods bound the site to the north and east. A soccer club, church and the Town of Haverstraw's vacant former Letchworth Village buildings border the site to the south.

A now defunct redevelopment proposal entitled "Encore" was previously approved for Haverstraw's Letchworth Village holdings, and an in-depth Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) provides good background information on potential impacts of redevelopment. The Palisades Parkway borders the site to the east and provides regional access to the New York State Thruway, Palisades Mall, West Point, Woodbury Commons, and Rockland, Orange, and Bergen (NJ) Counties.

Existing Zoning

The entirety of the existing site is located within the Town's Special Recreation-Residential (SR-R) zoning district. The SR-R district is highly restrictive in terms of both use and bulk. The only uses permitted by right are public parks, playgrounds and outdoor recreation facilities; and one-family detached residences on 4.59 acre lots. Camps and similar recreational facilities are permitted by conditional use. Home professional offices, utilities, and wireless facilities are permitted by special permit use.

A special provision is applicable to the SR-R district that restricts disturbance to slopes over 25% and requires mitigations to highly visible structures.

The restrictiveness of the existing zoning makes the existing property less desirable for economic development. Any investor wishing to purchase or lease all or portions of the existing Town site would need to amend the zoning to permit any use other than a few homes or a camp. This would add significant uncertainty to purchase and development of the site in that the project may become unattainable in the face of significant opposition.

Site Constraints

The area of the site currently available for redevelopment is limited to the area south of Clubhouse Lane. Previous efforts to redevelop the site have faltered when they included elements of the Stony Point Little League fields or the Patriot Hills Golf Course, both of which are highly valued by the public. Further, limiting redevelopment to these areas makes a great deal of sense insofar as this particular area is buffered from surrounding residences, has direct access to Willow Grove Road (County Road 98) and is an area that has been previously disturbed and used for the adult male housing units of the former state institution.

Because of the degree of previous use, there are generally no site constraints with regard to wetlands, steep slopes, sensitive species, pre-historic archeological resources, or rock outcrop.

Building Constraints

The building constraints are generally layout, asbestos, lead paint and mold abatement. Lead paint was prevalently used in buildings of this era and would require remediation prior to reuse. Asbestos is also known to be present in pipe wrap and is likely to also be used in floor tiles, and potentially ceiling tiles. The presence of these hazardous substances significantly increases the cost of reusing the existing buildings. The "Encore" EIS suggested that the cost of remediation is approximately $50 per square foot in 2005. This cost would be in addition to the construction and rehabilitation cost to upgrade the existing buildings to meet current building and fire codes and to adapt the buildings to a usable layout.

Traffic Considerations

The intersection of Willow Grove Road and the PIP northbound ramp met the warrant for signalization in 2005 at the time the WCI proposal for Haverstraw's Letchworth Village holdings was undergoing environmental review. It is highly likely that this intersection continues to meet warrants. The Town should petition to have the County signalize this intersection.

The PIP southbound ramp was identified as being significantly impacted by the Haverstraw project. However, it was not determined whether warrants for intersection signalization were met.

The intersection of Letchworth Village Road/Patriot Hills Drive with Willow Grove Road, was found to have adequate capacity in its current configuration to operate at good levels of service (C or better) even upon full buildout of the "Encore Haverstraw Proposal" which called for 38% of the traffic or 406 additional PM peak hour trips generated by the 500 residences and 30,000 square feet of retail to travel through the intersection. As no development has proceeded on the site, it is safe to assume that the intersection could handle similar ranges of traffic increases from development on the Stony Point site with the caveat that any future development will be required to investigate potential traffic impacts under SEQR, and the distribution of intersection approaches (number of vehicles entering from Patriot Hills Road versus Letchworth Village Road or Willow Grove Road) will be different.

A capacity of 400 trips could support up to 645 rooms of hotel, 116,000 square feet of high volume retail, or 231,000 square feet of medical office.

Comprehensive Plan Recommendations

The 1995 Town Master Plan recommended the Letchworth Village Parcel be reused for very low density residential and open space. The more recent 2013 Master Plan Amendment made specific recommendations that Letchworth Village be redeveloped as a "new village" or "new community." The

Plan suggests teaming with a "Redevelopment Partner" to guide the property through full revitalization. It acknowledges the high cost of adaptive reuse and suggests that an overlay zone be prepared along with a Generic Environmental Impact Statement that would serve to increase the value of the property for redevelopment.

Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles and facts were considered in developing the zoning for this area of the Town:

- The Palisades Interstate Parkway provides pass-by traffic linking the site to major tourist destinations of Woodbury Commons and West Point. Additionally, casinos are likely to be approved in Orange County or Sullivan County, as close as the adjacent communities of Woodbury and Tuxedo.
- The Town of Stony Point is largely suburban and rural in character and identity and the site is surrounded by several established neighborhoods;
- The Patriot Hills Golf Course is a valuable resource both to the community and possible redevelopment;
- The nearby Harriman and Bear Mountain State Parks provide outstanding recreational resources to residents and visitors to the region;
- Stony Point is a community rich in history, and the history of the Town, including the Letchworth Village site, is important to preserve;
- Truck access to the site is extremely limited;
- The existing market for senior housing, for-sale housing of all types and general office is extremely weak in the region;

Proposed Uses and Bulk Requirements

The following uses are proposed to be permitted as "incentive uses" within a new Letchworth Village Redevelopment Incentive Overlay District (LW-RIO). Incentive uses will be equivalent to "conditional uses" for purposes of procedure.

- Hotel, spa, conference center - The access of the site to regional tourism destinations makes the site uniquely suited to a Hotel, Spa or Conference Center. It is conceivable that a hotel building could incorporate one or more existing buildings into an overall site plan. For example, Kirkbride Hall could serve as a banquet or spa facility. While a luxury hotel would be most preferable, the site would be suitable for a range of hotels. Super budget hotels would generally not be as consistent with the surrounding neighborhoods, so any hotel should be required to provide a minimum square footage of conference or spa facilities, a minimum number of guest rooms, a restaurant and a minimum size of guest room. The Town could offer

prospective hotels the Town golf rate for overnight guests and allot a certain number of tee-times per day.

