



CITY OF SARATOGA SPRINGS

PLANNING BOARD

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June 27, 2013

John Franck, Commissioner
Office of Commissioner of Accounts
City Hall - 474 Broadway
Saratoga Springs, New York 12866

RE: **Advisory Opinion to the City Council**
PB#13.024 Turf Hotels proposed Zoning Map Amendment, 3368 South Broadway

Dear Commissioner:

Pursuant to your request dated April 19, 2013, the Planning Board reviewed the Turf Hotels Map and Text Amendment Request at its May 8, 2013, and June 26, 2013 meetings. The proposed amendment contemplates a change from the current zoning for the parcel from Office Medical Business-I District (OMB-I) to Tourist Related Business District (TRB).

The Planning Board, as required 10.1.5.1 of the City's Zoning Ordinance, reviewed the proposed change to determine if (1) the revision is not contrary to the general purposes and intent of this chapter and (2) the revision is accordant with the Comprehensive Plan.

Considerations:

The Planning Board understands the context of the location as proximate to the Saratoga Spa State Park, a contributing property on the NY State and National Registers of Historic Places that has been granted a rare distinction (only 2,500 sites nationally) of a National Historic Landmark.

We also recognize the site's location as within the significant South Broadway gateway to our community, and within a City Gateway Design District-I, the intent of which "is to establish a series of site and construction standards and guidelines to encourage appropriate development while preserving and maintaining a rural "country" character in this gateway area to complement the natural conditions of the neighboring Saratoga Spa State Park".

We are also cognizant of the fact that the City's Comprehensive Plan is in the process of being reviewed and potentially updated. Should the City Council not wish to wait for the process to be completed and with it an understanding of any changes to the land use goals for this portion of South Broadway, the Planning Board hereby issues a favorable advisory opinion- (In favor: Van Wagner, Lewis, Klein, Gaba, Pinsley, Bristol; Absent: Coppola) with recommendations for the City Council's consideration.

Consistency with Comprehensive Plan:

While understood the intended project for the site is an extended stay hotel, we are aware of our responsibility in providing an advisory opinion to the City Council in regards to the proposed re-zoning of the parcel to Tourist Related Business District which allows for a variety of higher intensity uses. Such uses include motor vehicle repair and fueling stations, eating and drinking facilities, outdoor storage and display, parking facilities, etc.

We would note a concern with the fact that there are no guarantees that the anticipated project will take place once the parcel is re-zoned, and that more expansive TRB uses could be considered at this location by right. To this end, the City Council may wish to consider revising the Tourist Related Business District permitted uses, bulk, and area requirements particularly in light of its sensitivity and appropriateness to this proposed location; but also reflective of other TRB locations within the City- further south on South Broadway, Maple Dell, and Nelson/Gridley Streets.

Given the commercial nature of the COMM-5 designation and the fact that uses other than office, and medical office are currently contained within the existing OMB-I zoning (examples senior housing and senior assisted living facility), we find the proposed map amendment to be not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Zoning Ordinance:

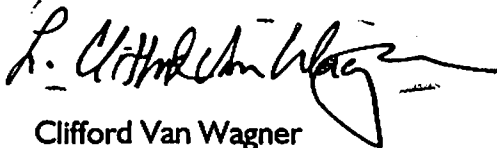
We find that the proposed revision is not contrary to the general purposes and intent of the ordinance. We would again offer the recommendation for consideration of review and revision of the TRB District in its entirety.

For clarification purposes, the following are procedural steps that must occur prior to City Council action:

- A public hearing by the City Council for this proposed zoning revision.
- Review by the Saratoga County Planning Board (General Municipal Law §239-m)
- Compliance with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) by the City Council including an evaluation of the SEQRA Part I. The applicant has submitted Part I of the SEQRA Short Form with the application.

If you have any questions regarding the above comments, please contact me.

Sincerely,



Clifford Van Wagner
Chair

cc: Mayor Johnson
Commissioner Madigan
Commissioner Mathiesen
Commissioner Scirocco
Kate Maynard, AICP, Principal Planner
Matt Jones, Agent for Applicant