

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Village of Garden City Zone Change Review Committee  
**FROM:** Max Stach, AICP  
**SUBJECT:** 555 Stewart Avenue Review  
**DATE:** January 18, 2018

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As subconsultants to H2M, Nelson, Pope & Voorhis has reviewed the following materials regarding the above referenced project:

- Application letter by Kevin M. Walsh dated September 13, 2017;
- Traffic Impact Study by Cameron Engineering dated September 2017;
- Application letter by Kevin M. Walsh dated May 4, 2017;
- Transmittal letter by Kevin M. Walsh dated May 16, 2017 with Attachments;
- Site Plans by Newman Design dated March 15, 2017;
- Survey by VHB dated January 10, 2017;

We note that all traffic-related review is being provided under separate cover by Ron Hill, P.E., of H2M.

The application by 550 Stewart Acquisition, LLC is for zoning amendment, special permit and site plan approval of a 150-unit, two- to five-story Multiple Dwelling Residence inclusive of 15 affordable rental units. The structure is proposed to be 193,663 square feet and the site will contain 343 parking spaces below grade and 42 spaces at grade. The building is proposed to be setback 84 feet from Stewart Avenue and 40 feet from the easterly property line with the Roosevelt Field Mall access road from Stewart Avenue. A power transmission line and 30-foot LILCO easement parallels this property line as well as the northerly property line and the site contains easements associated with these lines. A 40-foot undisturbed buffer is proposed from the property line with homes along Raymond Court, and the proposed building is set back an additional 40 feet from this buffer.

The property is located in the R-T Residential Townhouse Zoning District. The proposed use is not permitted under current zoning, and an amendment will be required to allow the proposal. The property is located on the north side of Stewart Avenue and the applicant is requesting the County to add a signalized intersection at the site entrance. A signal near this location was previously approved for a previous townhouse proposal for this site. A 10-foot Village of Garden City easement runs along the easterly property line and contains a 12" water pipe.

**Planning:**

1. The project is proposed for an existing large parking field in an area of transition from the traditional village single-family residential fabric (and Stewart School) to the west and the much

higher intensity commercial and office uses to the north, east and south. Higher density-residential is an appropriate transitional use between lower-density residential and higher intensity commercial and office. Proposed building height is also transitional between two-story residential units to the west and seven story office and commercial buildings to the east. The proposed building will mostly be four stories, tapering down to two stories closer to Raymond Court, and containing a small fifth story penthouse containing recreational area for tenants.

2. The site is located within walking distance of existing transit stops along Stewart Avenue, a variety of retail uses, employment centers, and recreational facilities which is appropriate for higher density housing, especially affordable units.
3. The proposed structure is designed to be clustered away from Raymond Court and is stepped down in height as the structure approaches Raymond Court. This along with landscape buffers will serve to soften visual impact to the existing adjacent neighborhood.

**State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR):**

4. We have reviewed materials provided by the project sponsor regarding the potential impacts that the project could have, most notably impacts to traffic and school enrollment, but also to fiscal conditions, visual impact and proximity of electrical transmission lines. This review has been generic in consideration of the proposed zoning and not with regard to the specific application itself or to the level of detail satisfying SEQR's hard-look requirement. We have the following comments regarding the materials submitted:
  - a. Traffic – See separate memo from Ron Hill, P.E;
  - b. School Enrollment - The project sponsor utilized the 2006 Rutgers University study on residential demographic multipliers in New Jersey entitled, "Who Lives in New Jersey Housing?" This report prepared by David Listokin et. al. was a follow up to the publishing of Demographic Multipliers based on 2000 Census Public Use Microdata released for each state. This report indicated the following generation rates, and we have calculated population based on our understanding of the proposed bedroom mix:

Price	Number of Beds	Total Persons Multiplier	Public School Children Multiplier	Proposed Units	Proposed Persons	Proposed Public School Children
Affordable (below median)	1	1.37	.069	2	2.74	0.138
	2	2.493	.432	12	29.916	5.184
	3	3.666	1.103	1	3.666	1.103
Market (above median)	1	1.644	.051	18	29.592	0.918
	2	2.107	.115	103	217.021	11.845
	3	3.422	.560	14	47.908	7.84
Total				150	330.843	27.028

The similar multipliers published for New York State indicate the following multipliers:

Price	Number of Beds	Total Persons Multiplier	Public School Children Multiplier	Proposed Units	Proposed Persons	Proposed Public School Children
Affordable (lower tercile)	1	1.32	.09	2	2.64	0.18
	2	2.68	.67	12	32.16	8.04
	3	4.23	1.27	1	4.23	1.27
Market (upper tercile)	1	1.67	.07	18	30.06	1.26
	2	2.31	.16	103	237.93	16.48
	3	3.81	.63	14	53.34	8.82
Total				150	360.36	36.05

Even though the numbers tend to be higher based on New York State-specific data, the resulting number of children based on the units proposed is still likely within the capacity of Garden City Schools to accommodate based on projected enrollment. As a side note, it is helpful to think of fractional persons as averages over time (2.64 persons living in two one-bedroom units, means over time the number of people will vary between two and three persons living in the two units).