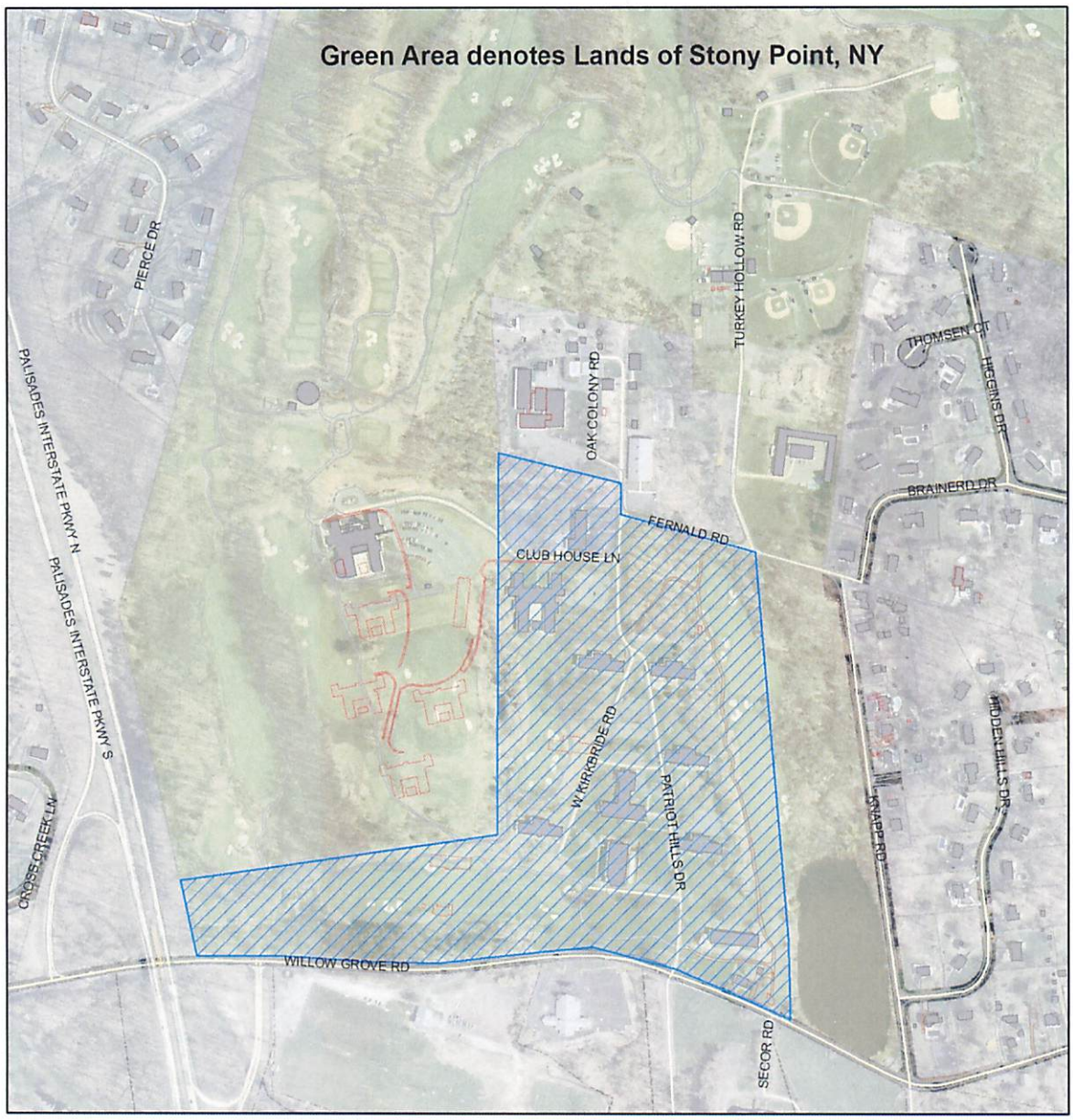
- Number of Rooms: Minimum 75 - Maximum 200
- Minimum Conference facilities: 15 square feet per guest room
- Minimum Parking: One space per guest room
- Minimum Restaurant space: 15 square feet per guest room
- Minimum Recreational Amenities: Must have pool and fitness center and minimum recreational area should be 30 square feet per guest room.
- Minimum floor area per guest room: 350 square feet.
- Maximum Height: 4 stories, except no more than 3 stories apparent from Willow Grove Road.
- Minimum Setbacks - 50 feet
- Maximum development coverage - 80%
- Potential Incentive 1: Use of Town Golf Course at Town Rates for guests if restaurant and conference facilities increased to 30 square feet, spa facilities are provided at a rate of 30 square feet per guestroom, and minimum floor area per guest room is increased to 450 square feet.

- Specialty Sporting Goods Retail - While general retail would not be appropriate, certain types of specialty retail may be a good fit for the site given the proximity to the Harriman State Park - specifically, large sporting goods stores that specialize in hunting, fishing, boating, hiking, and other outdoor activities. Such a retail store should have a minimum square footage and be able to support itself without other nearby retail. Examples include Cabelas, Orvis or Bass Pro Shops. A Cabelas is currently proposed in the Town of Woodbury. Often these types of uses seek to locate near their competition, and Stony Point could seek to draw a competitor.
    - Minimum floor area: 50,000 square feet
    - Minimum parking: 5 per 1,000 square feet.
    - Maximum Height - 45 feet
    - Minimum Yards - 30 feet
    - MInimum Setbacks - 50 feet.
    - Maximum Development Coverage - 80%
- Private recreational use - The 1995 Master Plan contemplated an outdoor public recreational use such as the golf course. However, additional private recreation, would be fully compatible with existing uses. Possible specific uses include a "Frozen Ropes" type athletic training facility, an indoor athletic field complex, an indoor skating rink or an equestrian center. Depending upon the demands of the Town little league, Town fields could be leased to such a use as needed and as available.
    - Minimum yard - 30 feet
    - Minimum setback - 50 feet
    - Maximum height of any structure - 45 feet
    - Maximum development coverage - 80%

- Parkway gasoline filling station - The access to and from the Palisades Interstate Parkway and the lack of easily accessible gasoline filling stations for several miles north and south of the location, make the site a prime location for a large gasoline filling station with convenience store. However, such a use has the potential to be visually incongruous with the existing architecture as well as the character of this area of Stony Point. To mitigate this, the zoning would have to require architectural treatments similar to the architecture of the Letchworth Village Buildings, such as natural field stone, gambrel slate roofs with dormers, roman entablature porticos. While structures shouldn't be facsimiles of the Letchworth Village architecture, the architecture should reflect the quality and aesthetic of the area. An example of a gas filling station that might be appropriate is included below:

