



October 07, 2022

Terry Haas
Department of Community Development
City of Essex Junction
2 Lincoln Street
Essex Junction, VT 05452

RE: The Village at Autumn Pond Phase II
Planned Residential Development Preliminary Site Plan Review

Dear Ms. Haas:

Trudell Consulting Engineers ("TCE") hereby submits the enclosed information and documentation on behalf of Amber Lanterns, LLC ("Applicant") for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) on land located on Autumn Pond Way in the City of Essex Junction.

This letter addresses the requested information per in the *Village of Essex Junction Land Development Code*¹ dated December 13, 2016 ("LDC") and includes the following: (a) brief narrative description of the project; (b) preliminary statement on traffic and municipal services; and (c) a list of requested waivers. A completed Conceptual Plan Review Application with the requisite fee has also been submitted.

A. Project Narrative and Description

The ±9.75-acre project parcel is located in the MF-2 Zoning District on Autumn Pond Way. The project proposes the construction of 117 residential units in three new buildings as the second phase ("Phase II") of the Village at Autumn Pond, the residential development to the north that is owned and was developed by the Applicant. Adjacent landowners include Essex High School to the south and east and the Tree Farm to the west. The residential buildings have been oriented on the site in a "z" configuration to maximize the views to natural features and open space and limit visibility into nearby and neighboring apartments.

Currently on the site are four multi-unit residential buildings with interconnected circulation and parking between all the buildings and three access points to Autumn Pond Way. There is a sewer easement that runs along the southern and southeastern boundary of the parking area. A Class II wetland and a VDH stream, each of which have an associated wetland and top of bank buffers. The project proposes to only redevelop existing impervious surface within the wetland and top of bank buffer, further encroachment or expansion of impervious surface into the wetland or buffers is not proposed.

The project is well buffered from offsite locations because of existing vegetation surrounding the project area. The undeveloped wetland and vegetation to the south and the west creates a substantial buffer

¹ The Village of Essex Junction became the City of Essex Junction effective in the Summer of 2022, however the current Land Development Regulation document has not yet been updated to reflect this change.

between the high school recreation fields and the residential development. A mature buffer of trees on the west side of Autumn Pond Way buffers the Tree Farm recreation fields to the west/northwest. Old Colchester Road is over 700 feet to the west of the project area with trees lining Autumn Pond Way and buffering the project area from the roadway.

The proposed project is an extension of the Village at Autumn Pond development that abuts the subject parcel to the north. The first phase of Village at Autumn Pond ("Phase I") has been highly successful, currently with no vacancies available in any of the buildings. As an extension of Phase I, the proposed redevelopment will be similar in aesthetics and treatment to the development to what is the existing development north. Additionally, the residents of the Phase II redevelopment will have access to all the amenities provided across the entirety of the development. This includes a heated inground pool, community room, fitness center, private dog park, fire pit, outdoor (year-round) barbeque grills, an onsite management office, and nearby walking trails.

New residential buildings are proposed to be four stories (see waiver section below) of residential units, with one level of subsurface garage parking. Parking on the site is distributed to achieve multiple parking options for residents. Subsurface garage parking and the lower parking lot area will be accessed from a driveway at the southern intersection Autumn Pond Way (south of Building 1). An upper parking lot is proposed at the north end of the parcel (west of Building 3). The upper parking area also has an outdoor gathering area and barbeque grills on the large parking island. A small number of parking spaces are proposed directly off Autumn Pond Way that are a continuation of the head-in that exists off of the road in the Phase I development. There is ample parking provided in Phase I of the Village at Autumn Pond, and for Phase II, the project proposes to use some of the available parking (located at the south end of Phase I), as overflow for the Phase II residents if needed. A parking waiver is requested to reduce the number of parking provided that is based on a parking study done showing the current parking use on the existing facility; this is discussed further in the Request for Waivers section below.

A multifaceted stormwater approach is proposed for the project that includes a gravel wetland and a bioretention system to capture and infiltrate site stormwater. During the redevelopment, the Applicant will upgrade Autumn Pond Way to the city DPW standards.