We do not believe that the deviation in the New York multipliers changes the result of the analysis significantly, but we suggest that the hard look requirement of SEQR, requires this information to be considered.

- c. Fiscal – The applicant has submitted projected taxes to be generated by the project based on full valuation. The applicant has not submitted an estimate of future costs based on the incoming population’s demand for services, nor has it anticipated the impact of requesting a PILOT through the IDA.
5. The applicant will need to provide an updated Full EAF Part 1 to the Board of Trustees. The submitted Part 1 did not include answers to all of Section B (probably left blank as it was not clear at the time of submission what path the project would take in terms of a zoning amendment, map amendment or use variance). Additionally, the EAF must be amended to include information for the entire R-T district affected by the zoning amendments even if development on other R-T parcels is not likely.
  6. We are prepared to assist the Board of Trustees with meeting their responsibilities under SEQR. We suggest this process will likely require the following steps:
    - a. Declaring Lead Agency Status and classifying the action at Unlisted;
    - b. Reviewing the Part 1 EAF and submitted information and completing the Full EAF Part 2 with our assistance, which will indicate where impacts are likely. This will likely include the following areas of potential environmental impact:
      - i. Traffic;
      - ii. School facility impacts;
      - iii. Visual Impact and impacts to neighborhood character;

- iv. Fiscal Impact including Average Costing Analysis and PILOT projection;
- c. Preparing a Part 3 (or asking the applicant to prepare one on its behalf) incorporating the studies already performed and supplemented with new information as necessary;
- d. Adopting a Determination of Significance (anticipated to be a Negative Declaration based on the review performed by the ZCRC).

**Site Plan:**

- 7. We have not conducted a detailed review of the site plans submitted to date. While a conceptual plan has been reviewed by the ZCRC, we have limited our comments to larger global concerns. These plans will need to be fully reviewed regarding drainage, landscaping, lighting, engineering, and other relevant areas of concern prior to approval of a site plan.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require further clarification of these comments.



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January 18, 2018

Mr. Ausberto Huertas, Jr., Superintendent  
Incorporated Village of Garden City Building Department  
Village Hall  
351 Stewart Avenue  
Garden City, New York 11530

**Re: Traffic Impact Study Review**  
**555 Stewart Avenue, Garden City, NY**  
**H2M Project No.: GARV 1603**

Dear Mr. Huertas:

We have reviewed the Traffic Impact Study, for the above noted project, dated September 2017 and offer the following comments:

1. As stated previously, access to the project is based upon the relocation of a traffic signal owned and operated by the Nassau County Department of Public Works. As such, the adequacy and safety of the access plan cannot be fully judged until County approval of the access plan is provided.
2. The Traffic Impact Study examines the potential impacts of the development of a 150-unit rental apartment on the north side of Stewart Avenue between Raymond Court and an access to the Roosevelt Field Mall. The study also includes the potential traffic impact of the development of a parcel on the south side of Stewart Avenue opposite the subject signal. Two alternate development scenarios were considered for the southerly parcel: a 200-unit rental apartment development or a 93,000-square foot office development.
3. Intersection turning movement counts were collected on Tuesday, September 12, 2017 during the weekday morning peak hours (7:00 AM to 9:00 PM) and evening peak hours (4:00 PM to 6:00 PM). The study notes that the evening count at the intersection of Stewart Avenue and Clinton Avenue was began at 3:00 PM rather than 4:00 PM due to the proximity of the Stewart Avenue Elementary School. Count data is not provided in the report and whether the impact of the school between 3:00 PM and 4:00 PM was significant was not discussed. The raw count data should be provided in an Appendix.
4. Processing of the raw count data is not discussed. Processing would include a determination of approach peak hour factors and heavy vehicle and bus factors. Data is often adjusted by monthly factors to provide Average Daily Traffic (ADT) counts. The data was collected in September and the ADT adjustment would slightly reduce the count data to an "average daily" number. No adjustment need be made, as no adjustment in this case is a conservative approach, but the lack of adjustment should be stated.
5. Existing 2017 count data is adjusted to the future Build Year of 2019 utilizing a growth factor of 0.6% per year. The growth factor is from the New York State Department of Transportation and is appropriate for use in the study.
6. The study includes two other developments that have either been approved or are undergoing review. Engel Burman at Roosevelt Field, LLC is a 120-unit apartment building and the Marriot OTO, a 163-room hotel. Figure 3-1 of the study indicates that for both other projects 20% of the traffic will originate from the Roosevelt Field Mall Access