  - Maximum number of pumps (fueling positions) - 18
  - Minimum square footage of accessory retail - 4,000 square feet
  - Minimum parking stalls - 5 per 1000 SF of retail area
  - Minimum yard - 30 feet
  - Minimum setback - 50 feet
  - Maximum development coverage - 80%
  - Front yard must be pervious and landscaped except for driveway entrances
- Medical Office/Surgical Center - Since the American Care Act went into effect, many doctors are seeking to consolidate with other doctors in order to take advantage of economies of scale with regard to billing and insurance processing services. This has led to large medical conglomerates such as Crystal Run Healthcare of Orange and Sullivan County. A large medical office of 40-80,000 square feet could potentially locate in this location. Such a building, would likely not seek to reuse an existing building given the technology infrastructure demands of these types of uses. The design of the structure will have to reflect the architectural features of existing Letchworth Village Buildings through incorporation of stone elements.
  - Minimum yard - 30 feet
  - Minimum setback - 50 feet
  - Minimum parking stalls - 5 per 1000
  - Maximum height - 4 stories
  - Maximum development coverage - 80%

- Sit-down restaurant - Old historic structures provide instant ambience to premium sit-down restaurants. Additionally, the grounds could be adapted to outdoor weddings, or live entertainment. Such a restaurant would only be appropriate as an adaptive re-use. Other restaurants may be appropriate as an accessory to a larger principal use.
    - Must be adaptive reuse.
    - Additions to existing buildings are permitted as well as site features such as outdoor dining areas and performance spaces.
    - Minimum yard - 30 feet
    - Minimum setback - 50 feet
    - Minimum parking stalls - 1 per 100 square feet of indoor dining area - exemption for valet parking
    - Maximum height - 2 stories
    - Maximum coverage - 60%
- Neighborhood retail - Letchworth Village is "on the way home" for many North Rocklanders. A limited neighborhood retail building providing spaces to multiple tenants offering dry cleaning, convenience store, coffee shop, deli, and ice cream shops would not be in appropriate if accommodated within an existing Letchworth Village Building. Wilbur Hall in particular would be well-suited to this type of use given its proximity to Willow Grove Road.
    - Must be adaptive reuse.
    - Additions to existing buildings are not permitted
    - Minimum yard - 30 feet
    - Minimum setback - 50 feet
    - Minimum parking stalls - 1 per 200 square feet
    - Maximum height - 2 stories
    - Maximum development coverage - 60%
- Film production studios. It has been noted that many of the buildings are arranged with good natural lighting and large open spaces that are ideally suited for film production. Film production in and around existing structures and grounds would be an ideal transient use of the site. Additionally, should the site prove popular for filming, opportunities may exist for a production studio.
    - Must be adaptive reuse.
    - Additions to existing buildings are permitted
    - Minimum yard - 30 feet
    - Minimum setback - 50 feet
    - Minimum parking stalls - 1 per 1000 square feet
    - Maximum height - 2 stories
    - Maximum development coverage - 60%



Letchworth Village Zoning Study
Proposed Overlay District

600 300 0 600 Feet

N W E S

July 2014
Basemap Data: Rockland County Planning Department, 2002
Aerial Photography: NYS GIS Clearinghouse, 2013

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Proposed Overlay District Boundaries - See Zoning Map

The suggested LW-RIO District boundaries are shown on the preceding map. In addition to the area surrounding the Town's vacant and underutilized buildings south of Clubhouse Lane, the district also encompasses holes 15, 16 and 17 of the Patriot Hills Golf Course, the southernmost building of Camp Venture and the Rho and Kirkbride Hall buildings.

The Camp Venture inclusion was intended to provide a largely undeveloped portion of that institution's property some flexibility to return the land to full taxability and to provide Camp Venture with a potential revenue source.

The inclusion of Town Resources is intended to provide flexibility for the Town to respond to a large-scale proposal. While such a proposal is not likely given the cost to replace, reconfigure or relocate these Town resources, not allowing for a moderate degree of flexibility would be unwise. It should also be recognized that the golf course is considered public parkland. In New York State, to use parkland for other purposes requires a permissive "alienation" by the New York State legislature. To adjust the fairways or relocate them is likely to be a difficult and time-consuming proposition.