PHASING

Erosion control measures will be installed prior to any demolition or earth disturbance. Based on available information, the existing structures on the property are believed to be served by one or two water service lines from the water main in Autumn Pond Way. No water shut offs for this service(s) are evident and the contractor will investigate/excavate these connection locations prior to disconnection. It is assumed that the existing water main in Autumn Pond Way (from the intersection of Autumn Pond Way/Old Colchester Road) will need to be temporarily shutoff to disconnect these water services (if no shut offs exist). The contractor will coordinate with the Town and Project engineer regarding roadway permits, timing, traffic control, and approval prior to work. See the disconnection notes on the demolition plans included with this application. The existing sewer services and on site subsurface drainage infrastructure will be disconnected/removed during construction.

Project construction is planned to begin in early 2023 once all necessary permits have been secured.

OPEN SPACE

The proposed project will be an extension of the Phase I development and all open spaces and common site amenities, like the pool, club house, grills, walking paths, private dog park, on site management, etc. will be available to the future residents of the Phase II development. Ownership and maintenance of the common areas and site amenities will continue to be maintained by the Applicant.

B Preliminary Statement Regarding traffic, sewer and water demand impacts

The proposed project is seeking a 69-net increase to the number of residential units from 48 (existing) to 117 (proposed). Increased traffic demand from these additional units was calculated using the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual, 11th Edition for the "Low-Rise Apartment" Land Use. The increase in PM Peak Hour vehicle trips is as follows:

- Existing Trips (48 Units) = 22 PM Peak Hour Trips
- Proposed Trips (117 Units) = 60 PM Peak Hour Trips
- Net Increase = 38 PM Peak Hour Trips

The project will connect to the City municipal water and sewer systems via the existing sewer and water mains that run through the property. The 117-unit project is a mix of one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments. Wastewater demand will be 20,580 gallons per day (GPD), and water demand is calculated to total 24,780 GPD per the State of Vermont Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply Rules. A breakdown of the calculation is attached to this application. The existing 48 units have a wastewater/water demand of approximately 9,800 gpd and 12,880 gpd respectively.

C. Request for Waivers

Per the LDC section on waivers (Ch 6, page 71)

3. Waivers. The Commission may waive requirements for lot coverage, setbacks, parking and height based upon the merits of the specific proposal. Waivers shall be based upon the following criteria and may include specific conditions.

- (a) Unique physical characteristics of the site proposed for development.
- (b) Superior building design, lot layout and landscaping design.
- (c) Provision of public open spaces or superior bicycle and pedestrian access.
- (d) Joint or combined vehicular access with adjoining properties.

As part of the PUD, the Applicant is requesting the following waivers:

1. Height waiver: the MF-2 District specifies a maximum height of three (3) stories or thirty-five (35) feet but allows for a waiver of up to (4) stories or forty-eight (48) feet if it meets one of two criteria. The proposed project meets second criteria:
 2. *The project is not located on a major arterial street, but adequate buffering is proposed that would cause no adverse impacts on the character of the neighborhood.*

The project is well buffered on all sides and will not have an adverse impact on the character of the neighborhood. Additionally, the proposed residential buildings would be visually compatible with the Village at Autumn Pond Phase I development north of the proposed project.

2. Parking waiver: The project proposes 117 residential units consisting of a mix of one bedroom, one bedroom plus den, and two-bedroom units. Based on requirements in Chapter 7 of the LDC, a total of 246 off-street parking spaces are required for the project. The Applicant requests a waiver for the required parking that would permit 205 parking spaces. Please find attached our Parking Waiver Request with analysis of existing parking by our traffic engineer.

Also note that handicap parking is located in throughout the development at locations that include (2) per garage building for a total of (6) garage spaces, and (2) on the upper surface parking lot near Buildings 2 and 3, all of which total of (8) handicap parking spaces. This is greater than the (7) required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at (802) 879-6331 x108 or by email at lucy.thayer@tcevt.com.

Sincerely,



Lucy Thayer, PLA
Trudell Consulting Engineers
478 Blair Park Road
Williston, VT 05495