Road, turn right on Stewart Avenue and proceed west through Clinton Avenue based upon an April 28, 2017 letter submitted to the Village by the Engel Burman project engineer. We note the following deficiencies with respect to the analysis of the other developments:

- a. Trip generation of the other projects is not given.
  - b. The Traffic Impact Study for the Marriot OTO dated March 23, 2015 and which should be available in the Village's files, indicates that 10% of the traffic exiting via the Mall Access Road will turn right on Stewart Avenue and 10% will turn left.
  - c. While Figure 3-1 shows the site generated traffic from the "other developments arriving and departing via the mall access drive, the Traffic Assignment Work Sheets show the site generated traffic passing east and west on Stewart Avenue at the Mall Access Road.
  - d. The site generated traffic from the other developments should not have been carried through the Clinton Avenue intersection but distributed to the right, through and left movements proportionally to the existing traffic movements.
7. The study assigns 70% of the arriving and departing site generated traffic to the east on Stewart Avenue, citing the presence of the Meadowbrook Parkway, a major draw to site traffic. However, we note the existing count data from the intersection of Stewart Avenue at Raymond Court. During the morning peak period, traffic arriving and departing splits equally east and west on Stewart Avenue. During the evening peak period more traffic comes to and from the west. Further evaluation and discussion should be provided as to why residential traffic from the site would be different than residential traffic patterns at Raymond Court.
8. The Traffic Study uses SYNCHRO 8 to perform the analysis of Existing, No Build and Build conditions at the study intersections. We note that SYNCHRO 8 has been superseded by SYNCHRO 9 and just recently by SYNCHRO 10. We also offer the following comment specific to the analysis:
- a. The SYNCHRO summary sheets provided in the Appendix do not provide the signal timing used for the analysis. More importantly they do not include queue lengths for individual movements or show the available storage for individual lane movements. Queuing is a crucial issue in determining project impacts.
  - b. Nassau County operates a system along Stewart Avenue yet the analysis provides different cycle lengths for adjacent signals. During the morning peak at the Mall Access Road there is a 68 second cycle length (probably too low) while at the site access the cycle length is shown as 119.5 seconds. Signal systems should be identified and the correct timing plans should be used in the analysis.
  - c. The analysis utilizes the same peak hour factor for all approaches. The correct approach peak hour factor should be used.
  - d. What is the basis for the heavy vehicle factors used? They are omitted from many print outs.



- e. The length of storage lanes used in the analysis should be indicated in the analysis print outs.
9. Critical to the safe operation of the proposed access plan is understanding the queues that will develop at the signalized intersections. While relocating the existing traffic signal 125 feet further west of the Mall Access Road will lessen the potential interference between the two signals, the relocation may cause more queueing interference at the intersection of Stewart Avenue at Raymond Court. Another concern will be queueing at the proposed site access driveway for 550 Stewart Avenue. The site plan shows only a short internal stacking area before the first internal intersection. Will queueing in the driveway potentially interfere with incoming traffic potentially causing a buildup onto Stewart Avenue? Another concern is whether adequate stacking has been provided for the proposed left turn lanes on Stewart Avenue for the proposed access.
10. The study does not include an analysis of the latest three years of accidents along the portion of Stewart Avenue studied.
11. As a minimum, the Traffic Impact Study should compare and discuss the trip generation of the proposed development under rezoning with the trip generation of the as-of-right development with the existing zoning.
12. The proposed access plan as depicted on the aerial photograph is not consistent with respect to the site plan's driveway layout. The aerial shows the development of a short fourth through lane eastbound at the site access point, as well as, a left turn lane for the site. The additional through lane may be confusing and require additional signage.

The inconsistencies and omissions found in the review of the Traffic Impact Study that should be corrected. We also look forward to receiving input from the Nassau County Department of Public Works.

Please contact me at (631) 756-8000 extension 1718 or [rhill@h2m.com](mailto:rhill@h2m.com) should you require any additional information.

Very truly yours,

**H2M architects + engineers**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ron Hill @".

Ronald N. Hill, P.E.  
Traffic Engineering Practice Leader