Zoning Mechanism and Other District Requirements

We suggest that the district be established as an incentive overlay district that allows additional "incentive uses" beyond those allowed by the underlying zoning. Listed incentive uses should be permitted by the Planning Board subject to all criteria being met - similar to conditional uses. Superfluous standards such as lot size and street frontage should not be listed. The district would be added as a new Article XXII at the end of the current zoning chapter, with a unique purpose section. Incentive uses would be listed along with relevant bulk requirements. Additionally, the following requirements would be applied to all uses.

Lighting - Night sky friendly site lighting. All outdoor light fixtures shall be full shielded, downcast lamps. No individual lamp (including one or more fixtures) shall exceed 12,000 lumens or be mounted higher than 30 feet.

Architectural standards. - All incentive uses must incorporate rounded field stone as a prevalent element of architectural design. Additionally, at least three of the following additional architectural/site elements should be incorporated:

1. Gambrel roofs with dormers;
2. Greek revival porticos or collonades;
3. Multiple, aligned, evenly-spaced, vertically-oriented windows with muntins;
4. Large expansive lawns and open spaces interspersed with specimen trees;
5. Horizontal building orientation (ratio of length or width to height);
6. Incorporation of some arched-top window openings;

View corridors. A view corridor unimpeded by any new structure shall be maintained from the intersection of Patriot Hills Road to the entire front facade of Kirkbride Hall to a point on Willow Grove Road 400 feet west of the intersection of Patriot Hills Road.

Historic resource documentation. Prior to demolition of any historic structure, the applicant shall photo document the structure and grounds and the Town shall exhibit such documentation to the public in one of the remaining preserved buildings.

Kirkbride Hall to be maintained or incorporated. No application shall be approved that results in the removal of more than 75% of Kirkbride Hall, or modifies the facade or front half of the structure as seen from the street.

Signage. Site signage shall be consistent with Article IX of the code of the Town of Stony Point. Additionally, the Town should maintain an attractive directory sign at the intersection of Patriot Hills Road and Willow Grove Road.

215-18 does not apply. The provisions of 215-18 (Restriction on lot development in SR-R and RR Districts) governing development on steep slopes and limitation on visibility shall not apply.

Other Recommended Tasks

To improve the marketability of the site, the Town could embark on several additional tasks. These include:

SEQR. The Town may wish to prepare a Generic EIS for concept developments permitted under the zoning. Doing so would establish thresholds within which a developer would not need to prepare an EIS. This could lower the approval costs for a developed by several hundred thousand dollars.

Negotiate signage with PIP. The PIPC maintains an advisory and policy restriction on the visibility of commercial signage from the Palisades Parkway. However, the redevelopment of the site for commercial use requires visibility to pass-by traffic. The two means of accomplishing signage from the PIPC is to allow a very tall pole sign or to seek cooperation with PIPC to provide signage for motorist services, should a hotel and/or gas filling station locate here. Should a large sporting goods retailer wish to locate here, it would likely require highway visibility, which could only be accomplished via very tall highway sign.

Subdivide property. Currently, there is no individual parcel for sale or lease to offer to potential developers. To provide certainty, the Town should subdivide its land holdings so that each building is located on an independent separate lot. Interested applicants could seek to acquire single or multiple lots.

Perform retail study - Once the site is zoned to allow a range of appropriate uses, it will be necessary to actively seek out potential interested parties. There are a range of hotels, production companies,

restaurants, medical conglomerates, and sporting goods retailers that may be interested in this site. Performing a retail gap analysis as well as a demographic study may help to entice investors.

Conclusion

The site is appropriate for a range of suitable uses including hotels, large-scale sporting goods retail, medical office, private recreation, Parkway gasoline filling station, neighborhood retail completely within existing structures and sit-down restaurants within existing structures and film production. We have attached draft zoning to this study for your review.

Due to past controversy surrounding development of this area, we suggest that the Town make this study available for public review and hold an informal public workshop prior to scheduling the statutorily required public hearing. This will allow the Town Board to incorporate public comment as appropriate and change the proposed law as necessary prior to preparation of SEQR documents.

We are available to discuss our recommendations with you and make revisions as necessary.